



St. Luke's Episcopal Church

Where all are welcome at the Lord's table

weekly

November 29, 2020

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Greetings!

As we enter a season of thanksgiving and gratitude, a season of giving and sharing our bounty with one another, I am reminded again of what a strange year this has been. This year has stripped away much of what was normal for many of us. Church looks different. Work and school look different. Last night my heart was broken as I turned on the news and saw lines, miles long, of people waiting for food boxes to make it through the coming week. I watched news clips of people at the airport who say they know there is risk involved but can't wait another moment to see people they love. And I was both frustrated by their carelessness and completely sympathetic to their desire to see people they desperately miss. I hate that the thing that is so deeply human - our desire to be with one another - is also the thing that is so dangerous right now. Some seasons of thanksgiving feel light and joyful, and some don't.

As people of faith, we know that there are times of consolation, where we feel the nearness of God in a deep way, and times of desolation, where we cannot seem to connect with God. We know that there are times of abundance and times of scarcity. We know there are times of joy and times of sorrow. And we know that whether we can feel it or not, whether there is much or little, whether we are joyful or sorrowful, God is always present, always with us, that we are never abandoned.

I am reminded of the story of the exodus of the people of Israel. God frees the Israelites from their captivity by Pharaoh in Egypt. But in his hot rage, Pharaoh pursues them, seeking to destroy them. They rush to escape, and they come to the edge of the Red Sea, where they feel trapped. But God hears the Israelites in their fear, and he tells Moses to raise his staff and stretch his hand over the water. As Moses obeys, the sea is parted and the Israelites cross safely to the other side. In the meantime, Pharaoh's armies pursue them, but they are too late, and when the Israelites have all crossed, the sea closes up on the Egyptians. The Israelites are

relieved, and there is much rejoicing, but they soon find their journey has just begun.

Stay Connected



Following their miraculous release from captivity, they find themselves wandering in the desert, seeking the Promised Land. The Israelites begin to grumble and complain almost immediately. And honestly, I know that's a sign of their lack of faith, but I find it so relatable. God has done this amazing thing for them, provided for their very freedom, and by day three they are annoyed. But it in the midst of their wandering, and despite their grumbling, God provides for them. When they are thirsty, God provides water in the midst of the dry desert. When they hunger, God rains down manna for them to eat, literally showering them with bread. The desert is inhospitable. It is brutal at times. But in the midst of the most challenging of circumstances, God reminds the Israelites that he is with them. When everything else is stripped away, the goodness of God becomes crystal clear.

As we enter a season of gratitude and thanksgiving, perhaps this year has clarified those things that are truly most important for us. In the midst of a year that has been dry and stripped of the usual ornamentation that makes it vibrant, a year that has been brutal at times, we have been reminded that God is still with us. Though I have only been at St. Luke's since August, my 5:40 wakeups on Sunday mornings had become an anchor for me. I looked forward to seeing the masked faces of the beloved saints of our church. Perhaps I'm not the only one missing an anchor right now. Even in the desert, though, God is in our very midst. When we are in the desert we are acutely aware of the blessings that God provides us, it is those blessings that sustain us and keep us journeying on, knowing that we are never abandoned, knowing that the one thing that never changes is that God has called us beloved.

I wish you joy and peace as we share Thanksgiving, as we look forward with hope and expectation to the Promised Land, as we make this journey through the desert together.

May the peace of Christ be with you all,
Mother Tanya

This Sunday at St. Luke's

The First Sunday of Advent

Click above for the lessons

Streaming Service of Morning Prayer.

Watch our worship service this weekend on [Facebook](#) or on [YouTube](#).

[Click Here](#) to download a copy of the parish prayer list.

The Rev. Timothy T. Rich, rector, preaching

Sunday Social Hour

**Please join us for a virtual Sunday Social Hour at 5:00 pm this Sunday!
We look forward to seeing our St. Luke's Family!**

Zoom Meeting Information is below:

[Click Here](#) to join meeting. See below for Meeting ID and Password that will be needed to join.

Meeting ID: 841 2163 5134

Password: 742013

This information will also be posted on our Weekend Invitation to Worship!

Adult Faith Formation

Adult Faith Formation

AFF is offering a study of Jim Wallis' *Christ in Crisis? Reclaiming Jesus in a Time of Fear, Hate, and Violence*. About this book it was written:

In *Christ in Crisis* Jim Wallis provides a path of spiritual healing and solidarity to help us heal the divide separating Americans today. Building on "Reclaiming Jesus"-the declaration he and other church leaders wrote in May 2018 to address America's current crisis-Wallis argues that Christians have become disconnected from Jesus and need to revisit their spiritual foundations. By pointing to eight questions Jesus asked or is asked, Wallis provides a means to measure whether we are truly aligned with the moral and spiritual foundations of our Christian faith.

