

St. Luke's News

December 2023

Vol. 6 #12



Advent, the beginning of the New Year for the church, is upon us. Just as with the calendar New Year, it is a time for reflection as well as looking forward. We look back over the last year, recognizing that there were things we did well, things that could have been done better, and perhaps even things that we wish we had not done! As a parish, we can look back over this past year with some pride. If you look back in the Newsletters, there have been lots of activities. These have included times to socialize, opportunities for worship and learning. It has been a different kind of year with Noel's being away for four months. We give thanks for Tracey's leadership and help. We give thanks for all those who stepped up from the congregation to make sure that worship continued and we give thanks for the visiting clergy. All of this Noel had arranged prior to his leaving.

As we look to the year ahead, we trust and pray that our life together will be enriched and productive. We are entering Year B in the Revised Common Lectionary. You can follow the readings for each day by going to <https://lectionary.anglican.ca/>. Our Gospel readings will be from Mark's Gospel. Perhaps we need to make some "New Year's Resolutions". These might include following the readings more closely, attending church more regularly and increasing our prayer life. 'Advent' comes from the Latin *advenire* to *adventus*, meaning arrival. The word 'Adventure' comes from the same Latin root *advenire* but to *adventurus*, meaning about to happen. Adventure is an unusual and exciting experience or activity, which may have some risk. Are we ready to embark on an adventure? Perhaps we can say that the period of Advent concerns not just looking forward to the coming Jesus, but also, for us, the arrival of a new adventure, in whatever form this may take! Happy Advent!!

Submit items for the January Newsletter by December 27th to website@oldchurchrd.com.

ANGLICAN CHURCH

of

ST. LUKE

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Red Deer, Alberta

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email:

office@oldchurchrd.com

website

www.oldchurchrd.com

Incumbent Priest/Pastor:

The Ven. Noel Wygiera
vicar@oldchurchrd.com

Vocational Deacon:

The Rev. Deacon Tracey Stagg
deacon@oldchurchrd.com

Incumbent's Warden:

Debb Mann
incumbentswarden@oldchurchrd.com

People's Warden:

Michael McAuliffe
peopleswarden@oldchurchrd.com

Pianists:

Judy Miller
David Blackwell
Terri Radke
Marilyn Martin

Organist:

Jo Wygiera

Service Schedule

In person

Sunday: 10:00 am

2nd Thursday of the Month: 2:00 pm

Online

Sunday: 1:00 pm

WEBSITE
www.oldchurchrd.com

Visit it often to check for news and upcoming events. If anyone has an item they feel might be appropriate for inclusion on the website please send it to website@oldchurchrd.com.

if you change contact information, eg. address, phone number or email address, make sure that you notify the office at: office@oldchurchrd.com

UPCOMING EVENTS

WORSHIP SERVICES:

Sunday 10:00 am:

December 3rd: **First Sunday in Advent** Eucharist: Celebrant and Preacher the Ven. Noel Wygiera. We will be welcoming Noel back from his Sabbatical.

Sunday 1:00 pm On line Service:

If you do not receive an email link to the on line services and would like to attend, contact vicar@oldchurchrd.com.

Thursday 2:00 pm: Said Eucharist

Advent Holden Evening Prayer: 7:00 Thursdays December 7th, 14th and 21st at the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, 40 Holmes Street

Watch your emails for details of other Advent and Christmas Services

OTHER EVENTS:

Advent Outreach: Our Advent Outreach this year will be focused on caring for some of our neighbours in downtown Red Deer. From Advent I through the first Sunday after Christmas (Dec 3-31), there will be a box at the back of the church where we will be collecting socks and underwear to be donated to Safe Harbour Society during the twelve days of Christmas. We are hoping for both men's and ladies' items of all sizes, and of high enough quality to help keep the recipients warm and dry throughout the season. Please consider how you could join us in this venture!

Thanks to Br. Michael and Tracey Stagg for organizing this.

Christmas Boxes: One of the Christmas Traditions in our church is the boxes of baking for those individuals who for many reasons can no longer attend church on a regular basis. I am once again reaching out to our congregation for donations of baking for our boxes. We will be boxing the goodies on Wednesday, December 13th, and would ask that donations be dropped off at the church between 9:00 and 11:00. Thank-you to everyone for taking part in this outreach ministry. Judy Ewart

December 9th: Men's Group Breakfast 9:00 am

December 11th: 7:00 pm Red Deer Youth and Community Orchestra Christmas Concert and Carol Sing Along – Directed by Heather Ensley

December 13th: Decorating the church for Christmas is on Wednesday, December 13, at 6:30 pm. The Altar Guild invites anyone who anyone who is able to come at that time and the additional help is appreciated. Elizabeth Thain

December 14th: Parish Tea following the 2:00 pm Service

December 16th: Ladies’ Group Breakfast 9:30 am Note the change in time.

