



HARK! THE HERALD

The Newsletter of St. Luke's Anglican Church, Merced, CA

December 2016



From the Pastor's Desk

As I write this, it is the Saturday after Thanksgiving. It is a quiet day in town, but a busy morning at the church. A team of volunteers is “greening” the church, decorating it for Advent. Our church is always beautiful, but to me, it is never as lovely as it is at Christmas. I look forward to the Christmas lights (also called “fairy lights”) to be turned on as we reach Christmas. These are small things, little changes of decoration. They do not carry the same significance as our change in liturgical color to blue or the change in our opening acclamation to “Surely the Lord is coming soon,” to which you reply, “Amen. Come Lord Jesus!”

Still, the volunteers putting up garland and other decorations are representing all of us this season. We prepare our church, our homes, our families, and ourselves for the coming of the Lord. Jesus came two thousand years ago, but we use this season to “ponder all these things in [our] hearts” as the mother of our Lord did. At the same time, we prepare our hearts for the return of Jesus, coming in glory to the Earth. Between these two “advents” (which means “arrival”), we prepare for Jesus to arrive in our lives in new and surprising ways each day.

Jesus arrives as we imagine the Jewish people longing for the Messiah to come, and we identify with their need for a Savior to set all things right.

He arrives as we ponder His coming as a child in Bethlehem, and we understand a little more each day how that arrival changed everything in the world and everything in our own lives.

Jesus arrives as we read Scripture and pray. Sometimes that arrival occurs through a new insight, sometimes through a sense of comfort and presence, sometimes through the actions we take alongside Jesus as we apply the Scriptures or step out in faith after praying.

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Jesus arrives in surprising conversations, as grace touches lives in expected ways, using us to draw people to God or giving us encouragement through the words of others.

Jesus may arrive while you are drinking coffee one morning or a mug of cider at night. He may arrive while you are stuck in traffic on the 99 or trying to find parking while Christmas shopping.

We cannot make Jesus arrive when we want or how we want. His people waited hundreds of years for his first coming. His people have waited thousands of years for his second coming. However, waiting for the Lord is never passive or idle. We wait by preparing our hearts and lives, like decorating a church. We wait for His arrival as hosts preparing for a treasured guest at the holidays.



Diocesan Convention with Archbishop Foley Beach and Bishop Eric Menees

Church Growth Commission

We will meet at Shirley's home during December for "Coffee and Christmas Goodies". If you would like to join us, please call or email Shirley at 722-4782,

Luke22936@aol.com.

Mark your Calendar for SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10TH - 10:00am - 317 West Alexander Ave. Merced

Pantry News

Thanks to all of our St. Luke's family for being a light and generous gift to those in need this past year. Merry Christmas and Blessings to you and yours.



December

DEC 4—Darlene Clouse, Cheryl Mayo, Loretta Stuart, Susan

DEC 11— Shirley Vaughn-Hulbert, Suzanne Miles

Dec 18—Volunteers needed

Up-Coming Events

DEC 2—First Friday 6-8 pm
Nevin & Stephanie Koepnick's
2038 H Street, Merced (Corner
of 21st Street & H Street) RSVP
261-4390

DEC 13—Men's Night Out
Location TBA

DEC 10—Growth
Committee 10 am

DEC 15—Vestry 5:30 pm

DEC 4—Sisters of Prayer
11 am

DEC 23, 26—Office Closed

Women's Fellowship

The women of the church met on November 18th to share lunch and fellowship at Paul's. Afterwards several of us went to Duarte's to see the poinsettias and order for the church. We were a small but mighty group due to other commitments. With the holidays coming and the move we thought we would not get together in December. The plan is to get together in January. The fellowship is wonderful.

Ladies, please let me know where you would like to go and if there is anything else you would like to do with our get-togethers. You can contact me at church, by phone or e-mail. Kathy Hill, 357-0782, taffyh@sbcglobal.net

Request for Feedback

As we prepare for our future move to Our Lady of Mercy Church, it is the perfect opportunity for us to consider our service time. I know that change is difficult for many people, and even bringing up the possibility of another change may upset some. However, I am truly seeking your input about our Sunday service time. Our current time of 9am seems to work very well for those who attend St. Luke's. However, I have received feedback from several of you that visitors, including children and grandchildren have a difficult time attending at that time. Similarly, I have personally heard college students, young adults, and young families tell me that 9 am seems too early for them to attend, and that they would be more interested in St. Luke's if the service was a little later.

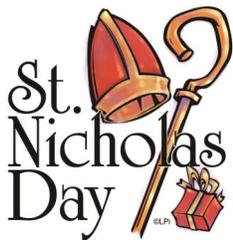
Weighing the needs of those who are already a part of St. Luke's against those of potential future members is always a challenge. I do not want to make changes that will cause problems for the committed, but I do want us to do everything we can to welcome visitors and invite the "next generation" of St. Luke's to join us.

