



# St. Luke's Episcopal Church DECEMBER 2016 Newsletter

*From Fr. Tim*

*Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. -- Mark 1:3*

Dear brothers and sisters,

One of the fascinating pieces I have picked up since beginning our Advent book study is that humans are inherently incapable of walking in a straight line. It seems we have a more natural tendency to drift, if not twist and turn, as we make our way.

Magrey deVega, in his book, *Awaiting the Already*, describes one study where subjects were blindfolded and then asked to walk for an hour in a straight line. No matter how hard they tried, no matter how carefully they walked, not a one of the subjects was able to move in a linear manner. Instead, they all were observed *going into these strange loop-de-loops in either direction. Apparently, "the researcher concluded, "there's a profound inability for humans to go straight."* And to be clear, this includes humans of all ages, not just young children as they go speeding through life, tugging at the hand of a parent.

I wonder if St. Mark was aware of this reality when he began his gospel with the following order: *"Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."*(Mark 1:3) It's an interesting command, to be featured so prominently, don't you think?

Whatever the challenges were in Mark's time, I am mindful of all the distractions, diversions, and demands we face in our time, especially as we prepare to celebrate Jesus' birth. We can hardly make a straight path while walking through the store aisles, shopping for presents, or meandering through rows of pines, looking for that perfect tree to decorate in our homes. And that's just to name two of the most common pre-Christmas tasks.

There's also the struggles, I think, to make a straight path not only with our feet but with our hearts and minds, as well. I imagine I am not the only one whose thoughts are racing from work to family to politics to "what's for dinner?" And as my thoughts zig and zag, I find my heart rate-ebbing and flowing, cycling through the myriad of pre-Christmas emotions which can range from calm to anxious, hopeful to disappointed, joyful to sad. Quite obviously, there is no easy path from Advent to Christmas.

But in the research regarding our walking challenges, there is good counsel for these Advent challenges. The one way, researchers have found, that we can walk in a straight line is by focusing on something ahead of us-- a tree on the horizon, a building on the cityscape, or maybe even a baby lying in a manger.

Imagine if, as we made our way through these next few weeks, attempting to navigate a path with countless side-distractions, doing the loop-de-loops of our pre-Christmas tasks, imagine if we could somehow keep our eyes and hearts focused on Jesus?

Imagine if, every time we set out for one errand or another, we simply prayed, "Lord, be with me." Imagine if, every time we found ourselves racing to complete one task or another we prayed, "Lord, calm me." Imagine if, every time we thought of others-- whether they be loved ones or individuals who were challenging-- we prayed, "Lord, love them." And imagine if, every time we felt our hearts quicken, whether that be with joys or struggles, we prayed, "Lord, bless me." Imagine how that might change the way we journey from Advent to Christmas.

My guess is that the distractions would seem less enticing. My guess is that some of the tasks would seem less obligatory. My guess is that whatever we did do, would feel richer, more sacred than profane. My guess is whatever emotions ran through our hearts, they would do so gentled by God's grace.

My guess is that, at the very least, we would find ourselves more prepared in "the way of the Lord." And, when we arrived at Christmas, my guess is that we just might look back and discover that our path, although still not perfectly straight, was at least filled with love.

It's worth a try, don't you think?

This Advent, may God bless us as we prepare, and may Jesus guide us as we make our ways along the paths we travel.

Advent blessings,

Tim

# HOLIDAY CALENDAR



## CHRISTMAS 2016



### Sunday, December 18

7:45 am Holy Eucharist

10:15 am Holy Eucharist

11:30 am **GREENING OF THE CHURCH**

All are welcome!

4:00 pm **CHRISTMAS CONCERT**

### Monday, December 19

5:00 pm Christ Community Kitchen Dinner

### Saturday, December 24 CHRISTMAS EVE

4:00 pm **Holy Eucharist with Children's Homily**

"Christmas in Scripture, Story & Song"  
featuring our St. Cecilia Choir, organ,  
piano & trumpet

7:00 pm **Holy Eucharist, Homily & Hymns**

featuring our St. Cecilia Alumni  
with organ & piano

10:30 pm **Musical Prelude**

11:00 pm **Holy Eucharist** featuring our  
Canterbury Choir, organ, piano & harp

### Sunday, December 25 CHRISTMAS DAY

10:15 am Holy Eucharist, Homily & Hymns

### Sunday, January 1, 2017 ONLY ONE SERVICE

10:15 am Festival of Lessons & Carols

### Sunday, January 8

7:45 am Holy Eucharist

10:15 am Epiphany Pageant

## **Dorcas International in Rhode Island**

At the November Vestry meeting, there was discussion about an agency to support this Christmas season. A suggestion was made for Dorcas International. I knew a little about Dorcas because the Deacons of RI last year-collected donations of toiletries and items to help people when they first arrive in RI. St. Luke's is collecting baby diapers and paper towels to donate to Dorcas International this year. Help us, help the refugees. Thank you, Christine DIF

Highlights from this year:

Dorcas served over 450 refugees from troubled regions all over the world including Bhutan, Burma, Burundi, Central African Republic, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Haiti, Iran, Iraq, Laos, Liberia, Rwanda, Somalia, Togo, and the Ukraine.

