



Saint Luke Lutheran Church

1807 Field Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55116 | 651-698-9443 | saintlukechurch.org

February 2024 Newsletter



The Pastor's Perspective

What is Lent?

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday on February 14. It is a six-week long season during which we prepare our hearts for Holy Week and Easter. You can use this time like a spiritual check-up, focusing on any areas of your faith life that need attention. That can look different for everyone. Many people use some form of fasting, or “giving something up,” to provide spiritual focus. Other people choose to add a specific spiritual practice like prayer, meditation, or journaling as a method of intentional reflection.

In my experience, six weeks often sounds more doable than it feels. After a few weeks, it can feel hard to keep the focus you had at the beginning. So if you set an intentional practice for Lent, be gentle with yourself, and just keep coming back to it as often as you can.

Making a Lenten Garden

One simple practice we use in our home is the creation of Lenten garden. Start by filling a shallow bowl or plate with rocks or sand. You can add a cross or candle if you'd like. Then just leave it somewhere visible for most of Lent. Its starkness is a visual reminder of this penitential season. One option might be to add one rock per day for all 40 days of Lent. When Holy Week begins on Palm Sunday, I start to transform our garden by adding moss or leaves. Then on Easter morning, I add blooms and flowers (fake ones are just fine). You can see in the photos below I also replaced the cross with a homemade

Pr. Bristol Reading

February Worship Volunteers

Thanks for your participation!

IN PERSON USHERS

First and Second Sundays:

Doug Klein

Third and Fourth Sundays:

Kay Reich, Carol Hornung

ONLINE USHERS

1st Sunday: David Tews

2nd Sunday: Sue McNeill

3rd Sunday: Raulie Ruiz

4th Sunday: David Nedrelov

OFFERING COUNTERS

Feb 4 Katy Eggert

Feb 11 Carol Hornung

Feb 18 Julie Gaarder

Feb 25 Julie Gaarder

READERS

4 Emily Elfritz

11 Kay Reich

18 Julie Gaarder

25 Wendy Bjorklund

COMMUNION ASSISTANTS

4 Emily Elfritz

11 Kay Reich

18 Julie Gaarder

25 Wendy Bjorklund

ALTAR GUILD

Julie Gaarder

paschal, or “Easter,” candle, just like the big one we have in the sanctuary. These are easy to make with permanent markers and wax paper. We’ll have a workshop at St. Luke toward the end of Lent if you’d like to make one for your home this year.



Bun Run

Many thanks to our Bun Run volunteers for February: Ken McGrew, Doug Klein, Kay Reich and Julie Ellingson.



Our Lenten Garden transforms during Holy Week

February Birthdays

- 1 Ellen Weis
- 5 Pastor Bristol Reading
- 9 Kirby Peterson
- 10 Junella Litzkow
- 11 Sue Grzywinski
- 14 Dianne Diestler
- 16 Ann Verschoyle
- 17 David Nedrelov
- 21 Matthew Elfritz
- 23 Volker Landenberger
- 26 Karen Wasko

Wednesday Vespers at St. Luke

St. Luke has some special offerings during Lent that might bring meaning to this time for you. We’ll gather for worship on Wednesday nights at 6 pm. The first service will be on February 14 for Ash Wednesday. Then Wednesdays February 21 through March 20 we’ll offer Holden Evening Prayer, with soup supper available before the service. All Wednesdays will begin at 6 pm.

Lenten Art Cards

Another way you can participate in Lent is through making art cards. Use a standard 3.5 by 5 inch index card and any materials you’d like (markers, pencils, collaged materials, etc.) to make one or more art card each week, then bring them to share with others on Sunday morning. You can keep your own card or take another’s home with you. Becca and I have created a series of themes for this year focused on the cross. Each week we have highlighted one verse of a hymn, one passage from scripture, and one focus prompt for your art cards. Below I’ve included an example for the first Sunday of Lent, so you can get a sense of that. Booklets with all six weeks are available in the sanctuary and on our website (click on “The Word & The Spirit Blog”). Becca will be posting videos of the hymns on our YouTube channel each week for you to listen to and reflect on.

Lenten Devotions

Lastly, I have written a series of devotions as I usually do for the weeks of Lent and Holy Week. These are also available printed in the sanctuary or downloadable on our website.

However you choose to focus on your faith life this Lent, I hope it is a season of growth for you. You are in my prayers always!

