



St. Luke's Episcopal Church

Where all are welcome at the Lord's table

weekly

December 19, 2021

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Greetings!

Wherever you go, the signs are unmistakable—Christmas is coming! More and more houses are decorated with lights. More and more cars are driving around with trees tied to their rooftops. More and more television programs are devoted to Christmas movies and specials. (Diane and I stumbled upon one of her favorites last night, *It's a Wonderful Life*.)

Beyond these many secular signs, St. Luke's is wrapping up its preparations for Christmas, as well. This Sunday we will light the 4th and final Advent candle. Immediately following the 10:15 service, we will "green the church." And then, at 4:00, the choir will amaze and entertain with what promises to be a magical Christmas concert.

It gives me such joy to say, "I hope you will be able to come to church for this great day."

In the same way, it also gives me much joy to say, "I hope you will join us in church for the celebration of the Nativity of Our Lord, either on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day." It is hard to imagine that we will be celebrating these services in person for the first time since 2019! (Please note that all services, the 4:00, 7:00, and 10:30PM services of Christmas Eve, and the 10:00AM service Christmas Day will be live-streamed and later posted for those traveling or staying home.)

All of that said, I also must acknowledge COVID continues to influence our movements and celebrations. Signs of this reality are unmistakable, as well. In Rhode Island and around our country, total number of infections, cases per/100,000, and even hospitalizations all are on the rise. Blessedly, the evidence that the vaccinations remain effective at reducing the likelihood of serious illness is abundantly clear, but nonetheless, COVID still poses a health risk for many.

With this reality, both the Governor and our Bishop have called for increased efforts to mitigate these risks. Specifically, the Bishop in a letter yesterday asked that all congregations, regardless of size, require mask wearing for indoor activities. Let me say as I have said previously, I am so grateful that already you have been respectful of this request for the past several weeks.

Additionally, he asked that we refrain from offering communion in both kinds, that is, from offering wine in addition to the bread. Beginning Sunday, we will implement this change. Other ideas were suggested, including mandating vaccination cards prior to entrance and instituting "communion stations." In the days to come

[**Especially for Children**](#)

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[**The Anglican Communion**](#)

Stay Connected



the COVID Steering Committee will reflect upon the feasibility and benefit of such options.

In all candor, there is no way to guarantee that one won't contract the virus when mixing in a crowd. What we intend to do at St. Luke's is continue to mitigate that risk in ways that are effective and prudent. And then, what each of you must do is assess the level of "risk" with which you are comfortable.

Honestly, it is crummy for me to speak of Christmas and COVID in the same note. Yet, over the past two years, despite COVID, we have managed to remain a community, prayerful, faithful, and even joyful. And although the current circumstances are stretching our capacity for being hopeful, I believe we can endure this challenge—because of the company we keep with one another and because of our Lord, whose birth we will celebrate anew in the days to come.

May we soon find the hopes of Advent realized and our celebrations of Christmas blessed.

Hopefully yours,
Tim

This Sunday at St. Luke's

[**The Fourth Sunday of Advent**](#)

Click above for the lessons

7:45am Holy Eucharist with Sermon

10:15am Holy Eucharist with Sermon

We are glad to offer a Facebook livestream for our 10:15 am Sunday services. To access the livestream, please follow the instructions below:

1. Our Facebook page can be accessed by [**Clicking Here**](#).
2. You do not need a Facebook account to access this page. If you do have an account, 'liking' our page ahead of the service will allow Facebook to send you a notification when the livestream begins. If you do not have an account, Facebook will ask if you would like to set one up. Simply click the 'x' at the top right corner to close that box or click 'not now'.
3. The livestream will be accessible from St. Luke's Facebook page near the time the prelude begins. If you have liked our page, simply click on the notification you will receive from Facebook when it starts to view the video.
4. If you have not liked our page, you may have to scroll down the page to find the livestream while it is happening due to the way Facebook works. Once the livestream concludes, the video of the service will be available at the top of our page, (so you will not have to scroll to find it).

Please contact our Assistant Rector, Mother Tanya, with any questions. She can be reached at [**tanya@stlukeseg.org**](mailto:tanya@stlukeseg.org).

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

The Rev. Timothy T. Rich, rector, preaching

Reopening Announcement

[**St. Luke's Has Reopened!**](#)

We are so excited to welcome everyone back to St. Luke's!

[Click Here](#) to view Fr. Tim's message regarding updated COVID protocols.
As of Sunday, August 1, we have resumed our mask-wearing and contact tracing practices.

We are using a QR Code for our Sunday Bulletin which can be scanned by using a SmartPhone!
This
will give worshipers the option to view our bulletin on their phone during Sunday Service or to print the bulletin and bring it to the church. We will provide hard copies as well.

