

St. Luke's

St. Luke's Episcopal Church - East Greenwich, Rhode Island



MONTHLY

Thank you!

When looking back over my eleven years as your administrator, the first thing that comes to mind is THANK YOU. Thank you for the opportunity and privilege to work for you and serve your parish community. A community of young and old, single and married, divorced and widowed, wealthy and struggling, and everything in between. How many people can say they feel privileged to go to work where they do? I know I can.

It is difficult to work in a church office as busy as St. Luke's and not be filled with gratitude. To be reminded daily of why I am grateful. On any given day, I would unlock the doors, sit down at my computer and get a phone call from the chaplain at Kent Hospital, David from Hill's Funeral Home, an email from a parishioner adding a loved one to the prayer list, or a call asking for help paying rent, heat or food for their family. I have seen people losing their jobs only to find a better one, the birth of a child or grandchild, families lose those closest to them, leaning on the people in this parish through their darkest days until they can see the light again.

I have been surrounded by authentic people. People who, if I sent an email out asking for help for a family, within hours, I would have help. When the refugees needed furniture, or professional clothing... you were there. A changing table for the nursery, Christmas gifts for a late family in need, food for a parishioner who lost a loved one, helping set up for the loaves and fishes run or Christ Community Kitchen... you were always there. People who month after month, week after week, give selflessly to the community, sharing the grace and love they have been fed with at St. Luke's and passing it on to others not as fortunate to have been touched. To make one person's day just a bit brighter. St. Luke's is filled with people like that.

This is such a special place. Special not because of the beautiful building, and it is beautiful, but because of the people who fill it. Thank you.

I take with me wonderful memories. Too many to mention. I could name dozens of people who have made a lasting impression in my heart that I will take with me. However, I would be afraid that I would miss someone.

I would like to mention a few who have taught me valuable life lessons that are now ingrained in me. When I ran into Fr. Craig at the post office in 2006, I was struggling through a divorce with 2 small kids. He asked me if I would come work with him in the church office. After a few months he shared with me that he couldn't imagine finding anyone as good as Kim Wertz. He then said, and he found me.

Then when Craig left, and took his family and dogs with him, who could have imagined St. Luke's without him? Greg Prior and John Higginbotham stepped in until we found Tim and Snickers (a package deal), along with Diane and their kids. I have to say, I was never concerned because I knew St. Luke's to have strong leadership, amazing grace, and guiding faith. Now fast forward, can you imagine this place without Tim? I know I can't.

How about Priscilla. She was here forever. I know I was a little skeptical about replacing her, but Rodney!!! He is precious and loved by everyone.

Then there is Susan and Noel leaving, another blow but Theresa came in and brought in new life to the children's ministry and then Deacon Christine and Dante. It just keeps getting better and better. New blood, new ideas, strong skills.

Well, now I am leaving. I could never imagine St. Luke's without me behind the scenes every day, but Tim found Christina, and she is fabulous. You will love her as you have loved and embraced me.

Although I am looking forward to this next chapter in my life, I am sad to say good bye to my daily exchanges and life in the office at St. Luke's Church. There are no words to capture my gratitude, love and warmth I have for each and every one of you. I tell Christina often that she will never work for a better group of people. EVER.

I will return from time to time, maybe even go to church once in a while J! But until then, I will miss you all, carry you in my heart and say... THANK YOU.

I will always have
this piece of my
H E A R T
that smiles whenever
I think about St. Luke's

WILLIAMSBURG, VA

Curate's Corner

Thoughts from Fr. Dante

Over the last few weeks, I have found myself overwhelmed by the same recurring thought: I am profoundly grateful to be the Curate of St. Luke's. While this thought has regularly crossed my mind in the six months I have been here, it has never been as powerful as it has been since December 16.