The Citizenship & Immigration Services is one of only two non-sectarian programs in the state accredited by the Bureau of Immigration Appeals (BIA), a branch of the federal government. Seven accredited caseworkers and a staff attorney are trained to handle immigration matters such as citizenship, petitions for relatives, green card applications, asylum applications, deportation defense, and temporary protected status.

Programs they provide are: Project Citizenship clinics, Job Placement Resources, Refugee Resettlement, Family Literacy

**Refugee Resettlement:** Marie arrived from the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2010 speaking seven languages but no English. After mastering her English at DIIRI she then moved to get her GED. Today she is enrolled at Community College of RI working towards a career in healthcare.

**High School Equivalency / College Readiness:** Sidy Maiga never imagined going back to school. As a child growing up in Mali, he said, school was tough. All he wanted to do was play music, and at school that wasn't possible. So as a teen, he dropped out to pursue his passion for percussion. But Sidy isn't a boy anymore. And he came to realize that to achieve his dreams--he needed to conquer his fear of school. This fall he starts a bachelors degree program at Berklee College of Music.

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## **DORCAS REFUGEE MINISTRY– How you can help**

The Refugee Ministry continues to help Dorcas and the refugees they serve. Eric Holmstedt has been working with Christ Church in collecting furniture and helping to transport it to Dorcas. Leila O'Connell and Peggy Rubel are handing clothes and small donations.

For specific information about the needs and people to contact, see the bi-fold on the track rack

**Diocese of Rhode Island  
Episcopal Charities**

The Bishop John S. Higgins Award  
November 5, 2016

*Congratulations Bill!*

**William R. McClintick**

Bill, you have been a member of St. Luke's Church in East Greenwich since 1958. Three times Vestry member, and Deputy to the Episcopal Church General Convention, you shared your leadership with the Diocese and wider Church following a distinguished career in the U. S. Navy. You were called by Bishop Higgins to be his "right hand man." In addition, you were appointed Director of Episcopal Charities in 1970.

As Director of this fledgling organization you brought about significant growth and a number of improvements in its work. Charities became more of a grass roots organization, the Board was strengthened as a decision making group, and parishes became actively involved in a general, broad based campaign. In 1972 when Bishop Belden brought a new style of leadership to the Diocese, his pastoral outlook further encouraged parish participation. At the 1974 Convention of the Diocese, with your leadership, a statement of Charities Mission, Goals and Objectives was adopted.

As Charities matured you assisted in the establishment of Amos House and represented the Diocese on its Board in developing programs for the homeless and underprivileged. During these years the volunteer base of Charities was widened and you initiated volunteer visits to agencies applying for assistance to provide firsthand knowledge of needs. An orientation program for clergy new to the Diocese was begun to further enable a broadened ownership of what Charities is and does.

All of these accomplishments were made during a changing and turbulent era in Rhode Island and for the Diocese. Now in your 97<sup>th</sup> year we view it high time to recognize you for your long and very special work in building Episcopal Charities as a significant outreach effort of our Diocese. Because of this special commitment we hereby grant you the Bishop John S. Higgins Award for your very special contributions and offer our grateful thanks.

The Rt. Rev. Nicholas Knisely  
Bishop



## **Join the J2A missionaries during coffee hour to learn more about the work they do in the DR.**

**When:** Sunday, December 11th in between services and after the 10:00 service!

**Where:** In the front foyer after the 7:45 am service & Upstairs at Coffee Hour after the 10:15 am service

**What:** We will unveil the newly constructed Dominican house fundraising effort! Parishioners can participate in the hands-on "Cinder Block Challenge" & other interactive stations. Kids and adults can try their hand at construction while learning about the service work our St. Luke's teens complete.

**Bring:** Your open, curious hearts and your wallet or checkbook! Kids are encouraged to interact with the teens, ask questions, and participate! This is a not-to-be-missed event! The J2A kids are excited to interact with their community and to shine a little light for their younger friends!



Our Giving Tree provides an opportunity for each of us to make Christmas a little more special for a family, a child, an elderly person. These gifts will make a big difference whether it is a warm coat, shoes, diapers, a much wanted toy or a gift card for food.

