

St. Luke's News

January 2024

Vol. 7 #1



Happy secular New Year and a continuing Happy Christmas! As we have been reminded, Christmas began on Christmas Eve and continues until Epiphany, on January 6th. Our liturgical new year began on the first Sunday of Advent. It is a busy time of year, and as Noel pointed out in church, this year we have had the shortest 4th week of Advent, as the 4th Sunday was also Christmas Eve. Last year we had the longest possible 4th week of Advent, as the 4th Sunday was a full week before Christmas Day. It is a time of year when a lot of people make resolutions for the upcoming year. As we know, only too well, a lot of these are not kept, even with the best of intentions. It is, however, a time when we can look back and reflect on the past year. There will be highlights and low points. There may be things we wish we had done that we did not do, and perhaps things we wish we had not done. As we look forward to 2024, we may have a lot of confused thoughts. Will we have another year of fires and other natural disasters? We may feel there are lots that may happen over which we have no control. I will have shared with a lot of you a story my father told me years ago after he had attended a synod meeting in Aklavik. They had to have a lot of translation and after discussing the problems of the church in the north, the translator from the Eastern Arctic came and said they really had no word for 'problem' in their language. When people said to him that they must have lots of problems living in that part of the country, he said that if you are in a situation and there is something you can do about it, you do it, and it is not a problem. If there is nothing you can do about it, there is nothing to do, and therefore it is not a problem. This may be a year where you need to make decisions about a number of things. In terms of this, I recommend Br. Michael's reflection/suggestion/request in "A Call to Something New?" that appears later in this Newsletter. Whatever 2024 brings you, may you approach it with prayer and reflection, knowing that you are not alone. If overwhelmed, remember you can contact Noel and the Pastoral Care Team for support. This parish family has shown itself to be very supportive to each other, and for this we thank God.

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

ANGLICAN CHURCH

of

ST. LUKE

4929 54th Street
Red Deer, Alberta

T4N 2G7

403-346-3402

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

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:

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

OTHER EVENTS:

January 3rd: Altar Guild Church 'undecorating' 6:30 pm

On Wednesday, January 3, at 6:30, we will be packing up our Christmas decorations and invite anyone who wants to help to join us. We certainly need strong helpers to handle the tree and carry the boxes to the basement storage.

Thank you in advance. Elizabeth Thain

January 13th: Men's Group Breakfast 9:00 am

January 11th: Parish Tea following the 2:00 pm Service

January 20th: Ladies' Group Breakfast 9:30 am **Note the change in time**

Watch your email for start dates for Wednesday Morning Bible Study and Sunday Evening Compline and also for the date of the next 'Pub Night'.

Secret Prayer Sisters:

In January a new match will be organized for the ladies in the parish who want to participate. Each participant is matched with another and she asked to hold in prayer her new Secret Prayer Sister over the next 12 months. If you want to be part of the match, please fill in the information sheet, Meet Me, with details you are comfortable sharing and it will be given to your matched Secret Prayer Sister. The Meet Me sheet will be available at the back of church on the next 3 Sundays, January 7, 14, 21. Completed sheets can be placed in my mail envelope or given directly to me. I'm happy to answer any questions. Elizabeth Thain

FINANCES:

Financial Statement:

	Nov 2023 Actual	YTD Actual	2023 YTD Budget	Variance
Income	13,534.79	162,349.57	149,508.33	12,841.24
Expenses	15,295.72	176,511.94	177,678.42	1,166.48
Net	1,760.93	14,162.37	28,170.09	14,007.72

On this chart, the variance column can be a bit confusing. What it represents is the variance from the 2023 budget. If you look at the ‘YTD Actual’, you will see that our expenses to the end of November were greater than our income by \$14,162.37. If you look at the ‘2023 YTD Budget’ column, you will see that the budget projected a net loss by the end of November of \$28,170.09. The figure of \$14,007.72 in the ‘Variance’ column shows that we had a net loss of less than that for which we had projected. We must remember that \$25,000 of that income was a transfer from an investment account that we have with the diocese. We will have the figures for all of 2023 in the next Newsletter.

It should be noted, that at this point, the donations designated for **Giving Sunday** amounted to \$12,135. (Comparison: 2021 \$6800, 2022 \$8200) We thank everyone for their prayerful approach to this, whether or not they were able to contribute at that time.

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. **A new flower calendar is now available at the back of the church for donations for 2024.** Thank you to all who have already signed up for donations.

AROUND THE PARISH:

December 3rd: We welcomed Noel back from his Sabbatical. It was appropriately the first Sunday of the new liturgical year.

December 10th:

At the 10:00 am service the blankets that had been made over the last several months by members of the congregation and friends were blessed in preparation for their being donated to the Dream Centre. Thanks to Joan Williams for coordinating this outreach project.



Thanks:

Thank-you to everyone who donated baking or items (chocolates, oranges) for the seniors' baking boxes. We filled 23 boxes with goodies and then had enough goodies to serve at our seniors' tea. A special thank-you to Debb, Elizabeth and Tristan for filling the boxes and then making sure they were delivered. Thanks also to Judy Ewart for coordinating this outreach.

Also, a big thank you to those who donated in our Advent Outreach to provide needed items for the Safe Harbour Society.

Choir:

As a trial this year, the choir has 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 January 11th.** If you have questions, contact Joan Williams at choir@oldchurchrd.com.

