



CHURCH OF THE
GOOD SHEPHERD
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

03/30/25

11:00am



No matter where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

March 30, 2025

Cover Art - "Lost & Found" by Lisle Gwynn Garrity. Inspired by Luke 15:1-7

Newspaper & gold leaf collage with digital drawing

I began my artwork for this series by collaging torn strips of newspaper articles together, overlapping global headlines with photos of current events. Along the torn edges, I added gold leaf. Then I photographed the result, editing the photos in black and white. These photos would become the backdrop for my pieces, as I wanted my digital drawings to emerge within the noise of the world's deepest pains, divisions, and everything in between. The collage is also a reference to theologian Karl Barth's famous quote about reading the bible and the newspaper together.⁷ I wanted the gold leaf to represent God's presence in the spaces in between the events and forces that tear us apart.

On September 27th, 2024, I began drawing the Good Shepherd with the lost sheep tenderly wrapped around his shoulders. As I worked, rain pummeled our roof, saturating the ground with an endless deluge as the wide bands of tropical storm Helene⁸ reached our high-elevation town of Black Mountain, NC. The next day, winds roared and threw trees to the ground like dominos. We lost power, then water, then cell service. We didn't know it yet, but every creek and river had swelled with enormous force, sweeping away everything in their path. Landslides, sinkholes, and extreme flooding ravaged the entire region of Western North Carolina, taking homes, towns, and human lives.

We were incredibly and graciously spared, having no flooding in our house or trees on our roof, so as soon as the storm relented, we headed out to find our friends and family by foot. As we walked through our small town, we found ourselves in a maze-like wasteland, changing our route every other turn due to downed trees or power lines, or washed-out roads. Progressively, we found family and friends, greeting them with great relief and urgent questions: "Do you have enough water to drink? Do you have water for flushing? Do you need any food?" It would be nearly 6 days before any emergency relief could arrive with food, water, and supplies. Meanwhile, neighbors survived by the help of their neighbors. Churches opened their doors. Firefighters and first responders persisted, despite perilous rescue missions. Helicopters air-lifted stranded people to safety.

When I began this artwork, I naively hoped to gain insight into Jesus' parable of the lost sheep. In that process, I did not wish to become the lost sheep and live through the greatest natural disaster to hit my hometown in over a thousand years. But as I read this parable again, now over 6 weeks after the storm, what strikes me is the pursuit of the shepherd, so singularly focused on the one who is lost, vulnerable, and at-risk. The Good Shepherd steadies the sheep on his shoulders and steps out of the frame toward us. His gaze finds mine, and I almost hear him whisper, "I will never stop searching for the lost. I will never stop rejoicing when one is found." —Rev. Lisle Gwynn Garrity

⁷ Karl Barth, 1886-1968, was a Swiss Reformed theologian. In a 1963 Time Magazine article, he urges young theologians to take the Bible and the newspaper and read both.

⁸ At the end of September 2024, Hurricane Helene hit the Southeastern US, devastating many regions, particularly Western North Carolina. Catastrophic flooding caused billions of dollars of damage, took hundreds of lives, and left many lives unaccounted for.

Worship Leader: Gina Sears

PRELUDE.....

**"My Jesus, I Love Thee," Melody by E.F. Miller, arr. By Anna Laura Page
Dorenda Morse, piano**

© MCMXCV by Alfred Publishing Co, Inc. Used with permission OneLicense.net A-721312

WELCOME.....

HYMN #459 “Come, O Fount of Every Blessing”

1 Come, O Fount of every blessing,
Tune my heart to sing your grace,
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
Call for songs of endless praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet,
Sung by flaming tongues above.
Praise the mount; I'm fixed upon it,
Mount of God's unfailing love.

2 Here I pause in my sojourning,
Giving thanks for having come,
Come to trust, at every turning,
God will guide me safely home.
Jesus sought me when a stranger,
Wandering from the fold of God,
Came to rescue me from danger,
Blessed body, precious love.

3 O to grace how great a debtor
Daily I am drawn anew!
Let that grace now, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to you.
Prone to wander, I can feel it,
Wander from the love I've known;
Here's my heart, O take and seal it,
Seal it for your very own.

© 1993 The Pilgrim Press. Used with permission OneLicense.net A-721312

OPENING REFLECTION.....

“O Vos Omnes” Chancel Choir

Tune: Copyright © 2006 GIA Publications, Inc. Used with permission OneLicense.net A-721312

JOYS AND CONCERNS.....

PRAYER.....

SCRIPTURE.....Gina Sears

**Psalm 126, New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition
A harvest of joy, a song of ascents**

L. 126

- 1 When God restored the fortunes of Zion,
we were like those who dream.
- 2 Then our mouth was filled with laughter
and our tongue with shouts of joy;
then it was said among the nations,
“God has done great things for them.”
- 3 God has done great things for us,
and we rejoiced.
- 4 Restore our fortunes, O God,
like the watercourses in the Negeb.
- 5 May those who sow in tears
reap with shouts of joy.
- 6 Those who go out weeping,
bearing the seed for sowing,
shall come home with shouts of joy,
carrying their sheaves.

Luke 15:1-7, New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition

15 1 Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. 2 And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.” 3 So he told them this parable: 4 “Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? 5 And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. 6 And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my lost sheep.’ 7 Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

Salmo 126, La Palabra (Hispanoamérica) El Señor ha hecho maravillas por nosotros Cántico de peregrinación.

