

# Hark! The Herald

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Volume 21 Number 12    The Newsletter of St. Luke's Anglican Church, Merced, CA    December, 2015  
A Welcoming Family...Worshipping Christ...Sharing His love with others.  
Serving Jesus Christ since 1879

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From the Pastor's Desk

"St. Luke's Anglican Church: A welcoming family, worshipping Christ and sharing his love with others."



My Dear St. Luke's Family,

I began working at St. Luke's the day after I arrived in town, so naturally I had a lot of boxes left to unpack. As I continued to open boxes, I often wanted something and had to decide between two options: to search every box until I find it or to decide I don't really need it now after all. As I have begun serving as your rector, I have felt that similar dilemma many times already. Which things do we need now? Which can we be patient about, until I have "moved in" a little more? Some answers are obvious. Sunday comes every week, and preaching and liturgy are highest priorities. Likewise, the personal needs of pastoral care never stop and can seldom wait. However, when it comes to planning for the future, creating new events, and launching or leading new ministries, the decisions about priorities become more difficult. I know there are some ministries that were put on hiatus when Fr. Ron retired, and there are new ministries or opportunities some of you have been eagerly anticipating "once the new guy starts."

When I think about starting new projects at St. Luke's, I have two guiding principles in mind. First, I want to plan with a team. I often hear suggestions and ideas from individuals, and these are very helpful. However, it can be difficult to discern whether this is a good idea from one person, or whether it is a more general desire of the congregation. I want to hear from many people with a variety of backgrounds. Second, as much as possible, I want my work to encourage and equip the rest of the church. I don't want to start new projects that replace lay ministries or make them unnecessary. There are some things that only clergy can do, and a few more things that I might have special training or background in, but I would rather work to help you serve than serve in your place.

Along these lines, I am requesting your help in two new ministry teams, parish "commissions" for worship and for Christian education. We already have one for church growth, and I hope these will be similarly supported by church members. We will have more teams in the future, and I hope to eventually see every church member serving on at least one team. The commitment is not overwhelming: usually just one meeting a month, plus whatever time you are willing to volunteer to work on special projects of your choosing. With these teams, I hope that every church member will find a meaningful place to use your gifts and pursue the priorities God has placed on your heart for St. Luke's. I know many of you are already serving faithfully, often in several areas. Rather than adding more for you to do, joining one of these teams might be a way to partner with others serving in related areas, for encouragement and coordination.

Here are the details:

## 1) Christian Education Commission

*Shall oversee the Christian Nurture, Discipleship and Confirmation programs for all ages.  
Shall plan retreats, quiet days and other opportunities for spiritual growth.*

Are you interested in helping in these areas? Maybe you have a heart for the children of our parish and community. Perhaps your passion is learning, and you would like to see Bible studies and book groups at St. Luke's. You might have creative ideas for classes, trips, seminars, or retreats. If you are interested in growth and formation, for children or adults, this is the team for you.

## 2) Worship Commission

*Shall plan, review, and evaluate the corporate worship services.*

How do we serve God with reverence, while also being a warm and welcoming family? How do we offer depth to life-long Anglicans while also introducing visitors to the liturgy, Scripture, and sacraments? How can we improve our Sunday services? Would you like to help plan special services for holidays? This group will also be a place for representatives of the altar guild, lay readers, LEMS, acolytes, ushers, and choir to coordinate their ministries and advise the rector. This is a team for those who love liturgy, music, preaching, hospitality, or planning.

If you are interested in serving on, or possibly chairing, either of these commissions, please contact Fr. Ryan. Each one will need a liaison from the vestry, but anyone who attends St. Luke's is welcome to participate.



### Christian Nurture at St. Luke's

#### Sundays

Children's Church meets in Norvell Hall during the worship service and is for children in the primary grades. They follow a liturgy designed for them that is based on the gospel lesson for that Sunday.



### Church Growth Commission

A special thank you is extended to all of our Church parishioners who have attended and contributed to our Church Growth Commission during 2015; it will be a year in January 2016. The brainstorming and discussion has been amazing! We will meet again on JANUARY 16, 2016 at 10:00 am in the Emma Hunt Room. Please feel free to join us at that time. Add yourself to Shirley's email list - [luke22936@aol.com](mailto:luke22936@aol.com) or phone her at 722-4782.

Blessings+, *Shirley*

### Christmas Eve Service

Our Christmas Eve service will be at 4 pm this year.

I realize that not everyone will prefer this time. I chose it with two primary groups in mind: those in our congregation who cannot drive at night and those with young children who find a later service challenging. My hope is that this earlier time will allow us to have an excellent turnout from members of St. Luke's and from visitors. Please remember that Christmas and Easter are the two times each year when non-Christians and Christians without a church home are most likely to attend church if they are invited.

My hope is that we will also be able to offer services at additional times in future years. I am particularly considering ways to add a late night Christmas Eve service and a Christmas Day morning service in future years, without taxing our choir or altar guild.

Blessings,

*Fr. Ryan +*

## Christmas



Mark your calendar for Sunday, December 6, 2015 for an after Service Celebration of the Feast of St. Nicholas. This Saint was one who loved and gave generously to children.

Let's honor him by decorating a Christmas tree, donating special Christmas gifts to 10 children sponsored by the Boys and Girls Club, and enjoying Christmas treats. Cheryl and Mady are working with our youth on Christmas carols. Shirley has a signup sheet and many of you have offered your help. If you have volunteered for a child's gift, please deliver to the office no later than December 4th, unwrapped. If you plan on donating decorations deliver them any time before the 6th, either to the office or leave in Norvell Hall.

