

St. Luke's News

February 2024

Vol. 7 #2



ANGLICAN CHURCH

of

ST. LUKE

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The season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, which this year is February 14th. This seems very early, although it occurred also in 2018. It is certainly not the earliest that Ash Wednesday can occur. That date is February 4th. With that, Easter is on March 22nd. It is a pretty rare occurrence, as it has only occurred in 1598, 1693, 1761, 1818, and the next time it happens will be 2285! It is determined by the date of Easter, which is determined by the first Sunday after the paschal full moon occurring after the ecclesiastical equinox, set as March 21st. The actual equinox can be March 19th, 20th, or 21st. There are some seasons of the Christian year whose names are self-evident-Christmas (Christ's Mass) and Halloween (All Hallows Eve). Lent is not quite as evident. Lent is a shortened form of the Old or Middle English word *lencten*, which means spring season. This tells us which hemisphere originated the term. There is a term in Old High German, *lenzo*, or lengthening, a reference to the increasing length of the days. In Christian terms, it refers to the period dating from the 40th weekday before Easter. In both Greek and Latin there are related terms which translate as fortieth. The actual days of Lent vary by denomination. As Anglicans, along with the rest of Western Orthodoxy, we mark Lent lasting from Ash Wednesday to the evening of Holy Saturday. As Sundays are not considered part of the strict observance of Lent, this makes it 40 days. Since 1970 the Roman Rite has defined Lent as being from Ash Wednesday to the evening of Maundy Thursday. The Lenten fast, however, extends to the Easter Vigil, so again, excluding Sundays, this makes 40 days.

Lent has traditionally been a time for "giving something up", but I refer you to Tracey's *From the Deacon's Bench*, for a new way of looking at our observance.

Submit items for the March Newsletter by February 24th to website@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

Thursday: 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.

Sunday 7:00 pm: Compline: Watch your emails for information on the resumption of this service.

Thursday 2:00 pm: Said Eucharist

OTHER EVENTS:

February 4th: **Annual Meeting of Parishioners** following the 10:00 service

Secret Prayer Sisters: Secret Prayer Sisters is a programme of prayer and care for another lady. All women of the parish are invited to participate. Each lady is matched with another and has the privilege and responsibility to hold her in daily prayer. There is still time to join and the sign-up/information sheets will be available

Sunday February 4, the last day before the match is drawn up. Please return completed forms to me. I'm happy to answer questions. Elizabeth Thain
ethain@telus.net

February 8th: **Parish Tea:** Due to the cold weather, our Parish Tea, for January 11 was cancelled. Hopefully the weather will cooperate and we will have our tea in February. Our February Tea is scheduled for February 8th and we will be serving cupcakes along with coffee and tea. **The Parish tea is open to everyone in the congregation** and is held the second Thursday of the month following the 2:00 pm service. If you would like to attend or know of someone who would like to attend but needs a ride to get to the church, please leave a message with the church office (403-346-3402) as we have a couple of members in our congregation who are willing to drive.

February 10th: **Men's Group Breakfast 9:00 am**

February 13th: **A Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper** will be provided on February 13th at the St. Luke's hall. Pancakes and sausages will be served and gluten free waffles provided for those requiring gluten free meals.

Food will start being served at 5:30 and continue through until 6:30. It is hoped that more people can be accommodated as people finish their meal and make some room for later attendees. Donations will be accepted.

February 14th: Ash Wednesday Service: 7:00 pm St. Leonard's on the Hill, 4241-44th Street

February 17th: Ladies' Group Breakfast 9:30 am

Wednesday Morning Bible Study: 10:00 am in the church hall

For the next while this will be in the form of a guided reflection on the Lord's Prayer.

Coping – A St. Luke's Lenten Series: Wednesday evenings from **February 21 through March 20**, 6:30-8:30 pm in the church hall. Stress, anxiety, depression, fear, and anger. Come and explore concrete, evidence-based strategies that can change your emotional direction and bring you closer to God. Come for yourself or come and learn how you can help someone you care about. For more information contact Joanne Wygiera at 403-877-5327.

Holden Evening Prayer: 7:00 pm Wednesdays **February 21st to March 20th**

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church 40 Holmes Street

Lenten Resource: Once again the PWRDF is producing an online Lenten series of reflections. They are being presented by renowned biblical scholar, Dr. Sylvia Keesmaat who is the past co-chair of the Bishop's Committee on Creation Care for the Diocese of Toronto. She offers on-line courses at Bible Remixed, and speaks widely on issues connected to climate justice and the Bible. Sylvia is the co-author, with Brian Walsh, of *Romans Disarmed: Resisting Empire, Demanding Justice*, and is currently writing a book on ecological grief and hope in the biblical story.

She lives on Russet House Farm, an off-grid permaculture farm in the Kawartha Lakes of Southern Ontario, on the traditional territory of the Michi Saagiig Anishnaabeg, with her husband, Brian Walsh, and a fluctuating number of people and animals.