Pr. Bristol



Easter Flower Fundraiser

With Easter right around the corner, it is time to think about decorating the sanctuary with flowers. This year we will be selling Easter lilies and other plants that can be used in our flower garden. Beginning Sunday, Feb 4th and running through Sunday, Feb 25th we will be taking orders for Easter flowers. Payment will be due at time of order, checks should be made out to St Luke Lutheran. Please visit the table in the social hall during coffee hour to see what is available and order your plants. Dates for pickup of plants still needs to be determined. If you would like to include them in the Easter garden, they can be taken home after worship that day.

Below is a sample of the hymn-themed art card prompt. You'll see that each week has a hymn verse, a scripture passage, and a short reflection to help you start thinking about what you might add to your art cards.

Lent 1, February 18: "Beneath the Cross of Jesus"

*Beneath the cross of Jesus I long to take my stand;
the shadow of a mighty rock within a weary land,
a home within a wilderness, a rest upon the way,
from the burning of the noontide heat and burdens of the day.*
(“Beneath the Cross of Jesus,” verse 1)

Scripture Connection: Mark 1:12-13

¹²After his baptism, the Spirit immediately drove Jesus out into the wilderness. ¹³He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

Art Card Prompt

The Gospel for the first Sunday of Lent tells of Jesus' 40 days in the desert wilderness, during which he experiences hunger and isolation as he faces temptations from Satan. The first verse of “Beneath the Cross of Jesus” draws on similar imagery of a dry, hot wilderness. In the hymn, the shadow of the cross is a protective shelter and restful respite.

This is the irony of the cross: although it is a source of pain for Jesus, it is a source of salvation for us. The salvation we have through Christ's work on the cross brings us comfort and peace.

As you create your art card this week, reflect on wilderness times you have been through in your life. What does the wilderness look like? How might the cross of Christ bring relief during such times? How is the cross a protective rock? How is its shadow a shelter?

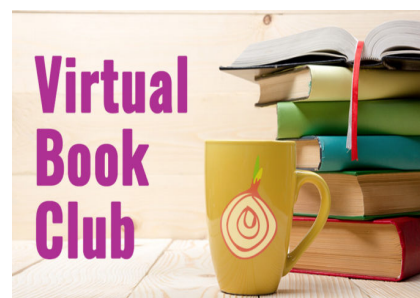


St. Luke Lent 2024 Schedule

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| Wed. 2/14, 6pm: | Ash Wednesday Service |
| Sun. 2/18, 9:30am: | 1 st Sunday in Lent |
| Wed.. 2/21, 6pm: | Soup Supper and Holden Evening Prayer |
| Sun. 2/25, 9:30am: | 2 nd Sunday in Lent |
| Wed.. 2/28, 6pm: | Soup Supper and Holden Evening Prayer |
| Sun. 3/3, 9:30am: | 3 rd Sunday in Lent |
| Wed.. 3/6, 6pm: | Soup Supper and Holden Evening Prayer |
| Sun. 3/10, 9:30am: | 4 th Sunday in Lent, w/Bishop Patricia Lull |



All are invited to Game Day at St. Luke, the first and third Fridays of the month, February 2 and 16, at 12:30pm. Bring a snack to share and your favorite game and settle down to an afternoon of fun...join us!



Join us for St. Luke Book Club, Sunday Feb. 11, 6:30pm, via Zoom, to discuss “The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry”, by Rachel Joyce. “A cause for celebration. Joyce has a lovely sense of the possibilities of redemption. In this bravely unpretentious and unsentimental take, she’s cleared space where miracles are still possible.” -*The Washington Post*. The Zoom invite will be emailed to you shortly before the meeting. All are welcome!

Lunch with Saints

Our next luncheon with St. Marks will be Saturday, February 10 at noon at Jensen's, 3840 Rahn Road, Eagan. If you plan on attending, please let Joyce Bluel (651-690-4614) know by February 5th, so we have a number for the reservation.