Please wrap your gifts, attach the tag and return to the church by next Sunday, December, 11th. Thank you for helping spread the spirit and love of Christmas!!!!

We make a living by what we get.

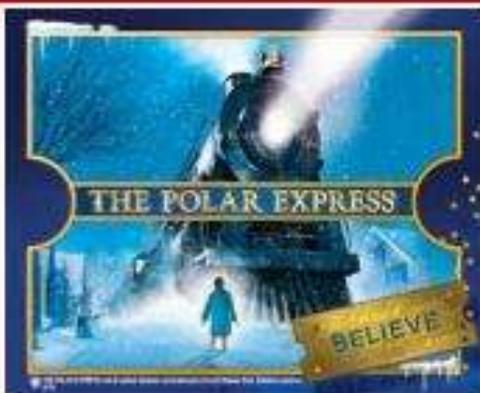
We make a life by what we give"

*Winston Churchill*



## HOLIDAY CHRISTMAS MOVIES AT THE ODEUM

ALL PROCEEDS WILL BE DONATED TO THE  
MOBILE LOAVES AND FISHERS MINISTRY.



Last weekend, Dana Sparhawk gave his "Minute Ministry" witness at our services. Kevin Muoio, a parishioner, was so inspired by his witness, he has offered to donate all proceeds from the Odeum's upcoming Holiday movie series, to the Mobile Loaves & Fishes Ministry.

A Christmas Story - December 9th (8pm)  
It's a Wonderful Life - December 16th (8pm)  
The Polar Express - December 17th (2pm  
matinee)

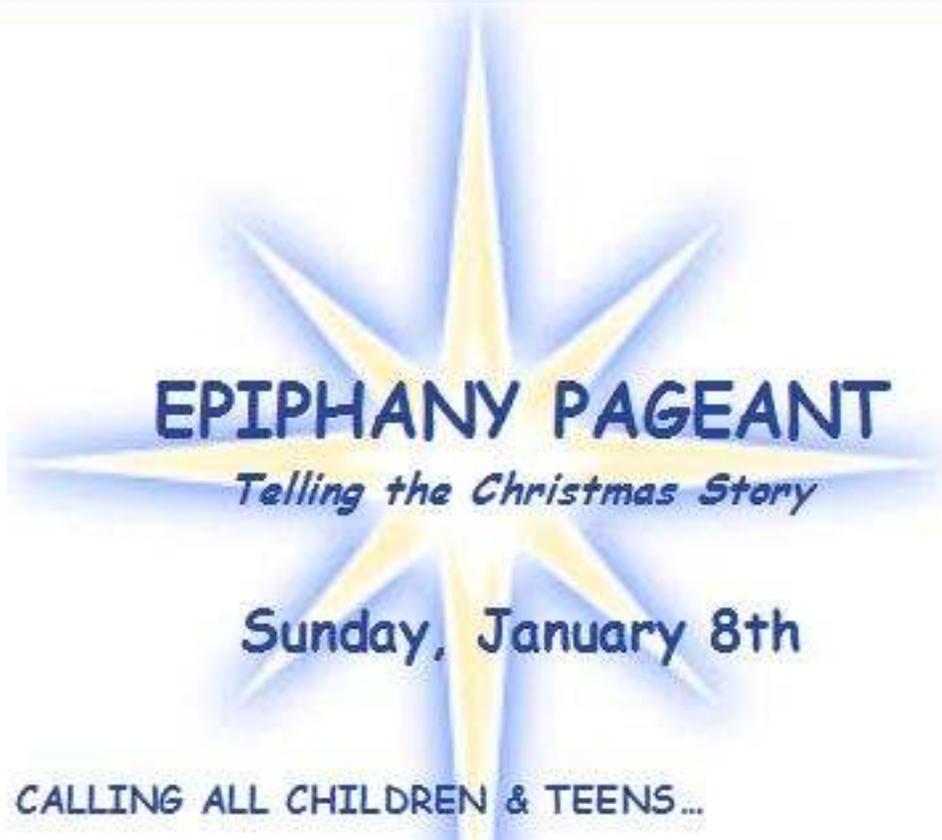


Tickets are \$5  
and proceeds  
will benefit Mobile Loaves and Fishes.

**Thank you Kevin!**

Show your support and enjoy a Holiday  
classic with your family or friends in  
downtown East Greenwich.