Healing Services Resumes

Every Tuesday at Noon St. Luke's will be offering a healing service with Eucharist. All are invited to attend. Like for the Sunday services, we ask that you wear your mask.

Here Is The Sunday Bulletin QR Code:



OR

[Click Here](#) to view our Sunday Bulletin!

Advent And Christmas At St. Luke's

Advent & Christmas at St. Luke's

Sunday, December 19th

Greening of the Church

at 11:30am

Christmas Concert

at 4:00pm

Friday, December 24th

Christmas Eve

Family Service

with Holy Eucharist

at 4:00pm

Service with Holy Eucharist

at 7:00pm

Choral Prelude

at 10:30pm with

Holy Eucharist following

at 11:00pm

Saturday, December 25

Christmas Day

Holy Eucharist with Hymns

at 10:00am

Sunday, December 26th

A Service of

Lessons & Carols

with Holy Eucharist

at 10:15am

Sunday, January 2nd

Holy Eucharist

at 7:45am

Epiphany Children's Pageant

at 10:15am

Treasurer's Notes

From the Treasurer

November Month End

Nov-21	2021 YTD	Budget	Var	2020 YTD	Var
Pledge Income	\$425,875	\$398,000	27,875	\$383,778	\$42,097
Loose Plate	\$32,712	\$21,000	11,712	\$17,960	\$14,752
Other Personal Inc.	\$61,019	\$52,217	8,802	\$64,165	(\$3,146)
Total Personal Inc.	\$519,606	\$471,217	48,389	\$465,903	\$53,703
Total Other Inc	\$122,314	\$132,186	(9,872)	\$110,133	\$12,181
Total Income	\$641,920	\$603,403	38,517	\$576,036	\$65,884
Staff Expenses	\$405,057	\$411,943	(6,886)	\$384,676	\$20,381
Facilities Expenses	\$93,770	\$101,056	(7,286)	\$102,289	(\$8,519)
Program Expenses	\$17,415	\$34,875	(17,460)	\$21,825	(\$4,410)
Outreach Expenses	\$9,898	\$8,816	1,082	\$12,067	(\$2,169)
Total Expenses	\$599,677	\$629,927	(30,250)	\$607,610	(\$7,933)
			0		
Net Income	\$42,243	(\$26,525)	68,768	(\$31,575)	\$73,818

November financials were on budget setting us up for a strong finish to the year.

I join the entire leadership team in thanking you all for your continued support.
I personally think you are all amazing!

Michael Sullivan
Treasurer

Vanco and PayPal QR Codes If You Would Like To Donate

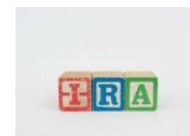


Vanco



PayPal

Here are some other options available if you would like to donate to St. Luke's!



Online Banking

Bill Pay – with online bill pay, you add St. Luke's Church as a payee, enter our address of 99 Peirce St. East Greenwich, RI 02818 and schedule your payment.

Benefits: Ease of use – if you already use online bill pay, then you are familiar with making payments this way. You can schedule single payments, or set up regular payments in advance.

No cost to you or the Church.

Zelle Transfer

Zelle Payment – with Zelle payment transfer, you can add St. Luke's Church by using the giving@stlukeseg.org address.

Benefits: Ease of use – if you already use Zelle, then you are familiar with making payments this way. This only makes one payment at a time, so you have to initiate each payment.

No cost to you or the Church

VANCO Payment Solutions

VANCO Payments – With VANCO payments, you create your individual account on the VANCO site, set up how you want to pay, and the funds are deposited in the Church's account

Benefits: If you like points or miles, then this is your site! VANCO is the only option that accepts credit cards. Like Online Banking, you can set up recurring payments or make single payments

Transaction Fees for the Church

Direct Payment From IRA

Direct Transfer – If you are 70 ½ or older, you can instruct your IRA provider to make a Qualified Charitable Distribution directly from your IRA.

Benefits: Any funds paid this way are not reported as taxable income to you. You can make your entire yearly pledge with one payment, help satisfy your required distribution, and incur no tax on the income.

No cost to you or the Church

Adult Faith Formation

The AFF class is reading Barbara Brown Taylor's *Learning to Walk in the Darkness*. In this book Taylor writes, "Darkness is shorthand for anything that scares me-- either because I am sure that I do not have the resources to survive it or because I do not want to find out. (But) I have learned things in the dark that I could never have learned in the light, things that have saved my life over and over again, so that there is really only one conclusion. I need the darkness as much as I need light."