December 17th: Advent Concert with *East and Rising*

East & Rising is a soft rock band composed of friends from Central Alberta. Their songs are mostly covers with some originals. Their heart is to perform music skillfully and with their hearts so that all guests leave saying “I had a good night!”. For this concert, *East & Rising* will take you on a journey through Advent, through the longing for a Messiah, and into the surprising and bewildering joy of Christmas. Come on in for free to enjoy the evening on Sunday, December 17: **Doors open at 6:45: Concert at 7:00.**

December 19th: In the Spirit of Christmas 7:00 pm Our programme of readings and music for Christmas returns after a long “COVID break”. Free will offering to be donated to the Food Bank.

Pub Night with Br. Michael: Watch your emails for date of the next Pub Night.

FINANCES:

Giving Sunday December 3rd:

As Br. Michael has so eloquently reminded us over the last month: “Through these seasons of stewardship, our thinking about giving has shifted from the realm of obligation to the realm of gratitude and love. And our thinking about stewardship itself has shifted from being primarily a matter of dollars and cents, to being a matter of time, gifting, money, relationships, and the Gospel. I am convinced that **discerning what God is up to requires cultivating a unique set of skills**. When we think about giving, or serving, or any other area of stewardship, we tend to start—or at least I do—with looking at how much financial wiggle room we have, or which nights of the week we’re available. Those are great financial literacy and personal care skills, but they aren’t the skills we start with when wondering about what God is up to, and what part we get to play in it. If we want to take seriously that God is inviting us to join him in what he’s doing in Red Deer, then that invitation is where we need to start the conversation.” Whatever you have decided is right for you is completely acceptable. Remember that if you are unable to be in church on December 3rd, these donations can be made at any time over the month. Please remember to signify any specific gifts as Giving Sunday gifts. You may have also been led to increase your regular giving by a certain amount and this is also very helpful.

Financial Statement:

	Oct 2023 Actual	YTD Actual	2023 YTD Budget	Variance
Income	19,044.03	148,814.78	135,916.67	12,898.11
Expenses	14,270.39	161,216.22	161,525.83	309.61
Net	4,773.64	12,401.44	25,609.16	13,207.72

We have benefitted from a generous donation this month. **We give thanks for all who, in whatever way possible, contribute to the help cover the expenses of keeping the church building and all its programmes functioning.** If you are interested in changing to pre-authorized giving, please contact Barb at the church office and she will provide you with the necessary form. We are also continuing to pick up donations weekly from the mailbox at the church and a number of parishioners are making donations via Interac e-transfer. If you would like to use this method, please enter offerings@oldchurchrd.com as the recipient email address. If you are usually an envelope user, you can enter your envelope number in the comments section or if it is for a specific use, such as Heat the Church or Flowers, you can mark that in the comments section. This is an automatic deposit so there is no security question.

Heat the Church: Just as it is important to continue giving our regular donations to the church, those who wish to contribute to this fund can do so by putting an envelope marked Heat the Church in the offering plate on Sunday, under the donate button on the website or by e-transfer as outlined above. The suggested donation is \$25 for a day. It is not just in the winter we encourage this, as the daily rate is averaged over the year. In terms of the heat in the Hall, if you or your group have an event and you turn up the heat, **please turn the thermostat back to 18 when you are finished.**

Flower Donations:

While the flowers beautify the church, they are also used by Altar Guild as part of their parish outreach, as after the service they are delivered to people in the parish. Thank you to all who have already signed up for donations. We do not have flowers in Advent. A new calendar will be put up before the end of 2023 for donations in 2024.

AROUND THE PARISH:

Events:

We have had two very successful events in our parish in this past month. These were the Great Turkey Supper and most recently the Tea and Talent sale. We thank those who spear headed these events: Kevin Schropfer and the Men's Group for the Turkey Supper and Judy Ewart for the Tea. Also, thanks to all those who contributed and volunteered and to those who attended.

Secret Prayer Sisters Reveal:

Thank you everyone for coming to the Ladies' Breakfast and enjoying one another's company. This is really a solitary participation and it was special to share time together. The group wants a new match organized. In January watch for the information sign-up sheets. The next match will be from February to February, that way we will include all the birthdays! The SPS group is open to all ladies in the parish and for more information please contact Elizabeth Thain.

Choir:

As a trial this year, the choir have been practicing on Thursday from 7-8 pm at the church. We are exploring new music in a new supplement to our blue hymn book as well as new music from our present book. If you do not wish to be in the choir but would like to come and learn the new music and then be able to help lead from in the congregation, there will be certain Thursdays advertised and you are invited to come on those days. **The next date for this is December 7th.** If you have questions, contact Joan Williams at choir@oldchurchrd.com.

