

Hark! The Herald

Volume 21 Number 1 The Newsletter of St. Luke's Anglican Church, Merced, CA January, 2015
A Welcoming Family... Worshipping Christ... Sharing His love with others.
Serving Jesus Christ since 1879

From the Pastor's Desk

“St. Luke's Anglican Church: A welcoming family, worshiping Christ and sharing his love with others.”

Dear Friends in Christ,

Happy New Year! This is always an interesting time of year. All the anticipation, excitement, and splendor of the Christmas celebration are over. Our hearts are still full of family connections, inspiring worship, and festive gatherings with friends. We've returned home from our travels, Christmas decorations will soon be put away and we begin reflecting on the New Year.

Each year during January we celebrate the season of Epiphany. This season begins with the coming of the wise men and the offering of gifts to the child Jesus. We are left to ponder what we will offer him this year, and what we will hold back. I am always moved by their dedication and commitment. Their journey was filled with peril, fear, doubt, blessings, worship, and wonder. And so is our journey in this life.

Epiphany is also a time for renewing our baptismal covenant with God as we celebrate the baptism of our Lord. Just as Jesus understood that God had a purpose for his life, so we discover in baptism that we too have a God-given purpose. We matter very much to God.

During Epiphany we celebrate the fact that God's love and message of hope and redemption is to all the nations, and not to just a few. We remember that we are “the nations” to whom this gospel has come and that we have a responsibility to share this good news of God's love and forgiveness with our friends and neighbors.

Epiphany is a wonderful time to invite our friends to church. I encourage each of you to invite at least one person or couple to church this Epiphany season. Not only will they be blest, but you will be also.

May Christ, the Son of God, be manifest in you, that your lives may be a light to the world.

Yours in Christ's love,
Father Ron+

Celebrating St. Luke's Babies – January 18

Did you, or someone you know, in your immediate family, welcome a newborn in year 2014? If so, please submit to the Church Office, the full name, date of birth as well as relationship to you. We will celebrate St. Luke's 2014 Babies on January 18, 2015.

Thanks,
Linda Parry

Wardens for 2015: Mrs. Linda Meyer, Sr. Warden and Mr. Max Dalrymple, Jr. Warden.

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
News from the diocese may be found at: www.dioceseofsanjoaquin.net.

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.



The Rector's Forum – "The Message of Romans"

Classes starts January 11.

Come join us after Coffee Hour in Saint Ann's Hall.

Wednesdays

10 a.m. Bible Study in St. Ann's Hall resumes January 21

Topic – "The Book of 2 Peter"

Class meets in Saint Ann's Hall; everyone is welcome.

6:30 p.m. Evening Prayer and Healing Service.

Every Wednesday night, except during Lent, we gather for worship, to offer intercessory prayer for our nation, church, city, family, and friends. We also provide a time for anointing with oil and the laying on of hands for healing. Everyone is welcome to attend. The service lasts about 30 minutes and is led by our licensed Lay Readers.

Annual Meeting Follow-up Report

At our December 14 Annual Meeting, Fr. Ron formally announced his intention to retire as our rector effective June 30, 2015, thereby completing 18 years of service. He called us to a season of prayer for three things:

First, Bishop Menees, those involved in the search process, and the man God is calling to be the next rector at St. Luke's.

Second, discernment among the possible candidates who will be presented to the parish by the Bishop, as to whom God is calling.

Third, once the call has been made and accepted, prayer for the new rector, asking God to help us receive, love, and follow him.

Bishop Menees has met with the Vestry to discuss the process for calling our next rector. He has asked Juan Laurel, George Parker, and Carolyn Reed (Vestry Class of 2014) to serve as his liaison committee with the Vestry and parish. They will keep the parish informed of the process and how they can assist in the discerning and calling process.

Elected to the Vestry Class of 2017: Linda Meyer, Frank Reed, and Mike Waite. Elected as delegates to diocesan convention 2015: Sylvia Bankson, Juan Laurel, and Carolyn Reed. Max Dalrymple was elected as the alternate.