So, I need to know how you would be effected if we keep the service time at 9am versus changing it to 10am. Please do your best to distinguish between personal preference and more substantial impact. I want to know what you prefer. However, I also need to know if a change of time would make it significantly easier or more difficult for you to attend church. In our new location, it is likely that altar guild would need to set-up for services either on Saturday night or Sunday morning. If you are on the altar guild, would a later time help you, or would it make little difference? Would a time change make things easier or more difficult for the choir?

Personally, I am happy with our current time. However, I think a change to 10 am might make it easier for

us to grow. If that is the case, I think it was worth changing, but only if that is a change that our current members want and would support. I do not expect total agreement on this, but I want to hear from you. I am hoping that most of you will be flexible and supportive regardless of which decision we make, but I need your input.

You can talk with me at coffee hour, make an appointment during the week by calling Patti, or email me at rector@stulukesmerced.org.



St. Nicholas Day

On December 4, 2016, we will be celebrating St. Nicholas Day. We need the

following items:

Drinks, snacks, desserts, 10 gift bags and small goodies for the bags.

Look for the signup sheet in Norvell Hall. If you have any questions, please call Cheryl Waite at 261-4896 or Victoria Schuller at 631-2590.

Let's make this the best Christmas to remember for the youth of our parish!

Tote Bag Project

Yes, we still have them, and this is our second batch of 36 ordered. We have had many positive comments! Nancy Wickstrom will have them for sale at the Sunday Coffee Hour - \$10.00 each

First Friday Family Fellowship

December 2nd 6—8 pm

First Friday will be held at Nevin & Stephanie Koepnick's home at 2038 H Street in Merced. They are located on the corner of 21st & H Streets. Bring an appetizer to share and something to drink. RSVP to Nevin at 261-4390.

ANNUAL GIFT BAG PROJECT

A special thank you to all parishioners and friends of St. Luke's who have given needed items and donations of money to the Annual Holiday Gift Bag Project sponsored by the In-mate Family Council at the Central California Women's Facility, Chowchilla. Pick up will be at Shirley's house during the week of November 14th. However, if items come in late, Dave Hetland can still receive them up until the end of November. Let Shirley know!

Church Growth Commission

**Is God calling you to *Love*
a family *In the name of Christ* this Christmas season?**

We have families in the Greater Merced area who are waiting for your support.
Click the link below to provide a meal, gifts or both to those in our community.

Let Love INC know by Monday, *December 9th!*

Yes, I will adopt a family

clearinghouse@loveincmerced.com



Love INC
*Love In the Name of Christ
of Greater Merced*

**Diocese of San
Joaquin Defense
Fund**

Make check payable to St. Luke's Church, earmarked for the Defense Fund. By representing the Diocese, they are representing us. Remember them in your prayers during the final process.

News from the Diocese may be found at:

www.dioceseofsanjoaquin.net

**PRAY
MERCED**
Fridays at Noon

*Join us in prayer for our community leaders and workers,
our neighbors, our businesses, our churches, our schools,
our families and opportunities for healing and growth.
Pray for God's mercy to be upon our city.*

Love INC of Greater Merced and the Pray Merced Initiative

Weekly Services
Sundays
9:00 a.m. Holy Communion

Church Staff

The Most Rev. Dr. Foley Beach, Archbishop,
Anglican Church in North America
The Rt. Rev. Dr. Eric Vawter Menees, Bishop
The Rev. Ryan Bradley, Rector, E-mail: rector@stlukesmerced.org
Mrs. Mady Montague, Choir Director; Mrs. Marian McFarland, Organist
Mrs. Patti McClain, Administrative Assistant; Mrs. Sue Linardos, Sexton

Members of the Vestry

Class of 2016
Mrs. Sylvia Bankson, Mr. Richard Blank, Mr. Fred Dutton
Class of 2017
Mrs. Linda Meyer, Sr. Warden; Mr. Mike Waite, Jr. Warden; Mr. Rob Mercurio
Class of 2018
Mr. Ed Gardner, Mrs. Kathy Hill, Mrs. Maria Laurel
Mrs. Karlyne Paul, Treasurer; Mr. Jim Hill, Clerk

Diocesan Convention Delegates

Norman Montague, Calvin Nixon, Shirley Vaughn-Hulbert; Karlyne Paul, alternate.

Contact Us

St. Luke's Anglican Church

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M - F 8:00 am - 2:00 pm

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www.stlukesmerced.org

E-mail:
office@stlukesmerced.org

ARTICLE DEADLINE FOR
HARK! THE HERALD IS THE
20TH OF EACH MONTH.

Send articles to:
office@stlukesmerced.org

Visit us at our website:
www.stlukesmerced.org

A Welcoming Family...Worshipping Christ...Sharing His love with others

St. Luke's Anglican Church
350 W. Yosemite Ave.
Merced, CA 95348

Address Service Requested

PLACE
STAMP
HERE