

Hark! The Herald

Volume 22 Number 3 The Newsletter of St. Luke's Anglican Church, Merced, CA March, 2016
A Welcoming Family... Worshipping Christ... Sharing His love with others.
Serving Jesus Christ since 1879

From the Pastor's Desk



Coffee in one hand
Leaning in to share, listen:
How I talk to God.

This is the first stanza of a poem by Kelly Belmonte, found in Malcolm Guite's *Word in the Wilderness: A Poem a Day for Lent and Easter*. As I mentioned in last month's Herald, Guite is an Anglican priest and poet in Cambridge, England. In his commentary on the poem, he mentions that people try to "pray with ceasing" (as St. Paul tells us to do in 1 Thessalonians) in various ways. Some people think this can only be done by monks and nuns, while others try to take on elaborate practices (such as constantly saying a prayer under their breaths at all times). However, for most of us, if prayer is going to be a central part of our lives, it will need to be like our lives: often messy, occasionally beautiful, frequently interrupted, necessarily flexible, and more a gift to be received than a duty to perform.

Lent is intended to be a time to remove distractions, preparing our hearts for Easter. I've described it as a spring cleaning of the soul. However, I'm finding this Lent to be a very busy season, in which finding time for prayer takes extra effort. Some of this is a professional hazard for a priest, but I am hearing similar stories from many of you. You have had health problems or someone you love has, and this not only causes stress and grief, but it also consumes huge amounts of your time and energy. It is a busy season at work, expected or unanticipated, and your schedule has lost all its blank spaces. Children or grandchildren or siblings need you, and it feels like you are giving everything away and have little left. For others, an injury or infirmity mean that you have more time than ever before, but it can feel like that time is being wasted as you lay at home or in a hospital bed.

Prayer belongs in all of this, but it may not be what we think of as prayer. I encourage you to practice morning and evening prayer, using the *Book of Common Prayer* or the form found on www.anglican church.net (our Province's website) under resources. The steady discipline of such a formal practice, the spiritual depth of the prayers, and the steady diet of Scripture read worked into the practice are an incredible gift. However, that is not the only way to pray. Why not pause in the morning, even if for just five or ten minutes, with a cup of coffee? Sip slowly in silence, remembering that God is with you. Then, when you're ready, tell Him whatever is on your mind. When you are at the hospital, waiting for an elevator or riding on the elevator, take that minute or two to check-in with God. Go for a walk, and tell God about what you see or what you think. Many people wish they had someone who would listen to them, someone they could tell about their day and their thoughts and feelings. Spend time sharing that with God. Practice the shortest prayers you can, and pray them as often as you can ("Lord help me be patient," "Thank you Lord for...," "Lord please heal/help/save..." are examples).

When we are busy and overwhelmed, or when our lives have changed in ways we cannot control, it is tempting to think, "once my life gets fixed, I will pray." Sometimes, we do need to make changes to our lives or circumstances if we can. Never, never, never should we wait to pray, however. Pray as you can, now (right now!) and later today and tomorrow. Even if it isn't the way you wish you could pray. Then, if you can find some better way to pray later, do that too! Today though, be with God however you can.

Lenten Activities

Wednesday Night Soup and Study

A St. Luke's tradition! We will meet on Wednesday nights from 5:30-7:00 PM for a soup supper, followed by a Lenten study led by Fr. Ryan.

Stations of the Cross

Meditate on the sacrifice of our Lord each Friday at noon, using the Stations of the Cross found in our sanctuary.

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

Next Church Growth Commission Meeting -- Saturday, March 19th, 2016 - 10:00 am - Emma Hunt Room. Thank you to all who attended our February Meeting. Thirteen were in attendance where everyone was encouraged to enter into lively discussion. Overview and Agenda are posted on the Bulletin Board in Norvell Hall. Remember, we only meet for an hour, so consider joining us in March. Add yourself to Shirley's email list, Luke22936@aol.com - if no email, phone her at 722-4782.

11th Annual Easter Egg Hunt at St. Luke's

WHEN: After the 9:00 am service on EASTER SUNDAY, MARCH 27, 2016 at 10:45 am.
WHO: Kids 0-12 - for the young people attending St. Luke's, including their friends & family
ENJOY: Easter Egg Hunt, a visit from the Easter Bunny with photo, refreshments and a drawing for a furry Easter bunny (not a real one) - have to be present to win! DON'T forget your Easter basket!

HELP NEEDED: Sign Up Sheet in Norvell Hall. Provide (filled) plastic Easter eggs, extra wrapped candy, special refreshments for the kids. Drop off at Church Office between 9:00-2:00pm, M-F by March 22nd. If you need more information or have questions, call or email Shirley Vaughn-Hulbert, 722-4782 - Luke22936@aol.com

Pantry Update

Besides bringing canned or packaged items, please consider donating money. Any amount would be really appreciated! Simply, put it in an envelope and mark it "Pantry Fund". Then place it in the collection plate. This might be a more efficient way for you to participate in this ministry. We need you to keep our closet ready for families in need. Thanks ahead of time, and blessings to you and yours and to those who seek our help.