As most, if not all, of you know I was ordained to the priesthood here at St. Luke's on Saturday, December 16. As I walked through the day, and in all of my reflections since, I have been filled with a sense of gratitude deeper than almost any other I have every felt. This gratitude is the direct result of the care, attention, excitement, generosity, and love that this community showered upon that day.

The moment I walked in the door, I could feel the joy and excitement in the air. It actually caused me to stop in my tracks and think how blessed I am to be part of such an amazing community. From then on, everything about the day was amazing.

The altar guild was incredibly gracious to prepare another service during a very busy time, and they carried out their ministry with the usual care and attention that they give each and every Sunday. The acolytes, ushers, and readers were flawless. Several people remarked to me how welcomed they felt to our community, and how wonderful our acolytes and readers were in their roles of liturgical leadership.

The music was unbelievable. The only word to describe everything – from the Three Amigos prelude to the choir's musical leadership to the organ postlude – is stunning. I was delighted to sneak into the choir balcony for a few minutes before the service started and be ushered into prayer by the Amigos playing "There's a sweet, sweet Spirit in this place." I was transported to the transcendent as I sat and listened to the choir's offertory anthem, "The Spirit of the Lord." Truly the Spirit of the Lord was upon us.

Then there was the reception, which was abundant and spectacular. In the weeks leading up to my ordination I was moved each time I walked passed the sign up sheet in the atrium and saw the number of people signing up to cook, bake, shop, prepare the space, and clean up.

Of course, the day could not have gone as smoothly as it did if it were not for the tremendous staff we have here at St. Luke's. The time and effort that Tim Marnane put into cleaning and caring for our space; that Theresa put into her prayer, support, and encouragement; that Rodney put into rehearsing the choir and preparing the music; that Barbara and Christina put into the administrative and coordination details of the day; that Christine, our Deacon, put into caring for the little details of the morning like setting out Eucharistic vessels that the altar guild had prepared; and that Tim, our Rector, put into guiding and caring for me through the myriad of

emotions leading up to and through my ordination, not to mention all of his work in helping prepare me to assume the trust and responsibility of my priestly ministry. I am truly blessed to be part of such an amazing team.

Thank you to each and every one of you for all your support and prayers over these last several weeks. I have never been more keenly aware of the amount of people surrounding me in prayer. I know that without each and everyone of you, without your prayers and presence, without your ministries and generosity, that day would not have been as glorious as it was. It was a gift to me to have this support embodied by Tim and Pam Dresselhouse standing as two of my presenters. While my time here at St. Luke's is limited, this community will always hold a very dear place in my heart. For that I will always be truly grateful.

Thank you for everything this community did to make my ordination happen. Thank you for calling me to be your curate. Thank you for your willingness to journey together as we strive to respond to God's call in our lives.

Christ Community Kitchen

Everyone is welcome to join us for our monthly Community Dinner in the dining room on Monday, January 29th.

More information will be available later this month.

A Christmas Message from Bishop Knisely

Some years I find myself in the Christmas spirit early in December, some years it doesn't seem to arrive for me until Christmas Eve is nearly upon us. This year it's been the latter case. I know Christmas is nearly here and for the most part I'm ready, but I'm still in an Advent frame of mind.

Perhaps it's because I've been spending our last few months following the big stories dominating the news. Stories about national health care, tax code, diplomacy, politics and so much more. It can be overwhelming. And it all feels and sounds so important. I wake up in the morning wondering what important development has taken place overnight. I find myself looking outward and not inward, looking at the big picture and not paying attention to the little things.

But if you spend time with the scriptures, you might notice that they don't seem to focus on such big stories at all - other than how they affect the people that we meet in the Bible. The focus instead is on the people and how they live with each other, how they treat one another. What the Bible seems to think is important is how two brothers get along, how willing people are to care for their neighbors, how we care for the stranger in our midst. The big stories, the accounts of the great kings and their empires mostly serve as a backdrop for the more intimate family stories that make up most of the Bible.