"Christians have often remembered, re-discovered, and returned to their obedient discipleship of Jesus Christ-both personal and public-in times of trouble. It's called coming home," Wallis reminds us. While he addresses the dividing lines and dangers facing our nation, the religious and cultural commentator's focus isn't politics; it's faith. As he has done throughout his career, Wallis offers comfort, empathy, and a practical roadmap.

Please join us for what promises to be a timely and important study.

You can order the book on Amazon. If you need help obtaining a copy, please email Father Tim.

[Click Here](#) to join our Adult Faith Zoom Meeting. See below for Meeting ID and Password:

Meeting ID: 886 8796 5392

Password: 395498

Peace,
Tim

Youth Faith Formation

Youth Faith Formation

Fr. Tim has put together an excellent group of people to thoughtfully consider how to offer

formation in the safest way possible. As we move through this season of uncertainty, we continue to walk in faith and hope. So that we can continue to be in touch with you as our plans progress, please fill out a registration form for each of your children. The form is online only this year and can be found in our weekly and on our website. Questions? Feel free to reach out to Mother Tanya: tanya@stlukeseg.org or 684-2844.

Advent Blog

ADVENT BLOG

Each year, St. Luke's provides prayer and reflection resources for Advent. This year, one of those resources will be one we write! Our Advent Blog will be an opportunity for community members to read and pray with reflections written by their fellow parishioners. We are in need of writers! You don't need to be an expert or even have any experience writing about Scripture; just an open heart and willingness to share. If you would be willing to write a short (1-3 paragraph) reflection, email Mother Tanya at tanya@stlukeseg.org and we will send you a set of daily readings and some more detailed instructions.

[Click Here](#) to view our Advent Blog!

Advent Resources

Other Resources For Your Advent Journey

From Forward Movement - forwardmovement.org

"Waiting and Watching"

"A Way to the Manger"

"O Wisdom - Advent Devotions on the Name of Jesus"

"I Witness" Kate Moorehead

"What Are You Waiting For?" Christine McSpadden

"Expecting Jesus" Danielle Elizabeth Tumminio

"Joy of Heaven, to Earth Come Down" Margaret Bullitt-Jonas

From Amazon

"Advent and Christmas: Wisdom from Henri Nouwen"

"The Soul of Christmas" Thomas Moore

"Preparing for Christmas" Richard Rohr

"Our December Hearts" Anne McConney

"Faithful Celebrations" Sharon Ely Pearson

The Giving Tree



Our Giving Tree last year was a huge success thanks to all of your kindness and generous donations! Your beautiful wrapped gifts and monetary donations made it possible to help 14 families have a wonderful Christmas.

The year 2020 is very different and difficult for many families. We are asking for your help and support once again. The decision has been made this year to provide families with Walmart Gift Cards. With these cards, families can purchase gifts and food. We are asking parishioners to purchase these cards and either drop them off to Christina at the office or mail them to St. Luke's by December 10th.

Thank you for helping to put smiles on the faces of our families in need this Christmas!

Sincerely,
Judy & Karen (co-chairs)

Christmas Flower and Music Memorials

Christmas Flower and Music Memorials

As in years past, we invite you to remember loved ones this Christmas season by making a memorial gift to St. Luke's. Although services will be different in this time of COVID, by your generosity, they still will include the beauty of both music and flowers. Simply make out your check to St. Luke's Church and let us know both how you would like it directed and for whom your contribution has been given. Please submit names to the office by Saturday, December 12.

Suggested donation for the Poinsettias and Music Memorials is \$10 per name. You can email names to Christina in the office at cimondi@stlukeseg.org or [Click Here](#) to fill out our Christmas Memorial form and mail or drop off with your check to St. Luke's.

Thank you for your generosity. May your loved ones continue to rest eternal with the communion of saints and may God bless you in the weeks to come.



St. Luke's New Fundraising Program

Giftng that Gives Back ... to St. Luke's!

Last week, we introduced the RaiseRight mobile app from ShopWithScrip. RaiseRight introduces an opportunity for each of us to support St. Luke's through everyday purchases, like grabbing a morning coffee or buying groceries and merchandise. With over 750 brands such as Starbucks, Amazon and Walmart, there are ample possibilities to generate additional funds for the church. Essentially, it's a three-step process...



You buy a gift card

You get the full value.



The brand gives back

No extra money comes out of your pocket.



Our organization earns

Impacting what matters most to you.

So, please, add the RaiseRight app to your phone today and help raise additional funds for St. Luke's! Scan the QR code below to get more details on the app. Most importantly, when downloading the app, please enter the following enrollment code to specify St. Luke's as your charitable organization of choice: FEB88LAC73L81



Create opportunities for what matters most to you—right from your phone. Buy gift cards from 750+ brands to earn on your daily purchases. It's simply the right way to fundraise.