Anglican Church Calendars 2024: Yes, the calendars are coming. The word is the calendars are to be at the printers by the end of next week. Hopefully this means orders can be filled and sent in a couple of weeks. Debb Mann has a list of people who want one and Altar Guild really appreciates your continued support. There is still time to contact Debb and place an order. The price is \$10. Contact Debb at debbmann@telus.net or Elizabeth at ethain@telus.net. The cost is still just \$10 and this is the only fundraiser that the Altar Guild has. A calendar can be reserved by contacting Debb Mann and prepayment would be appreciated.

Reminder - Pastoral Care Ministry:

A formal group has been established to give targeted support and encouragement. At this time our pastoral care team has several parts. We all share a foundation of connection. We aim to connect in prayer, connect in telephone conversations, connect in visiting, connect in cards of care and connect in being present. If you wish more information contact Tracey at deacon@oldchurchrd.com.

Prayer Chain Ministry: The Prayer Chain Ministry at St. Luke's Church has been initiated to provide a one-on-one connection to individuals with emergency situations through the gift of prayer. Prayer requests for yourself, or "consented to" prayers for others, are kept in strictest confidence and can be handwritten and placed in the prayer box at the back of the church, or submitted by contacting the Prayer Chain Coordinator at prayerchain@oldchurchrd.com. (email addresses are kept confidential and never shared with others) Prayers will be initiated within 24 hours following receipt of the request and continued on a daily basis for two weeks. After that time the Prayer Chain Coordinator will contact the requestor to determine whether further prayer is required, or if the prayer request needs to be updated. *"For surely, I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you."* Jeremiah 29:11-12. If you are interested in joining this ministry contact prayerchain@oldchurchrd.com.

Visitation: This part of the programme is to provide urgent and confidential in-person care and support to members of St. Luke's, as well as their families, friends, and loved ones. If you would like to have a visit, or are interested in joining this team, contact pastoralcarevisits@oldchurchrd.com.

Card Ministry: Over time, cards of greeting and encouragement will be sent to all members of the congregation.

Coffee Roster:

We still need volunteers to sign up on the Coffee Roster. Please consider this if you can. There is no need to supply food. Instructions for making the coffee are available in the kitchen. You can sign up on the form by the kitchen.

AROUND THE CHURCH:

Once again, this year the church tower was draped with poppies to mark Remembrance Day. We thank all those involved with this project. The netting with the poppies attached had been saved from last year, and only a few minor repairs were required. The poppies were featured in an article in the Red Deer Advocate and there was a lot of positive comments made by people in Red Deer and on Facebook. A response was received from a St. Luke's church in South Africa. Over the next year, more poppies will be attached to the netting on the west wall of the tower. Thanks, once again, to all involved in this project.

Prayers:

Prayer for the Parish

(BCP p. 44)

O God the Holy Ghost, Sanctifier of the faithful: Sanctify this parish by thine abiding presence. Bless those who minister in holy things. Enlighten the minds of the people more and more with the light of the everlasting Gospel. Bring erring souls to the knowledge of God our Saviour; and those who are walking in the way of life, keep steadfast to the end. Give patience to the sick and afflicted, and renew them in body and soul. Guard from forgetfulness of thee those who are strong and prosperous. Increase in us thy manifold gifts of grace, and make us all to be faithful in good works; O blessed Spirit, whom with the Father and the Son together we worship and glorify, one God, world without end. Amen

For Knowledge of God's Creation

(Episcopal Book of Common Prayer p 827)

Almighty and everlasting God, you made the universe with all its marvelous order, its atoms, worlds, and galaxies, and the infinite complexity of living creatures: Grant that, as we probe the mysteries of your creation, we may come to know you more truly, and more surely fulfill our role in your eternal purpose; in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer from St. Teresa of Avila (Spanish Nun of the 16th C.)

Christ has no body but yours, no hands, no feet on earth but yours.
Yours are the eyes with which he looks compassionately on this world.
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good.
Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world.
Yours are the hands.
Yours are the feet.
Yours are the eyes.
You are his body.
Christ has no body now but yours, no hands, no feet on earth but yours.
Yours are the eyes with which he looks compassionately on this world.
Christ has no body now on earth but yours. Amen

A Prayer for Ukraine

God of peace and justice,
We pray for the people of Ukraine today.
We pray for peace and the laying down of weapons.
We pray for those who fear for tomorrow,

That your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them.
We pray for those with power over war or peace,
For wisdom, discernment and compassion
to guide their decisions.
Above all, we pray for all your precious children, at risk and in fear,
That you would hold and protect them.
We pray this in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace.
Amen. (from Archbishop Justin Welby and Archbishop Stephen Cottrell)

A Prayer for the Middle East

God of mercy and compassion,
of grace and reconciliation,
pour your power upon all your children in the Middle East:
Jews, Muslims and Christians,
Palestinians and Israelis.
Let hatred be turned into love, fear to trust, despair to hope,
oppression to freedom, occupation to liberation,
that violent encounters may be replaced by loving embraces,
and peace and justice could be experienced by all. Amen.