About the author, Time magazine writes, "Few souls are as synched to the world's mysteries as Barbara Brown Taylor's... Taylor writes spiritual nonfiction that rivals the poetic power of C.S. Lewis and Frederick Buechner."

Please join the AFF class as she guides us through a spirituality of the nighttime and teaches us how to find God even in darkness.

Please read Chapter 5 in preparation for the next class.

[Click Here](#) to join the meeting! Zoom Meeting Information is below:

Meeting ID: 867 3899 9469
Passcode: 427552

Nursery and Godly Play

Nursery

We are happy to welcome your children back! Our nursery has reopened for both services. Please sign-up on our Sign-Up Genius page found [Here](#). We are limited to six children per service.

Godly Play

Godly Play has begun!

We're excited to welcome your children! We have two sessions: 9:30 and 10:15 in the auditorium. To join us, you need to complete two steps:

1. Please complete the youth registration form [Here](#) or pick up a hard copy form from the atrium at the church.
2. Please sign up for the dates your children will attend using our Sign-Up Genius - [Click Here](#).

Questions? Contact Theresa Deiters, Director of Youth Formation, at (415) 233-0761.

Advent and Godly Play

Advent, (from Latin *adventus*, "coming"), in the Christian church calendar, **the period of preparation for the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ at Christmas.**

No doubt your children are in fact already 'preparing' for Christmas in their own sweet way. 'Christmas' is usually their answer to the question, "What is your favorite holiday?" While it is often difficult to keep in mind during holiday celebrations, lights, shopping; the season of Advent is a very holy time.

The next few weeks in Godly Play we will be focusing on Advent. The children will each receive a very special package that was handmade especially for them. It is their first Christmas gift this year. Ask them about it..invite them to teach you about Advent. We really look forward to seeing you children each Sunday, these next Sundays will be especially meaningful. we hope to see them!



"God of hope, I look to you with an open heart and yearning spirit. During this Advent season, I will keep alert and awake, listening for your word and keeping to your precepts. My hope is in you." ~ Matthew Kelly

Fun Facts...

The Advent wreath first appeared in Germany in 1839. A **Lutheran** minister working at a mission for children created a wreath out of the wheel of a cart. He placed twenty small red candles and four large white candles inside the ring. The red candles were lit on weekdays and the four white candles were lit on Sundays.

Eventually, the Advent wreath was created out of evergreens, symbolizing everlasting life in the midst of winter and death. The circle reminds us of God's unending love and the eternal life He makes possible. Advent candles are often nestled in the evergreen wreath.

The four weeks Advent is broken down into four themes. These themes are represented by the four candles on the Advent wreath.

1. Hope or promise
2. Preparation or faith
3. Joy
4. Love or adoration

An Advent Prayer

Prayer is a wonderful way to help cut away from distractions of the season and open your heart to prepare for the joy and hope of Christ's birth. Here is a sample prayer to use during the season to focus your heart and mind for the birth of Jesus Christ.

This Advent, Lord, come to the manger of my heart.
 Fill me with Your presence from the very start.
 As I prepare for the holidays and gifts to be given,
 Remind me of the gift You gave when You sent Your Son from Heaven.
 The first Christmas gift, it was the greatest gift ever.
 You came as a baby born in a manger.

Wrapped like the gifts I find under my tree,
Waiting to be opened, to reveal Your love to me.
Restore to me the wonder that came with Jesus' birth,
When He left the riches of Heaven and wrapped Himself in rags of earth.
Immanuel, God with us, Your presence came that night.
And angels announced, "Into your darkness, God brings His Light."
"Do not be afraid," they said, to shepherds in the field.
Speak to my heart today, Lord, and help me to yield.
Make me like those shepherd boys, obedient to Your call.
Setting distractions and worries aside, to You I surrender them all.
Surround me with Your presence, Lord, I long to hear Your voice.
Clear my mind of countless concerns and all the holiday noise.
Slow me down this Christmas, let me not be in a rush.
In the midst of parties and planning, I want to feel Your hush .
This Christmas, Jesus, come to the manger of my heart.
Invade my soul like Bethlehem, bringing peace to every part.
Dwell within and around me, as I unwrap Your presence each day.
Keep me close to You, Lord. It's in Your wonderful Name I pray.
~Renee Swope, "The Manger of My Heart"

I send you blessings for this Thanksgiving and always,
Theresa Muscat

Thankfulness Tree

The middle school faith formation class wishes to thank everyone who hung a leaf on the St. Luke's Thankfulness Tree. Last week our class "harvested" a total of 113 leaves of thanks and created this Wordle which captures the parish's collective expression of thanks. Thanks to you all!

