

Newsletter October 2025

Administrators' Message

As Thanksgiving approaches, our hearts are filled with gratitude for the many blessings we share at Good Shepherd. This season invites us to pause, reflect, and give thanks for God's abundant goodness in our lives.



We are deeply grateful for our school community. The encouragement, generosity, and involvement of our families continue to strengthen the faith-filled environment where our students can grow, learn, and flourish. Your presence and support are gifts we never take for granted.

We also wish to recognize the dedication of our staff. Their commitment, creativity, and care ensure that each child feels welcomed, supported, and challenged to reach their potential. Together, we are shaping a school culture that reflects both academic excellence and Gospel values.

This year, we joyfully invite you to join us for our Thanksgiving celebration on **Thursday, October 7, at 1:30 p.m. at Good Shepherd Parish**. Gathering in prayer and thanksgiving reminds us that gratitude is at the heart of our faith. Please note that there is **no school for students on Monday, October 13** in observance of the holiday.

On behalf of all of us at Good Shepherd, we wish you and your loved ones a joyful and grace-filled Thanksgiving. May your homes be filled with peace, love, and gratitude.



~Jennifer Dimas
Principal



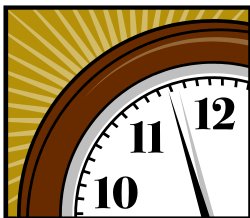
~ Beth Pecson
Assistant Principal



~Sonia Schultz
Assistant Principal



Office Hours



Our school office is open from 8:15 am to 4:00 pm. Parents who call the school after these hours are asked to leave a clear message and we will return your call as soon as we are able to.

Please remember that we will be happy to give your child or a staff member a message during the lunch break or at the end of the day. We thank you for your understanding of our wanting to protect learning time for all students and teaching time for teachers by not interrupting classes for messages.

Our School Charism: “Inspired by our Good Shepherd, Jesus, to Love, Learn and Lead.”



Like most people today, chances are you do not know any shepherds. For the first Christians, who were familiar with shepherds, the Good Shepherd was a favorite image to associate with Christ. In fact, the earliest Christian art depicts Christ as the Good Shepherd, not the crucified Savior. Often, he was portrayed as a beardless youth. Surprisingly, the image of Jesus as the Good Shepherd is still popular. In fact, early childhood education experts tell us that young children find the concept of a shepherd and his love for his sheep enchanting.

According to the Gospels, Jesus referred to himself as a shepherd. He said, “My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me” (John 10:27). A shepherd knows his sheep well. There is a personal relationship between Jesus and his followers. Jesus knows each of us by name. On the other hand, we respond to his voice and do not follow the voice of strangers who may lead us to harm. Jesus said, “I am the good shepherd. A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep” (John 10:11). Unlike a hired hand who flees to save his life, Jesus saved his flock from the wolf even though it meant sacrificing his own life.

The parable Jesus told about the lost sheep is a story about Jesus' concern and care for us sinners. He is the loving shepherd who goes to great lengths to search for his lost sheep and when he finds it, carries it back on his shoulders rejoicing.

When Jesus gave Peter the responsibility of leading his Church, he again used shepherd imagery. He told Peter, “Feed my lambs. . . Tend my sheep. . . Feed my sheep” (John 21:15-17).

Knowing about shepherds sheds light on the image of Jesus as shepherd. The shepherd uses a staff

with a hook on the end to guide the sheep and pull back the stray. Today Jesus guides his flock through bishops, who are known as *pastors*, the Latin for shepherds. Bishops carry staffs called crosiers. The shepherd has a rod to fend off wild animals that might harm the flock. Jesus saved us from evil.

Jesus restores our souls. Shepherds feed their flocks. Jesus feeds us with the excellent bread of the Eucharist and brings us to living waters: baptism and the Holy Spirit.

The image of shepherds is that they are kind, loving, patient, strong, and self-sacrificing. They are a good image for Jesus. And sheep, who can be rather stupid and foolish creatures, are a good symbol for us!

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want!

[\(https://www.loyolapress.com/catholic-resources/scripture-and-tradition/jesus-and-the-new-testament/who-do-you-say-that-i-am-names-for-jesus/the-good-shepherd/\)](https://www.loyolapress.com/catholic-resources/scripture-and-tradition/jesus-and-the-new-testament/who-do-you-say-that-i-am-names-for-jesus/the-good-shepherd/)


School Council/Parent Advisory Association


The School Council and Parent Advisory Association is off to a wonderful start this school year!

We began the first full week by stocking the staff room with supplies and treats to show our appreciation for the amazing teachers and staff. Our first event, Get the Scoop, was a hit. We loved seeing so many families come out and join the fun!

