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The Steeple

Dec 11, 2025

The Weekly Newsletter of St. Luke's Episcopal Church

Second Week of Advent

Beloved in Christ,

Advent always has a way of arriving right when we need it most. Just as the light begins to leave the day behind earlier and earlier and where we feel a bit frayed at the edges, the Church quietly lights another candle and reminds us that hope is not a sentimental thing, it is God's steady promises breaking into the ordinary places of our lives.

In this second week of Advent, we hear again the voices of the prophets and the saints calling us to prepare the way of the Lord. Not by pretending everything is fine, but by daring us to believe that God can meet us even in the places that feel uncertain, weary, or unfinished. Advent hope is not fragile. It doesn't require perfect circumstances or perfect people. It simply asks that we stay awake to the God who is drawing near.

This is one of the great gifts of our tradition: the conviction that God's light grows even when the world gives us every reason to doubt that the sun will ever shine again. Every act of kindness, every moment of forgiveness, every small gesture of courage, these are how we lean into the promise that Emmanuel is not just a name but a lived reality.

As we move toward Christmas, I want to encourage you to make a commitment now to be present for our Christmas services this year. Bring your family. Invite a friend. Reach out to the neighbor who mentioned they've been looking for a place to worship. This season is full, yes, schedules are tight, and travel will demand our attention but gathering together, shoulder to shoulder, in the glow of candlelight is one of the ways we proclaim to the world that hope still has a home.

For some of us, this is the moment we've been waiting for. For others, it may be the first step back into a community or a first step toward finding one. Whatever your story, you never know what grace might meet you, or someone you love, when you walk through the doors on Christmas Eve.

My prayer for each of you this week is simple: that the God who comes quietly, faithfully, and tenderly will stir hope in your heart again and again. The kind of hope that reminds us we are not alone. The kind that carries us all the way to Bethlehem.

May the peace of Christ guard your hearts and your minds.

Nick+

At Luke's Place: Dec 12th – Dec 18th, 2025

Dec 13th	**Christmas in the Woods, 4-8pm, 1000 Hazel Ct**
Dec 14th	**Holy Eucharist, Rite I, 8:00am, Chapel**
	Faith Forum, 9:15am, Metcalf
	Holy Eucharist, Rite II, 10:30am, Nave
Dec 15th	**Ladies' Prayer Partners, 11:30am, Metcalf**
	Community Soup Night, 4-8pm,Metcalf
Dec 16th	**Spiritual Discovery, 9:30am, Library**
	Discussion Group, 6:30pm, Rodgers
Dec 17th	**Choir, 4:30pm, Choir Room**
	YD, 6pm, Rodgers
	Advent Soup Supper and prayer, 6pm, Metcalf
Dec 18th	**Men's Fellowship, 7am, Metcalf**
	Bible Study, 9:15am, Metcalf
	Green Country Eucharist, 1pm, GCV

Prayer List

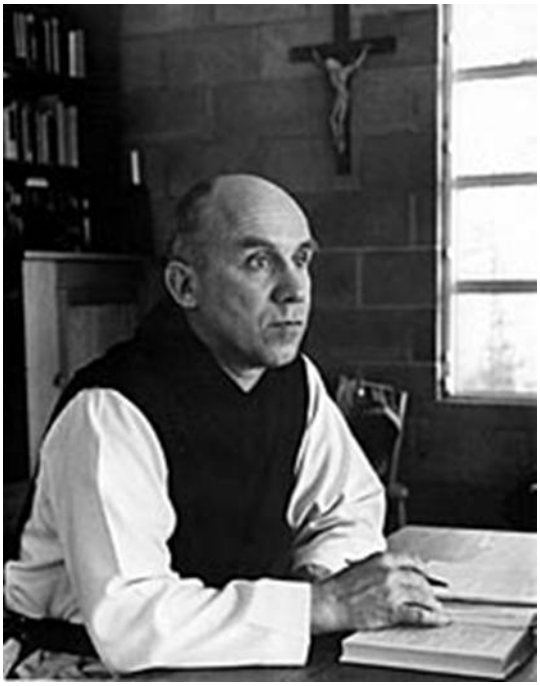
Please pray for: Ben Baker, **Steve** McCraw, **Josh** Harris, **David** Swindell, **Connie** Finch, **Terry** Grogan, **Tyler** Roberson, **Jerry** Nezam**, Lynette** Beebe, **Jack** Smith, **Danny** Clem, **David** McAtee, **Shawn**, **Stephanie** Gallegos, **Pat** Sare, **Steve** Linn, **Jean** Mason, **Adam** Thomas, **Tom** Oakes, **Bill** Pendley, **Mary** Wallace, **Lynda** Stephens, **Marcie** Zervas, **Audrey** Harris, **Peggy** Rockey, **Ken** Harvey, **Nan** Buhlinger, **Bill** Birk, **Carol** McSpadden, **Dionna** Cameron, **Betty** Rogers, **Dan** & **JoAnn** Gallery, **Freda** Bretz, **Kathleen** Turner, **Steve** Clark, **Lauren** Gandy, **Susan** Brooks, **Dea**n Zervas, **Frank** Molina, **Diane** Mitchell, **Rob** Dahlgren, and **Frank** Traylor.

Please add the following to your prayers for the Second Week of Advent :
St. John's, Woodward Grace, Yukon The Church of Bangladesh

Advent Soup and Evening Prayer
Last Wednesday this Advent,
Dec 17th
6pm.