- 1 Cuando el Señor hizo renacer a Sión,
creíamos estar soñando.
- 2 Entonces nuestra boca se llenó de sonrisas,
nuestra lengua de canciones.
Los otros pueblos decían:
“El Señor ha hecho maravillas por ellos”.
- 3 El Señor ha hecho maravillas por nosotros
y estamos alegres.
- 4 Señor, haznos renacer

como a torrentes del Négueb.

5 Los que siembran entre lágrimas,
cosecharán entre cánticos.

6 Al ir, va llorando
el que lleva las semillas;
pero volverá entre cantos
trayendo sus gavillas.

Lucas 15:1-7, La Palabra (Hispanoamérica)

15 1 Todos los recaudadores de impuestos y gente de mala reputación solían reunirse para escuchar a Jesús. **2** Al verlo, los fariseos y los maestros de la ley murmuraban:— Este anda con gente de mala reputación y hasta come con ella. **3** Jesús entonces les contó esta parábola: **4** — ¿Quién de ustedes, si tiene cien ovejas y se le pierde una de ellas, no deja en el campo las otras noventa y nueve y va en busca de la que se le había perdido? **5** Cuando la encuentra, se la pone sobre los hombros lleno de alegría **6** y, al llegar a casa, reúne a sus amigos y vecinos y les dice: “¡Alégrense conmigo, porque ya encontré la oveja que se me había perdido!”. **7** Pues yo les digo que, igualmente, hay más alegría en el cielo por un pecador que se convierta que por noventa y nueve justos que no necesiten convertirse.

A TIME FOR ALL AGES.....

HYMN #252 Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us 1,2,3

1 Savior, like a shepherd lead us,
much we need your tender care;
in your pleasant pastures feed us,
for our use your folds prepare.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
you have bought us, yours we are;
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
you have bought us, yours we are.

2 We are yours, in love befriend us,
be the guardian of our way;
keep your flock, from sin defend us,
seek us when we go astray.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
hear your children when we pray;
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
hear your children when we pray.

3 Let us always seek your favor;

let us always do your will;
Jesus Christ, our only Savior,
with your love our spirits fill.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
you have loved us, love us still;
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
you have loved us, love us still.
In our death, a resurrection;

SERMON..... **Tracy Howe**

PASTORAL PRAYER.....

PRAYER OF JESUS

Our Father, Our Mother,
Who is in Heaven, Holy be Your name,
Your Kin(g)dom come, Your will be done,
On Earth as it is in Heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.
And do not lead us into temptation,
But deliver us from evil,
For yours is the Kin(g)dom and the
Power and the glory,
Now and forever, Amen.

SHARING OUR GIFTS.....

OFFERTORY.....

"Gethsemane Prayer," by Colin Curtis. Dorenda Morse, piano
Tune: © 2008 Lorenz Corporation. Used with permission OneLicense.net A-721312

DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.
Praise God all creatures here below.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise God the source of all our gifts.
Praise Jesus Christ whose power uplifts.
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

PRAYER OF DEDICATION.....

CLOSING.....

CLOSING HYMN "Lost and Found"

To the tune of BEACH SPRING 8.7.8.7 D

1 In the flock I am surrounded
By my siblings and my friends
Safe at home and feeling grounded
With my shepherd to defend
But an aching, longing feeling
As the stars shine late at night
Draws me in, my dreams revealing
And I know I'm not quite right

2 The horizon starts to brighten
As I quietly slip away
I can feel my spirit lighten
With each cautious step I take
Unfamiliar paths unfolding
As excitement blends with fear
All creation now enfolds me
Like the flock I hold so dear

3 As I wander down the quarry
A familiar voice cries out
It's my shepherd searching for me
Reckless love has tracked me down
Though I left my place of refuge
He has followed all along
But I had to lose myself to
Find myself where I belong

Used with permission, Anna Strickland, Sanctified Art

LIFE OF OUR COMMUNITY.....

BENEDICTION.....

CLOSING REFLECTION.....

"Ah, Holy Jesus," by Johann Cruger, Tune: HERZLIEBSTER JESU,
arr. Robert Lau
Dorenda Morse, piano

Thank you for joining us in worship today

Welcome!



We are delighted to have you worshipping with us today!

Church of the Good Shepherd, UCC is a dynamic congregation with a rich history and an exciting ministry in the community.

Our church is a part of a blend of four major Protestant denominations that united together in 1957 to form the United Church of Christ.

We claim the early Pilgrim and Puritan settlers of this country as part of our heritage, and celebrate the words of Pastor John Robinson, who in his farewell remarks to the Pilgrims as they were leaving for the “new world,” said,

“There is still more light and truth to break forth from God’s holy word.”

We are a church that:

- Takes the Bible seriously, but not literally.
- Worships God with joyful hearts and open minds.
- Includes children in the life and ministry of the church.
- Celebrates creativity and the arts.
- Seeks to be inclusive of ALL people.
- Believes that growth in wisdom and understanding happens at all stages of life.
- Is committed to work for justice for all people and for the environment.
- Cares for one another, laughs easily, and rests in God’s love.
- Looks to Jesus as teacher, prophet and Child of God.

Vision Statement

Church of the Good Shepherd desires to be an inclusive community that shares Divine love as a path to peace and justice in the world.

Mission Statement

The mission of Church of the Good Shepherd is to build a just world through community one life at a time.

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

7834 Tennyson Street NE, Albuquerque, NM 87122

Office: 505-856-1004

www.ucccogs.org

No matter where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here.