



**Holy Eucharist
Worship:**

Sundays, 10:30 a.m.
Saturdays, 5 p.m.
Wednesdays, 12:15 p.m.

Find us online
and Facebook.



ON WE GO INTO LENT



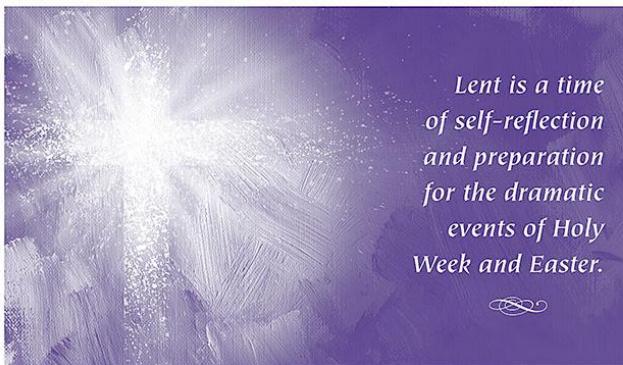
January and February, for me, have been all about reports. I've been busy counting. We just filed the Annual Parochial Report to the National Church. This report, which you can view if you want, counts stuff. As the Rector I count the members — what categories they may fall in, and I count the services — how many Eucharists and other services, our average Sunday and weekly attendance, how many baptisms, burials, weddings, etc. that took place at St. Luke's in 2024.

Our Treasurer reports on our financial affairs. We are asked also to provide a short answer to a few narrative questions. Counting, categorizing, choosing what to highlight... all this goes into the Parochial Report. The national Episcopal Church uses these numbers to track trends in the wider church and allocate resources.

Having gone through the process of the Parochial Report (24 times now), I can say with confidence that (simply according to the numbers) St. Luke's is doing pretty well. Our average Sunday attendance continues to go up, little by little. Our number of members continues to go up, little by little. Our outreach programs continue to develop and engage more members. But more than numbers — the positive energy seems to be palpable. I can truly say that St. Luke's is currently a multi-generational parish. Many signs of vitality and enthusiasm are evident.

Now that this particular annual task is behind us for this year, we can focus on more engaging endeavors. Lent is coming right up. Beginning with Shrove Tuesday on March 4th, we will enjoy our Pancake Supper, thanks to the Men of St Luke's. The next day is Ash Wednesday, with a solemn Holy Eucharist and the imposition of Ashes at 12:15 and 7 p.m. Thus Lent begins.

Lent is a time of self-reflection and preparation for the dramatic events of Holy Week and Easter. We will have a 5-week course based on the teachings of Henry Nouwen on Saturdays (noon to 2 p.m.) We will use the Penitential Order of the Eucharist during Lent and at least one Sunday with Rite One. The liturgical color changes to purple during Lent to signify the penitential nature of the season. A royal color for sure, but in Lent purple is for self-examination, repentance and amendment of life. To repent means to turn back to God, away from our rebellious and misguided ways, in order to receive the Forgiveness that is freely offered, if only we would accept it. The Amendment of Life is in response to embracing the forgiveness of God.



Engagement, not entertainment. That is what our church is all about. And Lent is a time to **engage** in the work God has given us to do. To love and serve God through loving and serving God's people. We are the Body of Christ, and so we will go on the journey to the cross with Christ. Give yourself the gift of engaging in a few weeks of reflection, turning, and embracing the Gospel knowing that Jesus walks the Way of Sorrows for our benefit.

Come each Friday in Lent at 12:15 p.m. for the Stations of the Cross and in some way walk that sorrowful journey with Jesus. It doesn't take long, yet it reminds us that the way to Glory is usually painful, chaotic and confusing. So we go this way together. — Mtr. Melinda †

FROM OUR DEACON:

AN INVITATION FOR THE LENTEN SEASON

On Sunday, March 30, we will gather in the kitchen/Cardwell Hall after our Sunday service and fellowship to make a meal to take to Tumbleweed. This meal will feed 50-60 young people who use the services of this caring organization. Our goal is to provide these meals quarterly to their daily meal program. This will be our early Spring meal contribution for 2025.