At our AGM meeting on September 24th, we re-elected Cindy Wilhelm as Chair, Shannon McLachlan as Vice Chair, and Judianne Walls as Casino Chair. We're also excited to welcome Sara Mueller as Treasurer and Samantha Tauro as Secretary. The next meeting for school council and parent advisory association will be on October 29, 2025 at 6:30 pm; please join us! All meeting minutes and documents are posted to the school website.

October is a big month for fundraising:

 Walk-a-thon Fundraiser – October 14th This is a fantastic chance to support our school. We are counting on you to help make it a success! Please be sure to return the pledge forms and monies aquired on October 14th. There are FUN prizes for each target reached, can your child collect them all?

 Casino Fundraiser – October 20th & 21st at Starlight Casino. This is one of our biggest opportunities to support our school. We are still in great need of volunteers! Please consider donating your time; it's a wonderful opportunity, and all funds raised go directly back into classrooms and resources for our students.

We thank you for your continued support, we truly couldn't do this without our amazing school



community! Stay informed and be sure to follow us on Facebook: Good Shepherd School Parents and Instagram @goodshepherd.community

Good Shepherd School Celebrates a New School Year!

On Thursday, September 11, the students and staff of the Good Shepherd School community came together to celebrate several meaningful occasions. We marked the start of a new school year, the forging of new friendships and relationships, and reaffirmed our commitment to this year's Division theme, "People of Hope." Thank you to Mrs. Pecson and Mrs. Schultz for organizing the celebration and a heartfelt thank you to all family members who joined us!



The BusPlanner Delays App

Stay up to date with your children's transportation. The BusPlanner Delays mobile app is free and easy to use. It helps mobile users view notifications more quickly and easily.

Just like the BusPlanner Web Delays & Cancellations page, the app will display:

- Delay and cancellation notices for specific routes or runs
- General notices for all subscribers.

Users can download and access the BusPlanner Delays App via the [Apple](#) or [Android](#) app stores.

For instructions on how to download the app, please access the following ECSD link:

<https://www.ecsd.net/page/34228/transportation-services-bus-delay-notifications>

Bus Payments

Just a reminder that bus pass payments need to be paid online through PowerSchool by October 5.

Current Enrollment at Good Shepherd

Currently, Good Shepherd enrollment is 618 students, which is about 50 students more than last year.

Grade	Enrollment
Kindergarten	87
Grade 1	71
Grade 2	78
Grade 3	112
Grade 4	94
Grade 5	87
Grade 6	89
Total	618

Good Shepherd Welcomes U of A Pre-Service Teachers

We are so excited to welcome two pre-service teachers from the U of A. Chelsea Philipiew will be working with Mrs. Mazer and our Kindergarten students, and Alexander Kay will be working with Mrs. Huang and our 1B students. Our mentor teachers are happy to support, mentor and to also receive additional support for their students! We wish them a very successful practicum!

After School Plans

If the after-school arrangements are going to change for your child and you do not want them to take the bus home after school, please ensure that you write a note in your child's agenda or call the school. If no note is written in the agenda or a parent has not called the school, we will send the child on the bus as is the usual arrangement. Many times, a child will tell us that they are not supposed to take the bus home because they are getting picked up, and then we cannot get hold of parents and the bus ends up leaving very late as a result while we are trying to reach parents. This ends up making every student on that route late getting home and worrying many parents.

In addition, students will not be allowed to use the office phone to arrange play dates for after school. They must make these plans with their parents beforehand.

Therefore, if there is no note or phone call, the child will be placed on the bus. The office will not be phoning parents after school to confirm if a student states that there is a change in after-school plans.

Emergency Communications

In the Edmonton Catholic School Division, the safety of our students is always our first priority and students are well supervised when they are on school property. When situations occur that warrant emergency procedures to ensure the safety of all students, we will provide parents with accurate and up to date information. One way to keep parents informed about an emergency and the safety procedures that have been put into place is by posting the information on the school website. Information will be posted and updated as required when a school is experiencing an emergency. We also need to keep phone lines available at the school during an emergency, so we ask that you do not call the school. This will enable the staff at the school to keep in touch with emergency providers and Division personnel. Thank you for your support and help in ensuring our students remain safe.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of a potentially dangerous situation, we have a Crisis Management Plan in place. Depending on the type of potential emergency, there are three possible responses. On Alert is called when it is important that hallways are clear for a medical emergency or there is an external threat. Students do not leave the building but all classroom and school activities continue as usual. Lockdown is called when there is an immediate threat to the occupants of the building. Evacuation

would occur if there is a fire or other danger to safety within the building. If students would need to be outside the building for a length of time, they would proceed to S. Bruce Smith School. We practice our procedures for Lockdown and Evacuation through the school year so the students are well prepared in the event of an emergency.

