



St. Luke's Episcopal Church

Where all are welcome at the Lord's table

weekly

March 14, 2021

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Greetings!

In one of our recent Thursday night Kid's Compline services, we read the passage in Genesis about Abraham and Sarah being chosen by God for covenantal relationship. "Covenant" is one of those words that doesn't really come up in our everyday conversation, so we talked together about what that word means. It's more than a promise. It's more than a one-way commitment. It's entering into a permanent commitment with one another. Covenantal relationship requires faithfulness from those involved. It is not about God promising that only good things will happen in our lives, but about God promising to always be with us, to be near to us, to hear us when we call out, to guide us when we turn our attention to God's faithful presence. We know that God is always faithful, but as human beings faithfulness is more difficult for us, so we rely on God's continuing mercy and forgiveness.

I used to think of mercy as a negative thing, something I had to beg for from a God that might withhold it from me. Then I learned that in ancient monastic communities, mercy was seen as a healing balm, something that poured out abundantly from God's very essence to heal those places in us that are wounded. Something shifted in me; instead of imagining myself crying out to a remote God for mercy, I suddenly imagined myself joyfully swimming in God's mercy, a pool of healing balm just waiting to meet me in the places I was most tender. There is no need to resist the mercy that longs to heal us.

I thought of the idea of commitment again during our Adult Faith Forum on Wednesday night. We talked about the chapter *Jesus Understands Feelings of Abandonment* in James Martin's book [Seven Last Words: An Invitation to a Deeper Friendship with Jesus](#). In the chapter, we are invited to the foot of the cross as Jesus cries out: "'Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Jesus' crucifixion is filled with heartbreaking moments, but



perhaps none so utterly gut wrenching. Jesus, the Messiah, God with Us, feels utterly deserted in that moment.

As we contemplated that cry coming forth from Jesus, we were invited to consider the difference between feeling abandoned and believing we are abandoned. We shared the realization that if Jesus cried out to God in his anguish, he was still in relationship with God. We don't cry out to someone we believe will not hear us. Even in his deepest, barely conceivable grief, Jesus cries out to God. One of the many thoughtful members of our group offered a reflection, that perhaps the infrastructure of faith and belief remains even if we don't sense God in a particular moment, even if God seems absent. As I thought about his observation, I realized that feels like commitment. That feels like covenant. That infrastructure of faith stands regardless of our experience of any particular moment because it is not about any particular moment. That faith infrastructure is our covenant, our promise, our deepest commitment to God, the God we know is in covenantal relationship with us. In his book *The Art of Being Together*, Frank Wade notes that commitment "...allows people to share great passion and real anger. It permits surprises as well as disappointments...It has room for confidence and confusion, fear and joy...It always has the capacity for forgiveness, recovery...renewal." Forgiveness, recovery, renewal- these are some of the building blocks of our faith.

During Lent, we are invited to think about forgiveness, recovery, and renewal with special intention. There are many ways to do this within our faith community. Our Book of Common Prayer offers the rite of The Reconciliation of a Penitent, a rite that can offer the chance to experience the healing balm of God's mercy. If you would like to speak more about that, I would be glad to talk with you, and I know Fr. Tim would be too. If you're curious about our Adult Faith Forum, you are welcome to join us this Wednesday, when we talk about Chapter 5 in Martin's book: *Jesus Understands Physical Pain*. Our God is not remote from us but completely understands our human experience. If you want to join us but need us to purchase a copy of the book for you, just let me know. I'll get it to your doorstep before next week. If you'd like to reflect on our daily scripture during this season, check out our Lenten blog.

Our covenantal relationship with God tells us that God is near to us, pursuing us, longing for us to turn our hearts over to the abundant love and mercy that is core to who God is. We grow in that covenantal relationship when we encourage each other along the way. Let us

grow together.

Lenten blessings,
Mtr Tanya

This Sunday at St. Luke's

The Fourth Sunday in Lent

Click above for the lessons

Streaming Service of Morning Prayer.

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

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

The Rev. Timothy T. Rich, rector, preaching

Lent Blog

Lent Blog

Seeking writers! This Lent, we are continuing our seasonal blog series where members of our community share their reflections on the day's scripture readings. If you would like to participate, we would love to hear from you! Whether you have written before or want to try it out for the first time, this is an opportunity for us to walk the road of Lent together even while we are physically apart. Please contact Mtr Tanya if you'd like to join: tanya@stlukeseg.org

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

Kid's Compline

Kid's Compline Service via Zoom

We are offering a new family friendly prayer service in the spirit of compline on Thursday nights at 7:00 via Zoom, crafted especially with children in mind.

Compline is a night prayer that marks the closing of the day. During Lent, we are invited to consider giving something up or picking something up, and this is an opportunity for families to pick up an enriching practice.