The meal will be delivered to Tumbleweed on the morning of Tuesday, April 1 and then served mid-day. Any leftover food will be packed up in to go containers by the staff at the facility to be placed in the communal fridge at Tumbleweed for clients to pick up "on the run." We will need a volunteer team who can help deliver the food to Tumbleweed on that Tuesday morning in addition to our volunteer cooks and food preparers who help on the previous Sunday.

The meals are one tangible way to show our love and support to Tumbleweed clients. These young people are often living in extremely difficult situations in our community, struggling with various hardships that make day-to-day life very challenging.



This is a great St. Luke's communal endeavor and a powerful way to put our "faith into action." It is also great fun. There will be sign-up sheets on the FIAT board in Cardwell Hall. All are welcome to join us, from the youngest to oldest. Please bring along any friends as well. All are welcome!

There are many jobs and no cooking experience is necessary. The more helping hands the better!

When coordinating this with Cole, our contact at Tumbleweed, I asked him if there was any particular meal they would like us to provide. His answer, "any homemade meal made with love!" So please join me to create "a homemade meal made with love." What a powerful way we can express our care and support for these beautiful young people in our community.

— Deacon Corinne



This is ... a powerful way to put our faith into action.

Preschool

CHILD ENRICHMENT CENTER

Valentines highlighted the first half of February at SLCEC. We spent extra time talking about the importance of friendship and kindness and had opportunities for making valentines for friends. Our Valentine's Day parties were a hit with all our families. Then, the dinosaurs came out! This is always a favorite time for the preschoolers. They are experts in the field of paleontology.

We spent some extra time inside with the extreme cold but found lots of fun ways to move our bodies and stay active. We are looking forward to a warm up.



FROM THE TREASURER FOR JANUARY

Monthly Income	\$22,611
Income Budgeted	\$17,658
Expenses	\$20,664
Expense Budgeted	\$22,627



If you would like to receive a newsletter by email instead of a printed copy, please contact Melody, our church secretary, at 406-252-7186.



There was a record crowd at this year's Trivia & Tapas preschool fundraiser. Thank you to all the attendees and generous supporters.

VESTRY REPORT

The Vestry met in regular session on Thursday, Feb. 20.

- The Vestry has three new officers this year: Maria Surdahl now serves as Senior Warden; Martin Surdahl is the Junior Warden; Mike Jackson has been appointed as Clerk.
- Mother Melinda presented the 2024 Parochial Report to the National Church which was approved by the Vestry.
- At the direction of the Vestry, Marni Walter will look into replacements for the chairs in the library which are very worn and broken. There may be a \$1,000 gift available to help off-set the cost.
- The Junior Warden reports that the baby changing table has been installed near the new bathroom just off the narthex.



FLOWERS & CANDLES

We do not decorate during Lent, a somber season of penitence. To make a donation for Easter flowers, please use an envelope with your name on it or write a check to St. Luke's with "Easter flowers" in the memo line.

There will be a sign up to sponsor Altar flowers after Easter on the back table as usual. Remember your flower sponsorship goes to purchase all the things we need for worship such as wine and bread, altar linens, candle oil, and of course the flowers for each week.

Sanctuary candles may be purchased in honor or memory of someone. The cost for a candle is \$10 and it burns for a week. Let the church office know in time to have it put in the bulletin.



MARCH BIRTHDAYS

3/03 – Ryan Funk	3/26 – Keith Frank
3/12 – Michael Songstad	3/26 – William Moyer
3/13 – Morris Hall	3/28 – John Michael Songstad
3/14 – Doug Clapper	3/30 – Malcolm Goodrich
3/25 – Jean Buer-Mott	3/30 – Noelle Kent

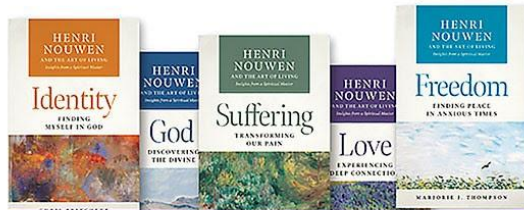


SPRING YOUTH EVENT

March 14–16, 2025 in Great Falls

The Spring Youth Event will be at the Church of the Incarnation in Great Falls. All Diocese of Montana youth, grades 6–12 (and their friends!) are invited. Youth Event weekends are a great chance to meet new people and re-connect with camp friends, play cat and mouse in all the dark, hidden spots in an unfamiliar church, and make a difference in the community we are visiting. The event begins with dinner on Friday, March 14, and ends by participating in Sunday worship at Incarnation with all kinds of fun in-between.