Halloween Activities at Good Shepherd

The afternoon of October 31 will be full of Halloween fun for students at Good Shepherd Catholic School. While we want to provide the fun and enjoyment that Halloween offers, we ask that students/parents please follow the guidelines below.

- Cultural appropriation should not be reflected in costumes.
- Costumes should be simple and comfortable (students should be able to comfortably participate in all learning engagements).
- Because classroom space is limited, especially during our classroom-to-classroom parade, **please avoid inflatable or awkwardly large costumes**. Once a time for our costume parade has been established, it will be communicated to parents/guardians.
- Costumes must allow for handwashing and hand sanitizing; therefore, no hand coverings.
- Students are not to bring costume accessories that are weapons to school.
- The only snacks that will be shared are healthy snacks that the teacher has organized with parents. Please do not send any food with your child unless the arrangement has been made with the homeroom teacher.
- If it is easier for your child and family, students can dress in orange and black or in a Halloween shirt.

Thank you, in advance, for your cooperation in following these guidelines. We are confident that our students will have an enjoyable time celebrating Halloween at school on October 31. Happy Halloween!



Read In Week 2025 ~ October 6-10

Theme: Books to Bytes

Celebrating how reading takes many forms—from traditional books to digital tools—and how technology fuels our learning.

Daily Activities During the Week

Monday, October 6- Read In Launch

- 9:15 AM: Live Read-Aloud with Mrs. Dimas
- Kick-Off: Reading Superstars Program during morning announcements

- Reading Strips: Students can take home reading strips (some classes have already started)

Tuesday, October 7 – Reading Buddies Day

- Pair up with your buddy class
- Split into groups and read together—either physical books or on Epic

Wednesday, October 8 – Go Digital

- Listen to an online read-aloud with subtitles
- Explore how technology enhances reading

Thursday, October 9 – Read-A-Shirt Day

- Wear shirts with words or phrases to promote reading
- A fun way to 'read what you wear'!

Friday, October 10 – Teacher Exchange

- Teachers swap classrooms with grade partners to do a read-aloud
- Coordinate with your grade partner(s) to schedule your time

Ongoing All Week

Daily DEAR (Drop Everything and Read) Time

- Will not be announced school-wide, but rather implemented at an appropriate time that works for each teacher daily
- Guest readers will be visiting various homerooms.
- Students will receive a bookmark of their House group (based on the Seven Sacred Grandfather Teachings)

A special thanks to Ms. Dunsmore and Mrs. McCoy for their work in organizing the entire event at our school.

Custodian Appreciation Day ~ October 2

This year, Custodian Appreciation Day falls on Thursday, October 2. We want to express our heartfelt thanks to our dedicated custodians, Mr. Gary Gray and Mr. Ronald Arenas, for everything they've done to keep our environment safe, happy, and healthy. Their hard work ensures our school always looks its best!

World Teachers' Day ~ October 5

Teachers are some of the most important members of any country's society. According to UNESCO, teachers help to educate global citizens, and so they are global leaders. Thus, teachers have earned an international day called World Teachers Day during which their efforts are recognized and applauded, and during which they can work together to further educate themselves and others.

Teachers have what is most certainly one of the most difficult professions of any available. On any given day, a teacher is expected not only to educate at least twenty – more often 25-35, and even more in developing countries – children in one classroom, but also do it with limited resources.



Teachers often face the challenge of educating average, gifted, and special needs students in the same classroom using versions of pre-approved methods. Some of their students may not speak the language most common to their country. Others may come from fractured or abusive homes. The increase in high-stakes testing around the world also means teachers face even more pressure than is already inherent in their jobs, to get the children in their care through classes and on to the next course or grade.

In order to raise awareness of these and other issues, and to show appreciation to teachers, we have World Teachers Day. This day was first created by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Foundation (UNESCO) in 1966 and remains a holiday today, celebrated every year on October 5th.

This is a wonderful time for us to pause and be thankful that we have a sustainable, high quality educational system and to thank our teachers for living out their vocation to Catholic education. Their commitment to our children is so important to building their futures, and to building a strong society.

Thank you to our teachers, support staff and custodial staff for their commitment and excellent work in building a better future for all!



Terry Fox Run

Terry Fox often reminded us that it would be young people who would carry on his dream of working toward a world without cancer. Each year, millions of students across Canada participate in the Terry Fox School Run, raising vital funds for cancer research. It has become one of the largest fundraising events in Canadian history and a powerful display of unity and hope.