This all comes to the forefront when we get to the second chapter of Luke. We start with a passing mention of the greatest empire the west has ever known and quickly we find ourselves hearing not about palaces and fabulous wealth but about two people expecting a child and a small band of shepherds watching their flock in a rocky field outside a village in Palestine

St. Francis of Assisi once noted that on Christmas night, that the Universe itself was found in the small stable where the Christ Child was born and swaddled. C.S. Lewis used that observation as inspiration for placing his wondrous world of Narnia in a wardrobe found in an empty room in an old house. God seems to see things differently than we might expect. Our God who upholds the cosmos and knows all of time and space in an instant, enters our small world in the intimate moments of our daily lives.

And just as God was known in the birth of the Christ Child and for a moment contained in a small space as the child was worshiped and loved by his parents, so too we probably have our most authentic experience of the Holy when we gather together as friends and family on Christmas Day. The giving of gifts, the sharing of a meal and warmth of just

being together is, in a very homey and profound way, the truest and most intimate communion we have with the God who is Love itself.

My prayer for all of you this year is that in the coming twelve days of the Christmas Season you too will have the opportunity to experience God in the love you share with the people closest to you. May God grant you the quiet moments that will let you recognize the real presence of God - who is always with us but whom we miss because we're often looking at the wrong things.

This year let us all look at what God thinks is important, the love we share with one another.

+Nicholas

Bishop of Rhode Island

**Wishing you a Blessed Christmas
and a Happy New Year!**

Dorcas International Rhode Island Houseware Drive

Donate Items to Refugee Families

after 7:45 and 10:15 services

Sunday's January 7th & 14th

7 Families will move in January!!! Can you help??

Whenever a refugee family comes to Rhode Island they are in need of many of the basic necessities for setting up a home. Dorcas International Institute of Rhode Island help by supplying their apartments with items they need to get started in their new homes.

Items needed:

- Re-gift new clothing for adults and children
- Toiletries
- Bed & bath linens
- Dinnerware & Cookware items
- Furniture is not needed at this time

Save the date . . .



Collegium Ancora at St. Luke's on February 10 at 5 PM



Please join us on Saturday, February 10 at 5 PM for a concert by Collegium Ancora, a professional chamber choir for the Ocean State. The 24-voice ensemble is led by Founder and Artistic Director Vince Edwards, Director of Music at Grace Church in Providence. The concert will feature an exploration of madrigals, folk songs, and spirituals, including many favorites from those traditions. Rodney Ayers, St. Luke's own Minister of Music, sings tenor with the group, and is the accompanist.

Tickets are \$20 and are available at the door.

For more information, go to collegiumancora.org.

Lunch On The Hill

(St. Luke's and the East Greenwich Interfaith Food Cupboard (EGIFC))

Matthew 25:35

***I was hungry and you gave me food,
I was thirsty and you gave me drink,
I was a stranger and you welcomed me.***



Every Wednesday Lunch on the Hill provides a delicious meal and welcoming place to have lunch for up to 40 appreciative guests.

St. Luke's and Jiggers will be hosting lunch on January 10, 2018.

- **Five to six volunteers (10:00AM – 12:30PM) for setup, serving, cleanup, and greeting our guests.**
- **Home baked desserts are really appreciated, 50 desserts (Cupcakes, Brownies, etc.).**

Call Steve McLoughlin at 225-5540 or Steve Bartlett at 885-5889 or reply to this email to volunteer to work at this lunch or provide desserts.