Wed.. 3/13, 6pm: Soup Supper and Holden Evening Prayer
 Sat. 3/16, 10am: Make-Your-Own Paschal Candle Workshop
 Sun. 3/17, 9:30am: 5th Sunday in Lent
 Wed.. 3/20, 6pm: Soup Supper and Holden Evening Prayer
 Sun. 3/24, 9:30am: Palm Sunday Service
 Thurs. 3/28, 6pm: Maundy Thursday Service
 Fri. 3/29, 6pm: Good Friday Service
 Sun. 3/31, 9:30am: Easter Sunday Service, Brunch, Egg Hunt



The 2024 church council was installed on Sunday, Jan. 14, and I'm happy to report that the make-up of the council is largely unchanged. Six of the council members from last year are returning this year including me as president, Volker Landenberger as vice president, Joyce Bluel as treasurer, and Mike Hegdahl, Carol Hornung, and Doug Nelson as commissioners. I look forward to working with this great team again this year. Since we are without a secretary (Kay Reich stepped down as secretary), the council members will rotate taking minutes.

As we did last year, our special offerings in January and February will benefit The Drawer, a nonprofit that gives socks and underwear to those in need. (Our thanks to Stew and Debby Shepard, founders of The Drawer, for addressing the congregation on Jan. 7.) Thanks to everyone who donated socks and underwear in January. You can still make cash donations to The Drawer through the month of February, either in the collection jar at Sunday services or on the St. Luke giving page (saintlukechurch.org/ways-to-donate). Sue McNeill is planning to volunteer at The Drawer's facility in Eagan on Monday, Feb. 5, bundling socks and underwear for distribution. Contact Sue if you would like to join her.

Speaking of volunteer activities, we want your ideas for possible causes we can support as a group, much like we did with Loaves and Fishes. They could be one-time events like Feed Our Starving Children or recurring events. Joyce Bluel has set up a suggestion box at the welcome center in the social hall if you have an idea for a volunteer activity.

Pastor Bristol and I plan to attend the St. Paul Area Synod's Conference Assemblies and Toolkit for Congregational Leaders, which this year will be hosted on Saturday, Feb. 24 at Faith Lutheran Church in Forest Lake. It's a chance to meet clergy and

Announcing a new event at St. Luke: Craft and Chat!

Do you crochet, knit, sew, embroider, scrapbook, or create in some other way? *Craft & Chat* is for you! Pack up your current project and bring it over to work on after worship on Sunday, Feb. 11 (around 11am). There are no group projects or rules about what you may work on; just a time for people to share, show off, and perhaps learn new skills from fellow crafters. This may be the motivation you need to finally finish that afghan you've been working on (or the like)! Lunch will be served...all are welcome...invite a friend or two! This is a trial event; depending on the participation, we will schedule more Craft and Chat events in the future. Join us for a relaxing, enjoyable afternoon with friends!



Notes from the Music Director

I would like to extend a huge thank you to all the people who contributed their talents in December and January - Charlotte, Hugo, Jo, Barb, Carol, Christine, Kay, Laurie and Wendy! You helped make our services beautiful (and fun)!

While we often think of Christmas and Advent as being a special time for music, Lent and Easter

other church leaders in the synod. In the conference assemblies, we'll elect conference representatives and vote on any proposed resolutions. The toolkit workshops provide insights into timely issues and ways to do things better.

Easter is early this year (March 31) and that means Lent starts early too with Ash Wednesday fast approaching on Feb. 14. I hope to attend many of the Lenten soup suppers and vespers services that will be held Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m. during Lent.

Enjoy the mild winter weather! There just might be something to this climate change thing!

Yours in Christ,
David Tews



Your suggestions, please.

Is there a charity you would like St. Luke to contribute to this year? The church council is looking for suggestions for our jar donations in the coming year. A suggestion box will be available on the welcome center for your input starting in February. Also, feel free to make suggestions also for volunteer opportunities that the congregation could get involved with in 2024.

***Connect,
Grow and Serve.***

are just as full of beautiful music too! From the midweek Lenten services with the Holden Evening Prayers to all the beautiful Lenten hymns, it's a rich wealth of music. Even our art cards are inspired by hymns this year! I hope you enjoy the videos that will be sent with the sermon links each week and that they help inspire your artistic creations.

Our choirs are also getting ready to share pieces during Lent. Have you thought about joining choir but September to May feels a little much? **Maybe this is the perfect chance to give it a try!** Rehearsals for Holy Week and Easter begin February 18th with main rehearsals on Sunday morning. No experience is necessary - you don't even have to read music! Bells meet 8:30-9:00 am and choir meets after service 10:50-11:30. We would love to have you join.

Or maybe this is your chance to share your musical talent in our services. Do you have a solo you'd like to share? Something that I can help accompany you in? Let me know, bunkamade@gmail.com or check in after service.

Rebecca Ruiz