This year, Good Shepherd proudly joined more than 9,000 schools across the country in celebrating the 45th anniversary of Terry's Marathon of Hope. Thanks to your generosity and support, our school raised just over \$757.25 for this important cause!

We were also honoured to welcome Terry Fox ambassador Brianna, who shared with our entire school community more about Terry's life and the legacy of his Run. As we walked and ran together, we remembered Terry's incredible message and example of courage, strength, perseverance, hope, and compassion.







Student Water Bottles

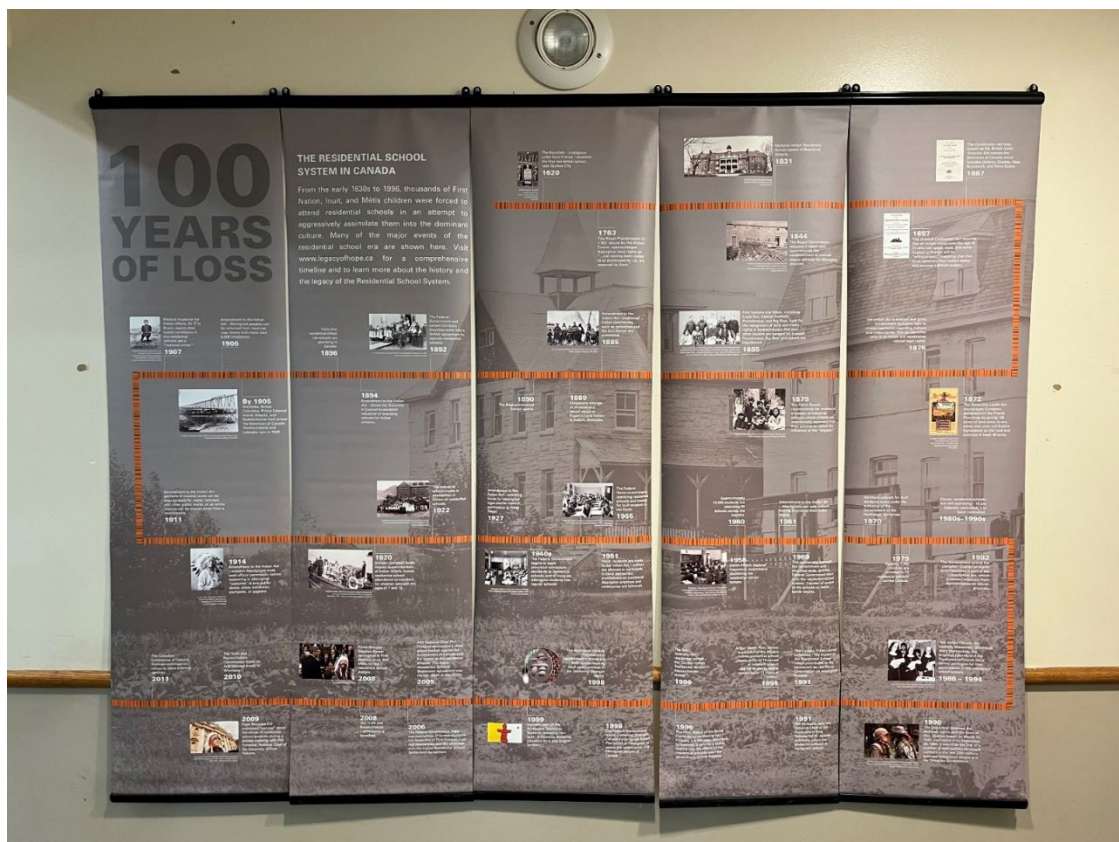
It is extremely important that children stay hydrated throughout the day, and it is for this reason that water bottle filling stations were installed at our school site. All students are strongly encouraged to bring a water bottle to school each and every day.

For hygiene purposes, water bottles should be brought home at the end of every single day and washed out. Water bottles will become moldy if left at school, and children can become very sick from drinking water from a moldy bottle. **Please remind your child to bring his/her water bottle home each and every day.**

Orange Shirt Day

This year, September 30 marked the third annual National Day for Truth and Reconciliation — an annual commemoration honouring the children who died while attending residential schools and the survivors, families and communities still affected by the legacy of the residential school system. September 30 was chosen as the date to commemorate what occurred because it falls during the time of year when Indigenous children were taken away from their homes and brought to residential schools.

Since September 30 was a holiday, all Catholic schools in the Division commemorated Orange Shirt/Truth and Reconciliation Day on Monday, September 29. It was so wonderful to walk into each classroom and see a sea of orange fill almost every little seat. During this time period, classes participated in events to commemorate Truth and Reconciliation Week and Orange Shirt Day.