The St. Luke's Faithful Servant 2014 recipients are: Juan Laurel, Sr., and Linda Parry

Thanks from Fr. Ron and Linda

Linda and I greatly appreciate the cards and gifts given us this Christmas. We are always touched by your love, encouragement, and support. Thank you.

Love,

Fr. Ron and Linda

A special "thank you" to the Altar Guild, Music Ministers, Lay Readers and Ushers for making the Christmas Eve service so meaningful and special. You are a blessing to our parish. *Fr. Ron*

Liturgical Notes

Epiphany is the climax of the Advent/Christmas Season and the Twelve Days of Christmas, which are usually counted from the evening of December 25th until the morning of January 6th, which is the Twelfth Day. The one or two Sundays between Christmas Day and Epiphany are sometimes called Christmastide. The season of Epiphany extends from January 6th until Ash Wednesday, which begins the season of Lent leading to Easter. Depending on the timing of Easter, this longer period of Epiphany includes from four to nine Sundays.

The colors of The Feast of the Epiphany and the First Sunday after The Epiphany are the colors of Christmas, white and gold, the colors of celebration, newness, and hope that mark the most sacred days of the church year. The colors are then changed to green until Transfiguration Sunday, the last Sunday before the beginning of Lent. The colors for Transfiguration Sunday are usually the colors of Holy Days, white and gold.

As with most aspects of the Christian liturgical calendar, Epiphany has theological significance as a teaching tool in the church. The Wise Men or Magi who brought gifts to the infant Jesus were the first Gentiles to acknowledge Jesus as "King" and so were the first to "show" or "reveal" Jesus to a wider world as the incarnate Christ. This act of worship by the Magi, which corresponded to Simeon's blessing that this child Jesus would be "a light for revelation to the Gentiles" (Luke 2:32), was one of the first indications that Jesus came for all people, of all nations, of all races, and that the work of God in the world would not be limited to only a few.

The day is now observed as a time of focusing on the mission of the church in reaching others by "showing" Jesus as the Savior of all people. It is also a time of focusing on Christian brotherhood and fellowship, especially in healing the divisions of prejudice and bigotry that we all too often create between God's children.

An Epiphany Prayer

Father, we thank you for revealing yourself to us in Jesus the Christ, we who once were not your people but whom you chose to adopt as your people. As ancient Israel confessed long ago, we realize that it was not because of our own righteousness, or our own superior wisdom, or strength, or power, or numbers. It was simply because you loved us, and chose to show us that love in Jesus.

As you have accepted us when we did not deserve your love, will you help us to accept those whom we find it hard to love? Forgive us, O Lord, for any attitude that we harbor that on any level sees ourselves as better or more righteous than others. Will you help us to remove the barriers of prejudice and to tear down the walls of bigotry, religious or social? O Lord, help us realize that the walls that we erect for others only form our own prisons!

Will you fill us so full of your love that there is no more room for intolerance? As you have forgiven us much, will you enable us with your strength to forgive others even more? Will you enable us through your abiding Presence among us, communally and individually, to live our lives in a manner worthy of the Name we bear?

May we, through your guidance and our faithful obedience, find new avenues in ways that we have not imagined of holding the Light of your love so that it may be a Light of revelation for all people.

We thank you for your love, praise you for your Gift, ask for your continued Presence with us, and bring these petitions in the name of your Son, who has truly revealed your heart. Amen.

Wanted: Clerk for the Vestry

If you are able to take good notes, have a computer with online access, and would like to volunteer to take the minutes for Vestry meetings on the third Thursday of each month, please speak to Fr. Ron. Thanks.

Up-Coming Events



Happy New Year

Wednesday, January 7 – The Epiphany of Our Lord (tr.)