[Click Here](#) to join the service! Meeting information is below:

Meeting ID: 838 6319 3679

Passcode: 136624

Easter Flower Memorials

Easter Flower and Music Memorials

As in years past, we invite you to remember your loved ones this Easter 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. Please click on the link below to fill out our Flower Memorial Form. Checks should be made payable to St. Luke's Church, Indicating "Flower Memorials" or "Music Memorials", suggested donation is \$10 per name. Email requests to cimondi@stlukeseg.org or Bring By The Office or Mail to: 99 Peirce

[Click Here](#) to fill out our Easter Flower Memorial form!

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.



Pledge Envelopes

If you have requested pledge envelopes,
they are located in the atrium.

Treasurer Announcement

From The Treasurer!

	2021 YTD	Budget	%	2020 YTD	Var
Pledge Income	\$113,826	\$116,000	98.13%	\$105,827	\$7,999
Loose Plate	\$1,549	\$3,600	43.03%	\$5,597	(\$4,048)
Other Personal Inc.	\$15,737	\$10,592	148.57%	\$15,198	\$539
Total Personal Inc.	\$131,112	\$130,192	100.71%	\$126,622	\$4,490
Total Other Inc	\$66,437	\$70,097	94.78%	\$4,255	\$62,182
Total Income	\$197,549	\$200,289	98.63%	\$130,877	\$66,672
Staff Expenses	\$72,533	\$74,795	96.98%	\$73,072	(\$539)
Facilities Expenses	\$13,231	\$19,170	69.02%	\$27,545	(\$14,314)
Program Expenses	\$2,489	\$5,750	43.29%	\$4,054	(\$1,565)
Outreach Expenses	\$1,769	\$369	479.40%	\$184	\$1,585
Total Expenses	\$105,403	\$113,400	92.95%	\$122,169	(\$16,766)
Net Income	\$92,146	\$86,889	106.05%	\$8,708	\$83,438

With a big thank you to all of you, we've had a strong start to 2021. Throw in the PPP loan and controlled spending, and we're right where we should be.

And can you sense the change in seasons? Optimism is in the air!

The weather is warming up, the vaccines are being rolled out and, with hope, we will soon be

worshipping together again.

Grace and Peace,
Mike

Covid Vaccine Update

EAST GREENWICH NEWS

Updated Article on Covid-19 Vaccines

Fully Vaccinated? Here Are Your Rules

by egnews | Mar 8, 2021

The CDC has unveiled guidelines for those who have been vaccinated, starting with, what qualifies for "fully vaccinated"?

According to the CDC, people are considered fully vaccinated:

- 2 weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series, like the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or
- 2 weeks after a single-dose vaccine, like Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine

If it has been less than 2 weeks since your shot, or if you still need to get your second dose, you are NOT fully protected. Keep taking all prevention steps until you are fully vaccinated...

[Click Here](#) to view the rest of the article!

Adult Faith Formation

Adult Faith Formation - Wednesday Nights at 7 pm

We are reading *Seven Last Words: An invitation to a deeper friendship with Jesus*, by Fr. James Martin. Even the titles of the chapters are a source of comfort: *Jesus Understands the Challenge of Forgiveness*, *Jesus Understands Doubts about the Afterlife*, *Jesus Understands a Parent's Love*, *Jesus Understands Feelings of Abandonment*, *Jesus Understands Physical Pain*, *Jesus Understands Disappointment*, *Jesus Understands Self-Offering*.

What wonderful news! Jesus understands. We hope you will join us as we dive more deeply into this welcome invitation. Please read Chapter 5 in preparation for our discussion.

[Click Here](#) to join the meeting! Log-In information is below:

Meeting ID: 867 3899 9469
Password: 427552

St. Luke's RaiseRight Program

Spring Bonuses for You and St. Luke's!

Add new colors, fits and patterns to your wardrobe this spring. Purchase RaiseRight ecards and gift cards to shop trending styles for the whole family and raise money for St. Luke's!



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.



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

Pastoral Care

Pastoral Care Ministry

Prayer is a powerful way for us to support each other and build community. If you would like to add someone to our parish prayer list, please use the online Prayer List Request Form. It is available on our website under our Parish Life tab and here in our Weekly Newsletter. The prayer list is updated weekly. 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 form, you will help us to keep in touch. [Click Here](#) for our Prayer List Request Form.

Thank you and stay well.

The Pastoral Care Ministry

St. Luke's Choirs

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!

Big Brothers and Big Sisters

Big Brothers and Big Sisters Donations

In our continuing efforts to be a good neighbor and serve our local community, we have added a new addition to the St Luke's parking lot! The clothing bin is a result of joining in a new partnership between the Episcopal Diocese and Big Brother Big Sister of Rhode Island. It will serve as a collection point for community donations of clothing, shoes and other cloth items. Please drop off your bagged items at your convenience.



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:

Canned mandarin oranges, canned pineapple, chicken and beef stock, hash, kidney beans, Italian dressing, ranch dressing, vegetable oil, regular instant coffee, and beef and chicken gravy.

Thank you!

EG Interfaith Food Cupboard

cimondi@stlukeseg.org | <http://stlukeseg.org>
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East Greenwich, RI 02818

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