If you are interested in participating (or being an adult volunteer), head to the new and improved Camp Marshall website to register: campmarshallmontana.com



A LENTEN DEVOTION SERIES FOR ADULTS

will begin on Saturday, March 15 at noon, and meet each Saturday during Lent (5 weeks). The booklets have arrived. Get yours from Mtr. Melinda as soon as possible so that you will be prepared for the first class. Bring your brown bag lunch and we will talk while we break bread together. We will be done by 2 p.m.





CALENDAR

Daylight Savings Time Change • March 9

- **Faith In Action Team Meeting:** Sunday, March 2, 12:15 pm, after fellowship in Cardwell Hall.
- **Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper:** March 4, 5:30 p.m. Hosted by the Men of St. Luke's. 
- **Godly Play:** March 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30. 10:15 a.m., in the Sunday School room. Ages 3–10.
- **St. Patrick's Day Parade:** Saturday, March 15, 10 a.m., Downtown.
- **Sandwich making for MRM:** Sundays, March 9 and 23 in Cardwell Hall, after the 10:30 a.m. service.
- **Art of Living Book Series:** March 15, 22, and 29 noon. Bring your own lunch. Coffee provided.
- **Preschool Board meeting:** Wednesday, March 12, 4 p.m., via Zoom.
- **Vestry Meeting:** Thursday, March 20, 6:30 p.m., Library.
- **Women of St. Luke's Meeting:** Saturday, March 22, 10 a.m. Guild Room.
- **Lay Eucharistic Visitors Meeting:** Date & time TBA.
- **Tumbleweed Quarterly Meal** event: Prep on Sunday, March 30, after fellowship. Delivery of the hot meal will be on Tuesday, April 1, 10 a.m.

MOST WEEKS — Coffee Talk & Lectionary Study:

Sundays, 9 a.m. in Cardwell Hall with Mtr. Melinda, Fr. Jerry and Dn. Corinne.

MARCH 5, 2025

Holy Eucharist and the Imposition of Ashes at 12:15 and 7 p.m.



STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Every Friday in Lent, 12:15 p.m.

LOOKING AHEAD

Palm Sunday • April 13

Easter • April 20



St. Luke's Episcopal Church

119 North 33rd Street
Billings, MT 59101



OFFICE — phone: 406.252.7186

email: secretary@stlukesbillings.org



GODLY PLAY

Sunday School continues to meet each Sunday at 10:30 a.m. across from the library. In February, our lessons delved into the parables and the allegories behind them. The students made little clay pearls after exploring the Parable of the Great Pearl. We planted seeds for the Parable of the Sower. Our seeds must have fallen on good ground as they are already up...not even a week.

We have had three children move in the last month and miss them already.

— Linda Auch, Shirley Waldron and Kim Hatheway

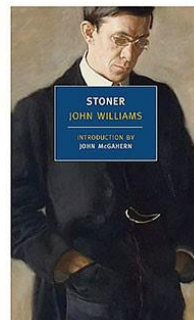


The **Women of St. Luke's** will have their last official meeting for the spring on Saturday, March 22, at 10 a.m. in the Guild Room. We will be finalizing plans for a high school graduation reception on May 4 after church and a possible basket fundraiser during the month of May.

MEN OF ST. LUKE'S

The **MSL Book Club** is starting a new book this month titled *Stoner* by John Williams. The novel has great reviews and recommendations.

The story follows the academic life of a young student and later turned professor in a minimalistic and understated style while emphasizing the importance of education and the search for knowledge over the passage of time. We will meet to discuss the book later in March and contrary to the suggestion by the title, we will not meet at a dispensary on the outskirts of town. If you are interested, please let me know and I will put you on the email list. All are welcome!



— Doug Clapper

406-671-0310