“O God, by the leading of a star you manifested your only Son to the peoples of the earth: Lead us, who know you now by faith, to your presence, where we may see your glory face to face; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*”

We will celebrate this Feast Day with Evening Prayer at 6:30 p.m.

Sunday, January 11 – Installation and Commissioning of our new Vestry.

Tuesday, January 13 – Men’s Night Out

Host and location TBA

Sunday, January 18 – Celebrating St. Luke’s Babies

Wednesday, January 21 – Confession of St. Peter the Apostle (tr.)

“Almighty Father, who inspired Simon Peter, first among the apostles, to confess Jesus as Messiah and Son of the living God: Keep your Church steadfast upon the rock of this faith, so that in unity and peace we may proclaim the one truth and follow the one Lord, our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*”

We will celebrate this Feast Day with Evening Prayer at 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, January 28 – Conversion of St. Paul the Apostle (tr.)

“O God, by the preaching of your apostle Paul you have caused the light of Gospel to shine throughout the world: Grant, we pray, that we, having this wonderful conversion in remembrance, may show ourselves thankful to you by following his holy teaching; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*”

We will celebrate this Feast Day with Evening Prayer at 6:30 p.m.

Diocesan Vestry Retreat at ECCO

February 6th – 8th

Lay leaders are also welcome to attend.

Brochures and sign-up sheet are available in the Narthex.

Registration deadline is January 23.

Pantry News

How generous all of St. Luke's family was during the past year! You are much appreciated! Let's begin this coming year with a well-stocked pantry. Please consider giving fruit juices, cereals or instant cereals, breakfast bars, canned fruit or vegetables, boxed meals such as mac and cheese, hamburger helper, canned stews and meats or fish, crackers and peanut butter. Or, if you prefer, please give to Father Ron's Discretionary Fund or bring plastic bottles to Ann's red bucket in the kitchen.

Blessings to you and yours for a prosperous and spirit-filled New Year.

The following Sign-up Sheets are posted in Norvell Hall

2015 First Friday Family Fellowship

2015 Men’s Night Out

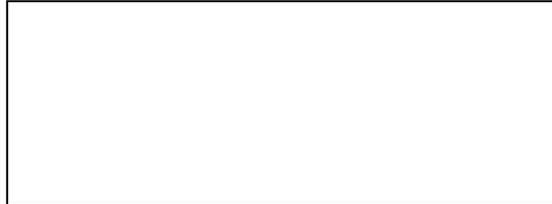
2015 Flower Chart

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
E-mail: office@stlukesmerced.org

ARTICLE DEADLINE FOR *HARK! THE HERALD* IS THE 20TH OF EACH MONTH.
Send articles to office@stlukesmerced.org

Weekly Services

Sunday: 9:00 a.m. Holy Communion [Children's Church meets during the Service]
11:15 a.m. Adult Bible Study after Coffee Hour
Wednesday: 10 a.m. Adult Bible Study; 6:30 p.m. Evening Prayer/Healing Service

Church Staff

The Most Rev. Dr. Foley Beach, Archbishop, Anglican Church in North America
The Rt. Rev. Dr. Eric Vawter Menees, Bishop
The Very Rev. Ron Parry, Rector (Home: 385-0677), E-mail: rector@stlukesmerced.org
Mrs. Mady Montague, Choir Director; Mrs. Marilynne Isenberg, Organist
Mrs. Patti McClain, Administrative Assistant; Mrs. Sue Linardos, Sexton

The Herald Staff

Mrs. Wanda Pehl, Mrs. Sue Dutton, Mrs. Winnie Mitchell,
Mrs. Linda Herlitz, Mrs. Ann Bean, Mrs. Trudy Holck

Diocesan Convention Delegates: Mrs. Sylvia Bankson, Mr. Juan Laurel, Sr., Mrs. Carolyn Reed;
Mr. Max Dalrymple, Alternate

Members of the Vestry

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

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

Class of 2017
Mrs. Linda Meyer, Sr. Warden
Mr. Frank Reed
Mr. Mike Waite