# EPIPHANY PAGEANT

*Telling the Christmas Story*

**Sunday, January 8th**

## **CALLING ALL CHILDREN & TEENS...**

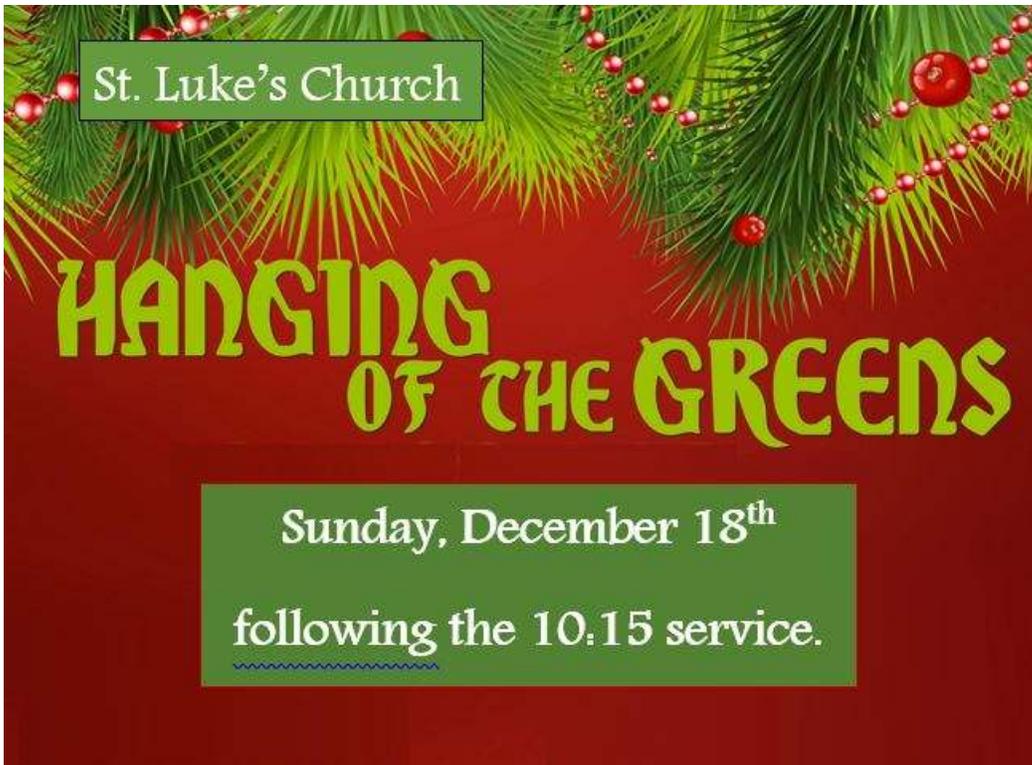
The youth of St. Luke's, from pre-school through High School are welcomed and encouraged to be part of this year's Epiphany Pageant, the telling of the Christmas Story.

**Costumes are provided and there are no lines to memorize!**

It is a wonderful opportunity for your child to participate in the Christmas Story and to share this beautiful story with our congregation.

**The only rehearsal is on Saturday, January 7th from 10 am—noon.**

Interested? Please see or email Rodney Ayers at [Rodney@stlukeseg.org](mailto:Rodney@stlukeseg.org) or Theresa Deiters-Muscat at [Theresa@stlukeseg.org](mailto:Theresa@stlukeseg.org)



## Treasurer's Update

Expenses year to date continue to trend under budget.

With gratitude, Income is almost at budget.

	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Var %
<b>Loose Plate</b>	\$27,063	\$29,170	-7.2
<b>Pledge Income</b>	\$381,245	\$387,926	-1.7

<b>Total Income</b>	\$465,992	\$476,180	-2.1
<b>Total Expenses</b>	\$457,638	\$483,032	-5.3
<b>YTD Net Position</b>	\$8,354	-\$6,852	\$15,206

# A JOYFUL CHRISTMAS CONCERT



*featuring*

The St. Cecilia and Canterbury  
Choirs, The Three Amigos and  
The Jubilate Ringers

Sunday, December 18  
at 4 PM

*Festive music for the holiday season with a  
Cookie Reception Following!*

St. Luke's Episcopal Church ~ 99 Peirce Street  
East Greenwich



## Property



This month's Property Breakfast will be on Thursday, December 15<sup>th</sup>. Last month we cleaned up lots of leaves and trimmed around the area. This month we will be getting in shape for the holidays, both inside and outside. Our thanks to Cindi Lovejoy for the special breakfast she cooks.

What a treat!

Please continue to let us know about things needing our attention. We hope to see you on the 15<sup>th</sup>.

Sandy and Peggy Rubel

## BOXSPRINGS & MATTRESSES



Imagine, you lost everything in a fire, flood, divorce or trying to escape an abusive home with your children and have nothing. The Christ Church Furniture Exchange in East Greenwich picks up donations from homes, stores them in a warehouse until someone reaches out for help.

