

# Pastor's Post



May 9, 2024

Dear Congregation,

This week is our week to serve at the Hugo Family Shelter. I thought this might be a good opportunity to highlight the ministry and raise awareness of what we are doing there. St. Andrews Lutheran Church (ELCA) has worked to convert the old Catholic parsonage connected to the Catholic church in Hugo into a homeless shelter. That parish combined with the Catholic parish in Centerville, and they no longer needed the parsonage. The parsonage was converted into a home to support homeless families. They asked neighboring churches to help in the renovation process. Good Shepherd participated. We even have a room named for us. It was the room that we furnished. Homeless families stay in this facility, and then St. Andrews Church works with them, and gives them support and training in finding work and finding suitable housing. Many families have been brought to self-sufficiency through this program.

We (at Good Shepherd) serve as volunteers at this facility quarterly. The role of these volunteers has changed a bit over time. Currently the most pressing need is volunteers to stay overnight. Homeless shelters do not have a good reputation for being safe (which is why they call this a "Family Shelter"; however, people entering this shelter are vetted and carefully screened. I have never felt unsafe. They have a private bedroom set up for you to sleep. Very clean and very private. You arrive around 8 PM, connect with the families who are staying there (very friendly people), then make sure things are locked up before going to bed around 10:00 PM. In the morning, after everyone has left (all out by 9 AM), you lock up and slip the key in the mailbox slot of the door. In case of any emergencies, there are phone numbers to contact. There is a vetting process to go through in order to serve here. Judi Krueger would be happy to walk you through that process.

This is a great opportunity to serve God and our community in a very concrete way. If God is leading you to serve in such a capacity, please let myself or Judi know.

In Jesus' Name,  
*Pastor Ted*