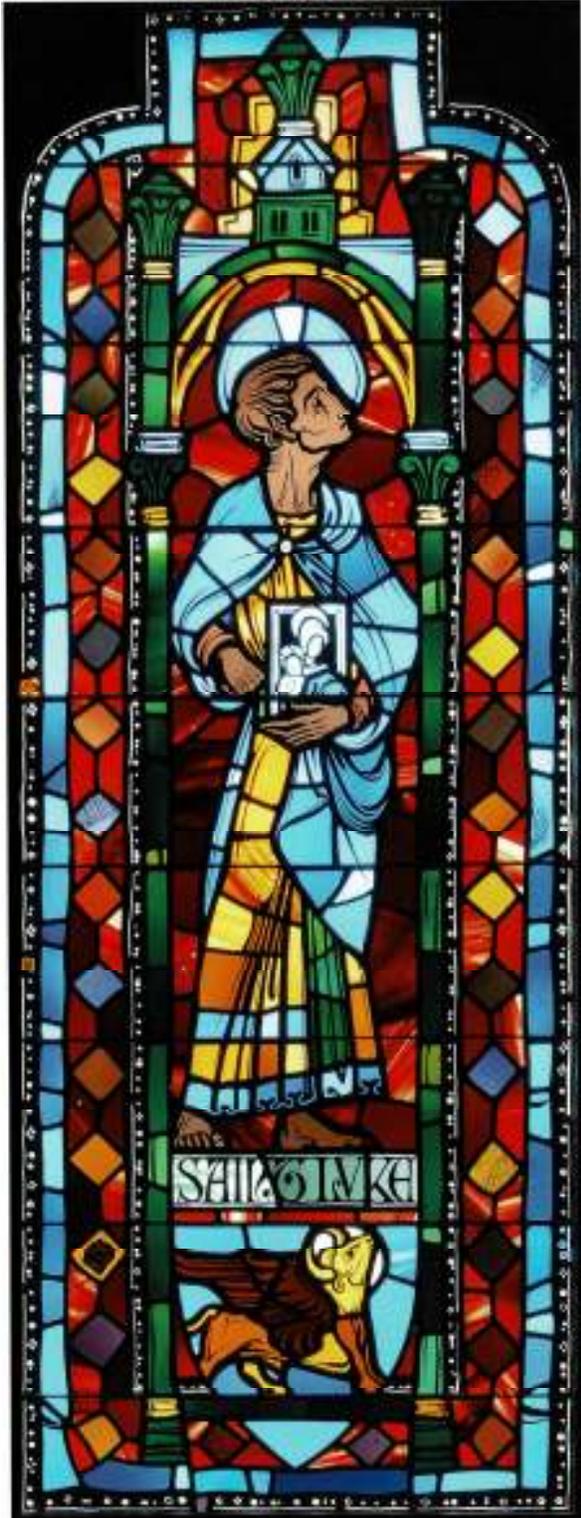
Thank you for your continued support and encouragement
Steve McLoughlin/ Steve Bartlett

Steve McLoughlin

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THE STAINED GLASS WINDOW BOOKS



The Stained Glass Window Books are finally here and available for sale. They will make great Christmas gifts. The price of the book is \$25.00 cash or check –made out to St. Luke’s Church memo line Window Book. If you would like to purchase one, please email Christina in the office @ Christina@stlukeseg.org to reserve yours today.

All proceeds will go towards the maintenance and preservation of our beautiful windows. Thanks to everyone who made this book a reality.

Shown below on this page is The Gammell-Goodhue Le Compte Window and an excerpt from the book on page 6...

“Of particular note in this window is the icon that St. Luke is holding of Mary and the baby Jesus. In the writings attributed to St. Luke, he is referred to as a physician, and accompanies St. Paul on his missionary journeys.”

January Activities and Events

January 6th

5 pm Epiphany Pageant and Potluck Parish Supper

January 7th

9 am Pancake Breakfast—DR Fundraiser in
the dining room

GET YOUR ANNUAL REPORTS IN!!

January 14 & 21

Adult Ed forum featuring Dr. Jeannine Olson
speaking about Protestant & Catholic Reformation

January 27

Loaves & Fishes run to Woonsocket

January 28

ONE SERVICE ONLY
followed by the ANNUAL MEETING

January 29

Christ Community Kitchen (CCK)