[Click Here](#) to view the Holiday Gift Guide and take advantage of increased bonus rewards during the upcoming holiday season. Stay tuned for more information on this exciting opportunity to support St. Luke's.

Thank you,
Mark & Susan Cordle, Deborah Collins & Jeremy Stowe
Your Faithful RaiseRight Project Team

Theology on Tap

Theology on Tap

Theology on Tap (TOT) is in full swing this fall. We are meeting regularly via Zoom on the last Monday of each month. November TOT Meeting: Mon. Nov 30 7:00pm. Contact Brent Bostick if you aren't on the distribution list. We'd love to have you join us.

Special thanks to the folks who helped out with our Thanksgiving Dinner donations!

Thanks,
Brent

Women of Grace - Sheer Poetry!

Women of Grace will meet on Monday, December 7, for an evening of poetry! For this meeting, Donna Leite, Jen Cormier, and Jen's co-blogger, Lori Ayotte, will lead the group in the creation of a community poem. This activity is based on Rachel Martin's Morning Edition piece 'If The Trees Can Keep Dancing, So Can I,': A Community Poem to Cope in Crisis . So, please, join us and energize your inner lyrical spirit!

Women of Grace meets once a month via Zoom. Each gathering opens with prayer and a period of fellowship, followed by the evening's discussion, and ends with a prayer or reflection. December's prayer volunteer is Laura Sullivan - thank you, Laura! We start at 7pm and promise to say our final AMEN by 9pm! Details for linking via Zoom and any additional information for the discussion will be emailed to the WOG list the week prior to the meeting. If you are not currently on our mailing list, please email Deborah Collins (collinstn01@gmail.com) to add your name and email address and receive updates on meetings.

Pastoral Care

Stained Glass Window Books and Note Cards

If you are missing church, here is an idea that will lift your spirits!

The Pastoral Care team will be selling The Stained Glass Window Books and Note Cards. They make wonderful Christmas gifts! The cost for our book is \$25 each or two for \$40. Shipping cost is \$2 if books are mailed to the recipient. The cost for our cards is \$10 for a package of 5 cards. They can also be picked up at the church office. Please call the office or email Christina, cimondi@stluke.org, if you would like to purchase these. We accept cash and checks made out to St. Luke's Church. All proceeds go for the restoration and maintenance of our beautiful windows!

Thank you!

Pastoral Care Ministry

Click Here for our new convenient way to request to add someone to our Prayer List. Our new form is also available on our website under our Parish Life tab and is available at the back of the church where the prayer list is kept. Our online form is easy to fill out or you can fill out the hard copy at the back of the church and return it to the office or put it in the basket on Sunday. The prayer list is updated weekly and available for all of us to view in this newsletter. The Pastoral Care Ministry continues to pray for all on the prayer list and send cards to the homebound and those in the hospital. By filling out the information on this new form, you will help us to keep in touch.

Thank you and stay well.

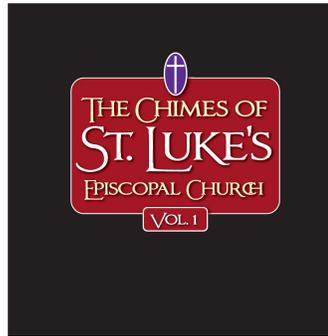
The Pastoral Care Ministry

St. Luke's Chimes

Another Great Holiday Gift Idea!

Many of you may have heard the chimes playing from our church tower on Sundays after services or on many a Tuesday evening over the last year. Now, a recording of 31 hymns is available on CD. Selections range from 'old chestnuts' such as Rock of Ages, patriotic tunes--My

Country 'Tis of Thee, gospel songs--It's Me O Lord, to traditional favorites like O Praise Ye the Lord. Contact Christina Imondi, Parish Administrator, at cimondi@stlukeseg.org to obtain a copy. There is no set price--rather, a donation to St. Luke's would be gratefully accepted.



Looking For Readers!

Looking for readers! We want to hear your voice!

We have wonderful liturgical volunteers who regularly contribute to our shared virtual worship service, and we would like to increase our ranks! We would love to hear from more members of our congregation. All you need is a willingness to share scripture with your sisters and brothers at St. Luke's, a means of recording yourself (most of us just use our iPhone or computer!), and access to Google Drive or Drop Box. Christina will send you a reading Monday or Tuesday, and you record yourself reading and send it back to her by Thursday. It is such a joy to see familiar faces and hear familiar voices, especially while we are apart. We would love to see your face and hear your voice too! Please be in touch with Christina at cimondi@stlukeseg.org if you're willing to share in this important ministry.

Feeding and Clothing Ministries Update

Feeding and Clothing Ministries - Changed But Not Ended

Although typical activities are not as visible around St. Luke's because of Coronavirus, many individuals are still committed to carrying out our mission of helping those in need. A recent example of St. Luke's parishioners' generosity and dedication to service is the delivery of clothing to the Open Closet organization in Providence.