Blessings+, *Shirley*

## Pantry News

After sorting through the items in the Pantry, we found that we are out of: Hamburger or Tuna Helper, canned fish or meat, pasta and spaghetti sauce, crackers, and canned stews. Hopefully, there will be some great sales during this time of year so that we can fill the shelves with these items. If you prefer to give cash, simply place your donation in an envelope, mark it "Pantry Donation" and place it in the Offertory plate. Thank you for this year's cash and food donations. You are certainly very generous. And each and every one of you are very much appreciated. Blessings to you and yours as you prepare for our Lord's coming.

*Monica*

## December Needs

Children's Sunday School: We have an immediate need for a few more volunteers to serve on a rotating basis. Are you willing to serve once or twice a month with our kids? Please contact Fr. Ryan.

Lay Eucharistic Ministers, Lay Readers, and Lectors: We need more people willing to be trained to serve on Sunday mornings in these areas. If you are interested, please contact Fr. Ryan.

We would like to improve the speaker system in the church, so parish members can better hear the liturgy and sermon. We would also like to begin recording the sermon and making it available online. If you have any expertise or would be willing to learn or research to help with this, please let Fr. Ryan know.

## 2016 Sign-up Sheets

The 2016 lists for First Friday, Men's Night Out and Altar Flowers are on the bulletin board in Norvell Hall. Please sign up at your earliest convenience.

## Up-Coming Events

**November 30 - December 2** – Winter Clergy Retreat

**December 4** – First Friday Family Fellowship @ 6:00 p.m. in Norvell Hall is a potluck. (Remember no alcohol, make your drinks virgin!) The church will provide decaf coffee.

Please RSVP to Linda Meyer, 726-0534 or the church office, 383-1888.

**December 6** – A special children's program with a tree and carols.

**December 11** – Annual Parish Meeting

**December 12** – A meeting of all church women in Norvell Hall at 10:00 a.m. to discuss our Sisters in Service coffee hour ministry.

**December 13** – Following our church service we will hold our annual all parish meeting. We will elect 3 new vestry members, elect our 2016 convention delegates and review/approve our 2016 operating budget.

**December 17** – Vestry Meeting 5:30 p.m.

**December 19** – Growth Commission Meeting 10:00 a.m. Emma Hunt Room

**December 23 - 25** – Church office closes at noon on Wednesday. Closed Thursday and Friday.

**December 24** – Christmas Eve Service 4:00 p.m.

**December 31 - January 1** – Church office closes at noon on Thursday. Closed Friday.

### **African Team Ministries**

Thank you for your participation in the jewelry sale this year. We raised a total of \$809 for this ministry of compassion.

### **Bowling Fun**

The bowling party was again a huge success at the Atwater Bowl on November 8th! Thanks to all the bowlers and supporters wearing their blue St. Luke's T-shirts. We will plan another fun Bowling activity in February 2016.  
Church Growth Committee

New Addresses:

Phyllis Gardner  
1231 Donna Drive  
Merced, CA 95348

The Rev. Ron and Linda Parry  
C/O The Spiottos  
1601 Shady Hillside Pass  
Round Rock, TX 78665



### **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 appeal process.

News from the Diocese may be found at: [www.dioceseofsanjoaquin.net](http://www.dioceseofsanjoaquin.net)

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Message from the Altar Guild  
Decorating the church for Christmas

We will be buying poinsettias to decorate the church for Christmas from a local grower again this year. If you would like to donate to the decorating of the Altar for the Christmas Eve and Christmas season services, please fill out the form below and submit it to the office by December 22. Make checks payable to St. Luke's Church.

Please indicate the celebration, thanksgiving or memorial message you desire and return to the Church Office.  
in celebration of \_\_\_\_\_  
or, in thanksgiving for \_\_\_\_\_  
or, in loving memory of \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_

St. Luke's Anglican Church  
350 West Yosemite Avenue  
Merced, CA 95348



Address Service Requested

## *Hark! The Herald*



St. Luke's Anglican Church  
Office Business Hours: Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.  
Phone: (209) 383-1888 FAX: (209) 383-4935  
Web site: [www.stlukesmerced.org](http://www.stlukesmerced.org)  
E-mail: [office@stlukesmerced.org](mailto:office@stlukesmerced.org)

ARTICLE DEADLINE FOR *HARK! THE HERALD* IS THE 20<sup>TH</sup> OF EACH MONTH.  
Send articles to [office@stlukesmerced.org](mailto:office@stlukesmerced.org)

Visit us at our website: [www.stlukesmerced.org](http://www.stlukesmerced.org)

### **Weekly Services**

Sundays

9:00 a.m. Holy Communion [Children's Church meets during the Service]

### **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](mailto:rector@stlukesmerced.org)  
Mrs. Mady Montague, Choir Director; Mrs. Marilynne Isenberg, Organist  
Mrs. Patti McClain, Administrative Assistant; Mrs. Sue Linardos, Sexton

### **Members of the Vestry**

Class of 2015  
Mr. Max Dalrymple, Jr. Warden  
Mrs. Shirley Vaughn-Hulbert  
Mrs. Karlyne Paul, Treasurer  
Mrs. Linda Cometta, Clerk

Class of 2016  
Mrs. Sylvia Bankson  
Mr. Richard Blank  
Mr. Fred Dutton

Class of 2017  
Mrs. Linda Meyer, Sr. Warden  
Mr. Mike Waite  
Mr. Rob Mercurio

### **Diocesan Convention Delegates**

Mrs. Sylvia Bankson, Mr. Juan Laurel, Sr.; Mr. Max Dalrymple, Alternate