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Running Team News

Over 100 of our Running Team members participated in the Edmonton Catholic Schools 34th Annual Cross-Country Run at Rundle Park on Monday, September 22 and competed against students from 30 other elementary schools in our division. Students 8 years and younger ran for 1.2 km and students 9 years and older ran for 2 km. Our Running Team members trained every morning for almost 2 weeks before the race in order to prepare for the event. They did extremely well and we are proud of each of our runners! A special thank you to our running team coaches, Mrs. Odediran, Mr. Korcaba and Mrs. Deering for all of their work in running early morning practices. Of course, a huge thank you goes out to our parent volunteers who assisted our coaches during the run! We are also very appreciative of all of our parents who came out to cheer our team on. There were many!





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Chief Superintendent Message

As September ends, Chief Superintendent Lynnette Anderson reflects on ECSD's growth and service. Visit ecsd.net/August-September-2025-Message to read the Chief Superintendent's September/October Message.

**WE NEED
VOLUNTEERS!**
Help make our
Book Fair the best ever!

Good Shepherd Book Fair

We are excited to let you know that the Scholastic Book Fair will be back from November 24th to November 28th. During this week, the students will come in and preview or purchase a selection of books and merchandise for sale. The actual sale

of books and merchandise for our families will be during our student-led conferences on Thursday, November 27th. What a wonderful opportunity to promote your child's reading journey by coming out and supporting this important literary event here at Good Shepherd! We invite your entire family to come out and purchase the latest children's books and build your own home library. Your support of this important literary event is key to helping us obtain new books and resources for our library and classrooms. With every purchase at the book fair, our school earns scholastic reward dollars which can be used to purchase much needed resources.

To help make this event great, parent volunteers are needed for the following:

Inspired by our Good Shepherd, Jesus, to Love, Learn and Lead.

- Setting up the fair
- Decorating
- Helping shoppers
- Checking out
- Packing up the fair
- And more!

If you are interested in helping with this exciting event, please contact Erin Strelkov, our Good Shepherd media resources personnel, at erin.strelkov@ecsd.net.

Do not forget to mark the Book Fair dates on your calendar! We look forward to seeing you at our Scholastic Book Fair and thank you in advance for supporting this great literary fundraiser. Most importantly, thank you for believing in the importance of reading!

A Bite of Health

As an APPLE school, we strive to build a healthy school community focusing on improving students' mental health, physical activity, and eating habits for life.

Say What?

This month, students are learning the importance of using respectful language when discussing health through a monthly campaign called *Say What?* Here is a summary of the learnings.

Why use inclusive language?

Everyone's mental, physical, and nutritional health needs are different, and we need to be respectful with how we talk to them about their health. Using rude or hurtful words can impact how others feel about their health and themselves, but we can combat that by using positive language. Using positive language about health can create a safe environment for students to practice their health habits.



Why inclusive language matters.

1 in 3 Canadian youth are bullied. Bullying can lead to depression, anxiousness, irritability and other serious consequences.¹ But practising inclusive language when it comes to health helps mitigate the use of harmful phrases and comments which may harm children.

How you can practice this at home	Examples
Comment on someone's process (how they played), rather than the outcome (whether they won or lost).	"Your catching skills are really improving, that's great!"
Use positive language when you are talking about your own body. This sets a positive example for your children.	"Not very many people have red hair like I do. That's one thing that makes me feel special."
Describe foods by the texture, colour, flavour or nutrients rather than using labels like "healthy" and "unhealthy" or "good" and "bad."	"Wow, all the vegetables in this pasta make it so colourful, it's like a rainbow!" "Apples have lots of fibre which help digest our food."
Share strategies you use when you feel down. This will help your child develop healthy strategies themselves.	"I like to talk to my friends when I am sad. They always listen to me."

References: ¹*Bullying*. (2021, February 18). British Columbia. <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/erase/bullying>



Good Shepherd Catholic Church

18407-60 Ave. NW

CWL Fall Fair & Market

Saturday, October 25, 2025; 2:00—6:00pm

Sunday, October 26, 2025; 9:00am—2:00pm

Great Selection of Vendors, Food Sales, Baking, Crafts,

Silent Auction, Sister Maureen Draws, CWL Raffle

Hot Dogs and Chips on Saturday

KofC Pancake Breakfast on Sunday after 9:00am & 11:00am mass

Sponsored by the Catholic Women's League

Frozen Food Sales

Perogies,

Sausage

Crafts



Baking



Vendors

