



# Shepherd's Call

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

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Dear siblings in Christ,

Growing up on Kauai, there were a variety of beaches that I enjoyed visiting. Some because of the waves, others because of the wildlife, and others because of the views. But one of my favorite beaches actually had none of the normal allures of a Hawaiian beach. There were no picturesque mountain views, the beach was near a landfill, so it wasn't safe to swim in, and it didn't even have the traditional white sand. So why did I love going to this beach? I loved it because it was a powerful reminder of what God can do.

The beach is called Glass Beach. It received this name because its shores are covered with small, smooth glass pebbles rather than sand. The local landfill, which is up current of the beach, is also a popular illegal dumping ground and some of the trash ends up in the ocean. While this is, of course, problematic, something amazing has also come of it. The glass that is dumped in the ocean is battered around by the current, until all that is left are smooth glass pebbles. These pebbles are then carried by the current until they wash up on Glass Beach.



This beach is a wonderful reminder of the amazing things that God can do – even with things that we consider trash and have thrown away. In God's hands, even trash can be transformed into something beautiful. But this transformation process is not a gentle one. The glass is broken and ground down until all the sharp edges are worn smooth. If the glass could talk, I imagine it would describe a traumatic process as it journeyed to Glass Beach. And yet that process was necessary for the transformation to occur. We all experience change throughout our lives. Sometimes the change is welcome and sometimes it turns our world upside down. But change in some form is inescapable – it is how we grow and mature as people and as a church.

I know that currently Good Shepherd is in the midst of change and it is scary not knowing what your ministry may look like in the future. In times of uncertainty it is tempting to try and recreate what we already know – to pick the path that will bring us closest to the way things were. But I want to encourage you to take advantage of this moment. Lean into the change (even if that means changing worship times) and be open to the new ways that God can transform your ministry. You might be surprised at the amazing things that God can do.

I know this is difficult and takes an immense amount of trust. So, if during this time of experimentation, you find yourself wondering why things can't go back to the way they were or why Good Shepherd has to change, I want you to remember Glass Beach. Rather than focusing on the way things are changing, focus on what can happen because of those changes. Just like in the waters of Kauai, God is at work in Good Shepherd and amazing things are happening. I look forward to seeing what God creates through you.

Yours in Christ, Pastor Christine