As an Advent offering, We will be having a light soup and bread supper then Evening Prayer. For Dec 17th , we still need 1 more soup. **The sign up is across the hall from the office**. Please consider bringing soup then lets end the evening in prayer.

Theologian's Corner:
Thomas Merton
Monk, Poet, Spiritual Writer 1968



Thomas Merton was born in 1915 in France, of American parents. His early education was in France (Lycee de Montauban 1927-8) and England (Oakham School, 1929-32; Clare College, Cambridge, 1933-4). He came to America and attended Columbia University, graduated in English in 1938, worked there one year as a teaching assistant, and got his M.A. in 1939. In 1939 he joined the Roman Catholic Church, and taught at St Bonaventure for the next two years.

In 1941 he entered the Trappist monastery of Gethsemani near Louisville, Kentucky. The Trappists, called more formally Cistercians of the Strict Observance, are (or were before Vatican II) an extremely strict Roman Catholic monastic order, devoted to communal prayer (they spend at least four hours a day in chapel, chanting the praises of God), to private prayer and contemplation, to study, and to manual labor. Except for those whose special duties require otherwise, they are vowed not to speak except in praise of God. Thus, when not singing in chapel, they are silent.

Toward the end of his life, Merton developed an interest in Buddhist and other Far Eastern approaches to mysticism and contemplation, and their relation to Christian approaches. He was attending an international conference on Christian and Buddhist monasticism in Bangkok, Thailand, when he was accidentally electrocuted on 10 December 1968.

Together we pray: Gracious God, who didst call thy monk Thomas Merton to proclaim thy justice out of silence, and moved him in his contemplative writings to perceive and value Christ at work in the faiths of others: Keep us, like him, steadfast in the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ; who with thee and the Holy Spirit livest and reignest, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

If you are looking for an Advent and Christmas resource to introduce you to Merton, you might try: "Advent and Christmas with Thomas Merton" Liguori Publications.

Concerns current needs are: sugar and "just add water" pancake mix.

Pack the Backpacks December item

Black Dry Erase Markers with chisel tips

TUESDAY DISCUSSION GROUP

The Tuesday Discussion Group will meet Dec 16th at 6:30pm in Rodgers Hall. Discussion will be on .

Now that the Star Tree is empty of children's gifts, its time to turn it into the Remembrance Tree. Please bring an ornament in memory of someone and hang it on the tree during the Christmas season. If you do not have one for a remembrance, just bring a meaningful ornament to add so we can cover the tree. Its so special to see all the ornaments from different households. Please add yours. (all will be returned after)

Birthdays & Anniversaries for Dec 14th - Dec 20th

Birthdays		**Anniversaries**	
Robert Clark	(12/14)	Fr Lee & Lynda Stephens	(12/17)

If your or a love one's name doesn't appear on the list, please email or call the office, and we will add your birthday and/or wedding anniversary

The Christmas Concert is canceled this year due to illness.

The Episcopal Diocese of Oklahoma

By the Grace of God
The Right Reverend Poulson Reed
VI Bishop of Oklahoma
Will ordain

Jeffrey Phelps Birk
Andy Duane Bowers
Kelsey Michele Carter
Robert Duane Kuhlman Jr.

To the Sacred Order of Deacons
In Christ's One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church

The Eve of the Confession of Saint Peter the Apostle
Saturday, the Seventeenth day of January
In the year of Our Lord two thousand and twenty-six
Four o'clock in the afternoon

Saint Paul's Episcopal Cathedral
127 NW Seventh Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73102

Reception to follow

Cassock, Surplice, (or Alb), and White Stole
Your Prayers and Presence are Requested

Live Stream Ordinations

YD Shop for the Angel Tree

FantasyLand of Lights Johnstone Park

Mark the evening of Dec 15th on your calendars and come drive through Johnstone Park, see the Christmas light displays, and support our Vestry members as they work the Gingerbread House at the end of the park.

Service
At St Luke's, 4:00pm

After the Christmas Eve Service, join us in Metcalf Hall for eggnog and wassail. If you have extra treats from Christmas celebrations, please bring those to share.

Brunch Bunch serving up Christmas Treats last Sunday

St. Luke's Vestry Members

- Nancy Woods, Sr. Warden – Nancywoods120@gmail.com
- Karole Cozby, Jr Warden – kscozby916@gmail.com
- Chad Ellis – w.chadwick.ellis@gmail.com
- Karen Lewey – kgrammy07@yahoo.com
- Laura Birk – lpbirk73@gmail.com
- Steve Heidorn- sgheidorn@yahoo.com
- Dolores McCreary –dolomc37@gmail.com
- Steve Roper- sdroper2006@yahoo.com
- Fred Whitson- sandyswhit@gmail.com
- Robert Lonski- rjtazski@yahoo.com

Bereavement Team 2
Laura Birk, Nancy Megee, Wendy Hall, Karen Lewey, Debbie Mueggenborg

St. Luke's Episcopal Church Contacts:

The Reverend Nick Phares, Rector
269-788-7063; RevPhares@outlook.com

Keeli Droege, Choir Director/Organist
918-697-8509 keelidroege@gmail.com

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Email: StLukesBartlesville@outlook.com
918-336-1212
Or contact
Penny Williams, secretary 918-766-2157

Christmas Eve Service: 4:00pm 12/24/2025
Christmas Day Service 10:00am 12/25/2025