Prayer List

Dear Fellow Parishioners,

I'm sure most of you are aware of the Prayer List on the back of each Sunday's bulletin. Hopefully you are taking the bulletin home and using that list as a prayer guide for the week. However, we are finding the list of "Friends and Family" gets longer and longer each week and needs updating from time to time.

A few of the names have been on the list for as many as 5-6 years. There is no definite length of time for a name to stay on the list, but in many cases the reason for requesting prayer has been answered and the individual has moved on with their life. We are not anxious to take names off of the list if the illness or situation is ongoing. At times people have simply forgotten to call the office and take a name off, those are the names we will be checking. We would like to make sure the list is current.

I have taken on the responsibility of helping Patti keep the list relevant so periodically I will be calling individuals to see if the prayer has been answered and the name can be removed from the list.

We hope that these calls are not offensive to anyone, but will be seen as necessary. If you would like to call me to have a name removed, please feel free to call, text or e-mail me. (Phone # 349-8346, cell # 386-2993 or e-mail janiclarke@att.net)

Your friend in Christ, Jani Clarke



Dear St. Luke's Family,

I thank you all for the out-pouring of love & kindness to my family in our loss of my father, Adalberto Laurel. I don't know where to even begin to express our gratitude for all the sympathy cards, emails, calls and embraces we have received from our dear church family.

Thank you Fr. Ryan for coming to see and pray for dad, including administering last rites just before he passed. I thank all who made the Funeral Mass so beautiful, parishioners present, the altar guild, ushers, choir & music, the lay readers, acolyte and thurifer. You just made it truly a taste of heaven so full of hope and assurance.

We were also honored by those able to accompany us to Winton for the graveside committal service following Mass.

Also, heartfelt thanks for the dear ladies and men who made the reception so special, the beautiful arrangements and, of course, the food! The love was palpable, it did not go unnoticed by friends and family.

I do ask your continued prayers for my family.

Thank you all- Juan & Maria Laurel & Family

Coffee Hour Ministry

MAR 6	Sharon Graham, Linda Cometta and Susan Souza
MAR 13	Maria Laurel, Jani Clarke and Nancy Tapia
MAR 20	Joan Brammer, Ann Bean and Mady Montague
MAR 27	Kathy Hill, Miranda Hendrickson and Suzanne Miles

*Fr. Ryan is available to hear your confessions throughout Lent.
Please call to make an appointment.*

Holy Week

March 20 – The Sunday of the Passion/Palm Sunday 9:00 am

March 23 – Soup Supper and Bible Study 5:30 pm

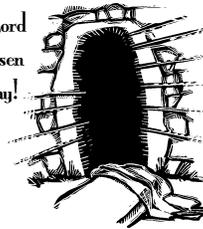
March 24 – Maundy Thursday 6:00 pm

March 25 – Good Friday 6:00 pm

March 26 – Holy Saturday 10:00 am

March 27 – Easter Sunday 9:00 am

Christ
the Lord
Is Risen
Today!



Up-Coming Events

March 4 – First Friday Family Fellowship 7 – 9 pm, Hosted by Linda Herlitz,
2863 St. Bonaventure Dr. Merced
RSVP 381-2003
Bring your favorite appetizer and beverage.

March 8 – Men's Night Out 7 – 9 pm
Food, Fellowship, Sharing, Worship
Location TBA
Invite a friend.

March 9 – Pray for Oral Arguments in Court Case

March 13 – Daylight Savings Time Begins

March 17 – Vestry Meeting 5:30 pm

March 18 - Love INC 25th Annual Dinner Auction, 6 pm at Gateway Community Church
Tickets available at Hope Christian Store, and www.loveincmerced.com

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

April 1 – First Friday Family Fellowship 7 – 9 pm, Hosted by Jack & Jani Clarke
1286 Avignon Dr. Merced
RSVP 349-8346
Bring your favorite appetizer and beverage.

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



Easter Flowers

Please clip this coupon and turn into the Office before March 23rd if you would like to donate to the decorating of the Altar for the Easter services. Please attach your check and make them payable to St. Luke's Church (Easter Flowers on the memo line). Thank you. *[You may also call the office and let Patti know your intentions.]*

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 _____

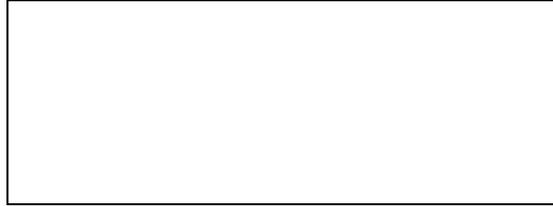
By: _____

Please give your name(s) as you want it to appear in the bulletin.

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

Address Service Requested

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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

Visit us at our website: 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

Mrs. Mady Montague, Choir Director; Mrs. Marilynne Isenberg, 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

Mrs. Karlyne Paul, Treasurer

Class of 2017

Mrs. Linda Meyer, Sr. Warden

Mr. Mike Waite, Sr. Warden

Mr. Rob Mercurio

Mr. Jim Hill, Clerk

Class of 2018

Mr. Ed Gardner

Mrs. Kathy Hill

Mrs. Maria Laurel

Diocesan Convention Delegates

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