Anglican Church Calendars 2024: A huge thank you to everyone who supported our Anglican Church Calendar sale. We sold virtually all the calendars and are thankful they finally arrived.

Reminder - Pastoral Care Ministry:

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.

If you wish more information contact Tracey at deacon@oldchurchrd.com.

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.

A Call to Something New?

We spent quite a bit of time throughout November focusing on stewardship—this multifaceted aspect of the Christian life in which we actively seek to be wise in our use of time, energy, resources, relationships, gifts, and whatever else we happen to find in our hands. The main focus during that month was on preparing ourselves for Giving Sunday by asking the Lord how he would have us use our financial resources to participate in what he's doing in and through our little community. Now, as we enter into a new year, I want to encourage you to apply the same skills we were practicing during November—setting aside time to listen to the Holy Spirit—to the ways that you are using your gifts, your connections, and your time to take part in how God is at work in and through St. Luke's.

Because God is already very much at work in and through this place. There's actually lots of stuff that goes on here through which we are caring for one another, making room for visitors to come through our doors, and serving the community of Red Deer and Central Alberta. Groups like Altar Guild, the Intercessors, Servers, and Readers play an important role in making Sunday morning worship happen. Other groups like Men's Group, Ladies' Group, Pastoral Care, and the Greeters serve our people and the wider community by providing a feeling of welcome and connection, responding to difficulties faced in our lives, and taking on various projects to keep our building safe and looking great. Very soon it will be time for the Annual Meeting of Parishioners at

which we will elect new members to bodies like the Parish Council and the Corporation who take care of and provide direction to the various bits and bobs that go on behind the scenes here. And that's just the start. There are small groups who meet in homes, folks who volunteer with different organizations in the community, people who put together and facilitate different outreaches, and all sorts of other ways that we, the people of St. Luke's, are responding to the Lord as he leads us to care for one another, invite people in, and offer his kindness to the City of Red Deer.

Here, at the start of a new year, seems like as good a time as any to check in and see whether the Lord is asking you to keep plugging away in the areas you are currently serving, or to make some shifts in how you serve. Maybe He would have you tap into one of your gifts that you're not currently using. Or maybe he's got something new for you to start up, or something old to bring to a close. Or maybe he would have you tap someone on the shoulder to see how the two of you could be in this together. As you spend some time thinking and praying through how God would have you participate in what he's doing in this community—and through it in our city—I wish you all the best. Would this be a time where you know that God delights in you as you offer yourself up to his service and direction.

And as you go, can I highlight one particular opportunity for you? Since at least before my time, Brenda has served as St. Luke's PWRDF representative, keeping us up to date on how the Anglican Church of Canada is active in both ongoing projects and crisis relief in Canada and around the world. We wish her well as she takes the next steps in her life—steps which, unfortunately, see her leaving Red Deer. In light of her absence, we now find ourselves without a PWRDF rep, and maybe you're the right fit to take up Brenda's mantle.

Below you'll find the job description that PWRDF has on their website for a Parish Representative. Take a look, and ask yourself, and God, and the people around you if maybe this is a place where you could start serving in a new way.

Peace,
Michael McAuliffe

PWRDF Volunteer Parish Rep Job Description (It may look overwhelming, but it is not!)

Purpose:

As the PWRDF Rep your role is to strengthen and lift up PWRDF as a vital ministry within your parish; encouraging your community to live out the gospel in tangible and concrete ways by faithfully and actively supporting the work of PWRDF. This position description represents the activities that are needed to support a strong PWRDF ministry within a parish. It can be done by 1 person or by building a team. The team approach is encouraged.

Key Tasks:

- Include PWRDF partners and programs in your parish prayer and worship.
- Raise awareness of PWRDF in your parish

- Create opportunities for parish educational events and activities.
- Plan for, order and promote the use of PWRDF resources.
- Plan and support PWRDF fundraising events in your parish.
- Encourage support for PWRDF campaigns and appeals.
- Promote the many ways to donate to PWRDF.
- Liaise regularly with your PWRDF Diocesan Representative and report on parish PWRDF activities.
- Participate in diocesan PWRDF events or activities.
- Keep your parish leadership apprised of PWRDF's work and activities.
- Provide updated parish contact information to PWRDF.
- Adhere to PWRDF policies: For the full text of the policies go to <http://pwrdf.org/who-we-are/policies/>

Skills and attributes:

- Internet access and proficiency with e-mail, internet and social media.
- Interest in sustainable development, relief, refugees and global justice.
- Good verbal and written communication skills and comfort with making presentations
- Event planning skills
- Ability to lead and inspire others

Time required:

Approximately 3-5 hours per month with a flexible schedule for a 2-year term (Renewable).

Support Provided:

- PWRDF Parish Representative Handbook.
- Staff and diocesan representative availability for advice and support.
- PWRDF Resources
- Regular communication from diocesan representative about PWRDF programs and resources.

Benefits:

- Be part of a dynamic network of volunteers committed to social justice, who can provide support and inspiration
- Learn about international development, social justice and humanitarian response
- Be part of a ministry that has a large impact in Canada and around the world

AROUND THE CHURCH: It seemed to me that the church was particularly lovely this year, although I suspect I have thought this every year! Thanks go out to the Altar Guild and all those that came and helped decorate the church this year.





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

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