As part of the Rhode Island Loaves and Fishes program, St. Luke's has actively participated in providing food and clothing for others over the past eight years. When the virus restrictions slowed the distribution of goods, St. Luke's accumulated a wealth of clothing that needed a home. One of the team of leaders from our Loaves and Fishes group reached out to an organization in Providence (Open Table of Christ) where people have access to the clothing they need along with their weekly visit to the Food Pantry.

Led by Joyce Harvey, Nancy Rudicil, Caroline Sparhawk, and Linda Wegrzyn, our storeroom of clothes was sorted and packed for delivery to Open Closet, the clothing ministry program run through Open Table. A caravan of two full pickup trucks plus two SUV's packed with clothing made their way to Providence to share with our neighbors.

Open Closet, founded and run by a Rhode Island couple, is an extraordinary operation. It is a well curated thrift store overseen by Shirley and her husband Gus and a team of volunteers. Their work and commitment bring dignity for all who benefit from the donated clothing. Those who can are asked to pay a minimal price for their clothing while others receive it free of charge. All funds raised from the clothing are put back into the feeding ministry.

Work such as this by our Loaves and Fishes group makes us proud of our community and grateful for parishioners who reach out to help those in need. It is especially gratifying that, in this hiatus forced by the virus, there are still ways for our community to continue to help others.

At this time, the clothes being collected for our clothing ministries is limited. However, please keep your eye on St. Luke's bulletins and newsletter where a list of needed goods will be provided.

Faithfully Submitted by the St. Luke's Storeroom Sorting Party



Clothing Ministry

Clothing Ministry Update

Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, we have had to suspend the collection and sorting of used clothing. We have also suspended our monthly run to Woonsocket to distribute clothing due to crowds and close contact, but we have been brainstorming other ways to help:

Connecting with other Agencies:

In October we stuffed over 30 bags of clothing donations from our basement and drove them up to OPEN CLOSET at 1520 Broad Street in Providence. The group there was thankful and welcoming for our donation as they continue to sort and sell clothing in their thrift store to support feeding ministries in their community. They do accept donations Monday 8-11, Friday 8-11, and Saturday 9:30-1:30.

HELP for the HOMELESS (<http://www.helpthehomelessri.org/>) - this group continues to distribute items in Woonsocket on Sundays. We are hoping to connect with them to create "winter bags" for Men, Women, Teens, and Children to distribute in early December. Our goal is to fill 30 bags for the adults and 50 bags for the children consisting of gloves, hats, socks, underwear, blankets, bottoms, toiletries, and sweatshirts. We have secured a grant that has allowed us to purchase most of these items.

WHAT WE NEED IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO HELP:

NEW SWEATSHIRTS FOR TEENS

TRIAL SIZE TOOTH PASTE (60 ARE NEEDED)

These can be dropped at the church by Nov. 30th to be put into the bags.

THANK YOU!

Linda Wegrzyn- Children's Clothing Coordinator Ldwez@cox.net
Joyce Harvey & Caroline Sparhawk (cdsparharwk@gmail.com) - Adult Clothing Coordinators

St. Luke's Choirs Sing for You!

As a special gift from the Canterbury, St. Cecilia, and Angel Choirs to our St. Luke's family and friends, choir members compiled a special 'arrangement' of "How Can I Keep From Singing". The music is from an American folk song originally composed by Baptist minister Robert Wadworth Lowry in 1868 with the four-part arrangement published by Jeffrey Honoré in 1991. The choirs performed this piece at their 2019 Spring Concert and happily recreated that performance in this video (also available on St. Luke's website and Facebook page).



St. Luke's Choirs Sing For You!

Especially for Children

To watch Godly Play online please [Click Here!](#)

Looking for Helpers / Looking for Help

Several of you have already reached out, volunteering to help those in need. If you are healthy and in a low risk category, and would like to be added to a volunteer list please email our [Church Administrator](#). We are working on creating a team of individuals who can help out as the need arises.

With all of the precautions and guidance coming from the Governor, CDC, and the Department of Health, we are aware that some members of our community may have difficulty getting access to basics like food, medication, and other necessities. If you find yourself in need, please contact our [Church Administrator](#) for assistance.

Food Cupboard

Greetings from our Food Cupboard!

We are reaching out to update you on some of our needs during this challenging time. Our thoughts and prayers are with all of our families that they are able to stay healthy and safe.

Please consider donating these items:

Spam, Small Canned Hams, Chicken/Beef Broth, Mashed Potatoes, Hash, Chili, Beef Stew, Yellow or Chocolate Cake or Brownie Mixes, Canned Fruit, Pudding/Jello Mixes, Pasta Sauce, Beef/Chicken/Turkey Gravy

Thank you!
EG Interfaith Food Cupboard

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