You can register for this Lenten series, by going to <https://pwrdf.org/Lent2024/>.

Lenten Outreach Project:

As a Lenten outreach project, we will be collecting assorted feminine hygiene products for the women in our shelters. I think it is especially appropriate to collect these on March 10, known as Mothering Sunday and it is Rose Sunday, where rose vestments are able to be worn. I believe supporting women in this way is important. There will be a pink box placed at the back of the church to collect these items, should this be of interest to you. Thank you for your continued support. Tracey+.

From the Deacon's Bench



As I write this, I think of how quickly time has gone by. I look out the window at some Christmas remnants still in the yard. Yes, I know it is nearing the end of January. Yet I

like Christmas things, the season, the lights, the people, the light and faith, the promises held and given. Now as I plan ahead in my life, I note that Lent will soon be upon us, or at least it feels that way.

Lent is that intentional time of being more present with our faith and faith journey – with God, with the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, of the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives. We walk our way with Jesus to the cross, noting our own humanity, frailty and disconnectedness from perhaps God, others and ourselves. There is a self-examination and humility that reminds us of who is God and who we are as God’s people.

For some, this Lenten time is set aside with extra study, perhaps daily readings and meditations. There might be a fasting from favourite foods or a fasting from selfishness, greed, gossip etc. This “fasting” I believe, is meant to be a way of turning ourselves away from distracting things and to towards God. Our Ash Wednesday liturgy (BAS pg 282) brings an invitation “to observe a holy Lent by self-examination, penitence, prayer, fasting and almsgiving, and by reading and meditating on the word of God.”

One of the ways I try to observe Lent is as an intentional place of serving/assisting others in addition to my daily readings and meditating. It is a commitment to make the life/experience of another easier or better. The yearly Lenten practice of going out of my way to help someone reinforces the servanthood and sacrifice that I see in Jesus throughout scripture. I commit to an act of service. This could be **committing** to being a snow angel for your neighbours – each and every time it snows, giving respite care to a family member/friend; this is doing something for someone else that takes time, energy, commitment and even sacrifice.

I encourage you to pray deeply about how you observe this Lent. Is it a deepening of prayer time and quality, intentional studying of scripture and/or theological writers, acts of service, inward honest examination of short comings as well as gifts to be used, a fasting from food/drink/gossip etc.

Whatever and wherever your Lenten prayerfulness takes you, I invite you into a holy and healing Lent. Peace, Tracey+

Almighty and ever living God, you invite us deeper into your world, your people, your Lent. May this time be one of outward focus; seeking you in those we often ignore. Help us live a Lent focused on freedom, generosity, and encounter. Give us hearts hungry to serve you and those who need what we have to give. Amen.

(Author unknown)

FINANCES:
Financial Statement:

	Dec 2023 Actual	2023 Actual	2023 Budget	Variance
Income	35,871.29	198,220.86	163,100.00	35,120.86
Expenses	14,672.32	191,184.26	194,331.00	3,146.74
Net	21,198.97	7,036.60	31,231.00	38,267.60

As you can see, we have ended the year 2023 with a small positive balance. Where we had budgeted for a \$31,000 deficit, we have a \$7,000 surplus. This is in thanks, partly, because we took money from our ministry account with the Diocese, but it is primarily because of the generosity of all of you. This said, **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:

Altar Flowers are given to the Glory of God. There are 42 Sundays plus Christmas in a year and there are no flowers during the 10 Sundays during Lent and Advent. Following the main Sunday service, the Altar Guild gives the flowers to someone in the parish, a gift saying we care for one another.

The cost for 2 bouquets is \$60, which is the same as the suggested donation when someone chooses to sponsor a Sunday. At the back of the church is a beautiful Flower Calendar with many Sundays available. The sponsor may choose to make a dedication and this will be noted in the leaflet that week. You will receive an email from the office prior to your Sunday to ask if you have a dedication. Payment is made to St. Luke's Church by e-transfer to offerings@oldchurchrd.com, with 'Flower Donation' in the comments section, or by cheque or cash in an envelope in the offering plate at church, again marking it as 'Flower Donation'. Thank you to everyone who sponsors a Sunday. Please contact me if you have questions. Elizabeth Thain

AROUND THE PARISH:

A Big Thank you!

Thanks to everyone who contributed to the Advent/Christmas collection of items for Safe Harbour.

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. Watch your emails for the date of the next group practice. If you have questions, contact Joan Williams at choir@oldchurchrd.com.

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. If you are interested or would like more information, contact Michael McAuliffe at peopleswarden@oldchurchrd.com.

AROUND THE CHURCH:

After a pause last year, we intend to have Shawn, with Ravenstone Conservation, undertake the next phase of conservation of the stone at the church. We have applied for Heritage Funding from the Provincial Government. We have received a generous donation to be used for this purpose, and will draw money, if necessary, from our maintenance investments that we have held by the Diocese.

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