Christmas Concert

A JOYFUL CHRISTMAS CONCERT



featuring

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

Sunday, December 19
at 4 PM

Festive music for the holiday season

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



Epiphany Pageant

Epiphany Pageant
Sunday, January 2, 10:15am

Calling All Children, Teens, And Those Who Are Young At Heart!

All people of St. Luke's from pre-school through high school and beyond 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!

There will be only one rehearsal for the pageant. It will be on Saturday, January 1, from 1-2:30pm.

A sign-up sheet is available in the Atrium. For more information, please speak with Rodney Ayers at rodney@stlukeseg.org or Mtr. Tanya at tanya@stlukeseg.org



Reverend Ted Hallenbeck's 95th Birthday

Reverend Ted Hallenbeck's 95th Birthday

The Reverend Ted Hallenbeck, retired deacon from St. Luke's, is celebrating his 95th birthday on December 20th! He treasures his connection to our parish, and on this milestone birthday it would make his day to hear from those who remember his service here. If you'd like to send him a card, his address is: The Rev. Ted Hallenbeck, 101 Larchmont Rd, Warwick, RI 02886. Thank you for making his day that much more special!

Save The Date!

Community Embrace Golf Classic

SAVE THE DATE!

*And Help Prepare for our
SILENT AUCTION!*

.....
Potowomut Golf Club
.....

MONDAY,
MAY 9, 2022



*How might you make the auction a
HUGE success? Do you have tickets
to a sports event, concert or the
theater that you can contribute?
Or possibly, if you have a family
cottage, would you be willing to
donate a week or weekend?
Or, a special item that could be
included in our auction? The Silent
Auction will take place during the
dinner directly following the golf.*

.....
*For further information, contact
Golf Tournament Co-Chairs:
Bill Warburton (bill.warburton@cox.net)
Jon Jacaruso (jonjacaruso@live.com)*

Coffee Hour

Coffee Hour Volunteers

People don't come to coffee hour just for a cup of joe; they want a human connection, something we all have missed during the pandemic! Here's a place where we build community one cup at a time.

We need your help! Father Tim would like to resume Coffee Hour. For now, we are only offering coffee and juice- no food.

As usual, our sexton, Tim, will set up the coffee urn in the morning. The Coffee Hour host simply needs to set up the coffee "station" with cups, sugars, creamer and napkins. These supplies (except the creamer) are all kept in the armoire in the Blackburn Room. There will be a table set up in the narthex near the stairs where you can set up a juice "station" with small juice cups and napkins. Tablecloths can be found in the armoire also.

So, the host would bring half and half as well as some type of juice. Everything else is provided. After the 10:15am service's coffee hour, the urns would need to be cleaned out and stored in the Blackburn Room and you would need to ensure that coffee grounds go in the trash.

Please consider signing up for an upcoming Sunday so we can properly extend our hospitality and reconnect. Christina put the sign-up sheet on the wall across from the office. You can sign up at church or call Christina in the office at 401-884-4116 and she'll add you to the list.

We look forward to seeing you all soon,

Tracy
401-447-0472

Marcia
401-241-1821

Dorcas Donations

Dorcas Donations

We are now collecting donations for our Dorcas Ministry! We are looking for better sportswear and clothing suitable for job interviews. Please drop off in the atrium under the mosaic and label as Dorcas. Thanks so much for your support!

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 RaiseRight Program

Embrace The Holiday Season And Raise Additional Funds For St. Luke's!

It is the season of warm drinks, cozy sweaters and home-made comfort food. Use RaiseRight E-cards to purchase all the things you need to embrace the season and raise additional funds 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



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

St. Luke's Birthdays, Anniversaries, and Special Days of Thanksgiving

St. Luke's Birthdays, Anniversaries, & Special Days of Thanksgiving

Would you like to celebrate your birthday, anniversary, graduation or other special day with St. Luke's?

We are compiling a list of parishioners' birthdays, anniversaries, and other important dates. If you would like to have a thanksgiving offered during the weekly Prayers of the People, **please complete this form**. An appropriate thanksgiving will be included during the prayers.

Any questions? Please email Christina (cimondi@stlukeseg.org) or call the parish office (401-884-4116). Happy Celebrating!

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).



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!](#)

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:

Kidney beans, cannellini beans, baked beans, pasta sauce, rice/pasta sides, ramen noodles, cooking stock, canned pineapple, hash, chili, yellow cake mix, Italian or ranch dressing, ketchup, juice (64 oz), crackers, cookies and mayonnaise.

Thank you!

EG Interfaith Food Cupboard

St. Luke's Episcopal Church | (401) 884-4116
cimondi@stlukeseg.org | <http://stlukeseg.org>
99 Peirce Street
East Greenwich, RI 02818

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