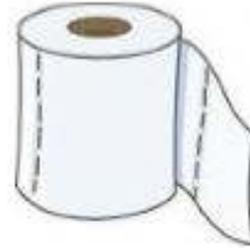
Right now, they are in specific need of box springs and mattresses (except king size). Please be sure there are no rips, tears or stains. You can contact Trudy at Christ Church by email (it's the best way to reach her) [trudyjohn42@verizon.net](mailto:trudyjohn42@verizon.net).

They are always accepting furniture donations but low in box spring and mattresses. Recycle your unused furniture for a great cause today!

**ANNOUNCING A NEW  
"COVER THEIR BOTTOMS FOR CHRISTMAS CAMPAIGN"  
FOR NEW REFUGEE FAMILIES IN RHODE ISLAND.**

St. Luke's has just been asked by Dorcas/International Institute of Rhode Island (DIIRI) to provide badly needed supplies of toilet paper and baby diapers for the fifty new refugee families in Rhode Island during the Christmas holiday period, December 20-January 10.

Dorcas has given a clever name to this campaign:  
"COVER THEIR BOTTOMS FOR CHRISTMAS"!



Dorcas has asked if we can provide, by December 15th:

100 "6 packs" or "12 packs" of toilet paper and

150 "12 packs" or "20 packs" of diapers for newborns and babies up to 18 months of age.

We hope that St. Luke's members and families will participate generously in this effort.

Details will be announced shortly as to the deposit place (the Atrium?) for donations of diapers and toilet paper.

In the mean time, please feel free to make suggestions (and donations as well) to the office, to Eric Holmstedt, or to members of the Refugee Assistance team at St. Luke's.

Thanks.





## Mobile Loaves in December: A Lovely Way to Give Back

We know this is a busy, busy time. But it's also a time where many of us are looking for a greater meaning to all the holiday shopping, eating and sparkle. Since this month our regular MLF run would be Christmas Eve, **we have decided to do an abbreviated run on Friday, Dec. 23**, instead and we'd love to have you join us!

We will bag up food ahead of time and give out only socks, hats and gloves. We also would like to give every guest a \$5 Dunkin' Donuts gift card. If you would like to contribute a gift card or two, please put them in an envelope marked "Dec. MLF" and leave with Barbara in the office, or give to Elizabeth McNamara or Liz Crawley directly.

The sign up for the run will go out mid-month. If you would like to be added to the Signup Genius email list, send an email to [emac6660@gmail.com](mailto:emac6660@gmail.com).

Thank you!



## Women of Grace, December Edition

This month, we are gathering at Kathy O'Leary's ([125 Granite Drive, East Greenwich](#). Park in driveway or on street), on Wednesday, Dec. 14, at 7 p.m.

Women of Grace is open to all women of St. Luke's (*and friends!*). The first half hour is spent socializing, then we take up a chosen topic for about an hour (stay tuned, the topic will be announced soon), and we end with a closing prayer. Everyone is out by 9.

If you are able to come or just want more info, contact either Liz Crawley at [lcrawley53@gmail.com](mailto:lcrawley53@gmail.com) or Elizabeth McNamara at [emac6660@gmail.com](mailto:emac6660@gmail.com) or [401-749-3115](tel:401-749-3115).

And, if you are interesting in hosting a future WofG, or have a topic idea or two, please let us know!

# Christmas Flower & Music Memorials



Given by \_\_\_\_\_

Please PRINT name(s) to *be remembered*:

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Names must be submitted to the office on or before **December 21st**. Checks should be made payable to St. Luke's Church, indicating "**Flower OR Music Memorials.**" If you would like both, please specify how much for each.

Suggested donation for flowers is \$10 per name.

Email requests to [barbara@stlukeseg.org](mailto:barbara@stlukeseg.org). Drop checks in the Sunday offertory, bring by the office or drop in the mail to 99 Peirce St, East Green-





St. Luke's Episcopal Church  
99 Peirce Street  
East Greenwich, RI 02818

*St. Luke's Episcopal Church*  
*December 2016 Newsletter*

A festive graphic with a dark red background. The top right corner features a decorative border of green pine needles and red berries. A small green box in the top left corner contains the text 'St Luke's Church'. The main title 'HANGING OF THE GREENS' is written in large, bold, yellow-green letters. Below the title, a green box contains the text 'Sunday, December 18th' and 'following the 10.15 service.'

St Luke's Church

**HANGING  
OF THE GREENS**

Sunday, December 18<sup>th</sup>  
following the 10.15 service.