*In this week's Steeple >>>*


- Fr Nick's message
- Theologian's Corner
- Luke's Place Schedule
- Remembrance Tree
- YD & Men's Group
- Christmas Services
- Jeff's Ordination
- Feast Day of St Thomas


# The Steeple

Dec 18, 2025

**The Weekly Newsletter of St. Luke's Episcopal Church**

## The Candles and Their Names

Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love – these are their names. These are their names! I light them and say the collect. I say the collect all the more fervently in the face of such violence this week: another school shooting, the attack in Syndey, and the murder of two parents. The candles thus stand for Hope, Peace, Joy, Love and for Ella Cook, Mukhammad Aziz Umurzokov, Matilda, Rabbi Eli Schlanger, Dan Elkayam, Alexander Kleytman, Boris & Sofia Gurman, Peter Meagher, Reuven Morrison, Rabbi Yaakov Levitan, Tibor Weitzen, Marika Pogany, Edith Brutman, Boris Tetleroyd, and for Rob & Michele Reiner. Hope, Peace, Joy, Love, these are their names along with countless others, who are unnamed and that have been taken by war, poverty, and sickness. Come Lord Jesus.

I read an article this week about Mia Tretta a survivor of the shooting at Brown University and how she was also victim of Saugus High School Shooting in Santa Clarita in 2019. I wondered if I heard that correctly. I did. In the middle of the article, I came across the following statement, and it stopped me dead in my tracks. "It feels," the author said, "as removed and naïve as hanging up a HOPE poster." I read those words again and again… and took them not as a mark of cynicism but as lament… as the light of hope was all but extinguished in the author's eyes. Dare we light the candle of hope?

This week too, it was reported that across the globe nations states are openly investing more money in their defense budgets, some budgets expected to rise as high as 80%. Germany's defense minister said their objective is to be ready to defend against a major attack by 2029. In the western hemisphere, tensions continue to escalate in the South. And, I can't help but think that some of us sit with our eyes fixed on the candle of peace as the winds of change swirl around that ever-timid light. Dare we keep the candle of peace lit?

As the longest night of the year approaches communities are planning to give witness to the growing darkness by lighting candles of their own. Some of those communities mark the day by

holding a liturgical service to mark the night, knowing that joy's light, tends to be swallowed up by grief in times like these. Dare we light our candles? Dare we feel joy?

With the other candles waning in the growing darkness the next match is set to light the candle of love. Love, perhaps the greatest of the virtues, is a light meant to endure. Do we count on love? Shall we strike the match? Does love remain stronger than death?

After service this past week, I had a conversation about these candles and was asked about replacing the ones in the Advent wreath in the chapel after they were used up. The wreath, as you know, is meant as a way to mark time. Candles burned down to the nub are visual reminders of what is passed. And so, I was asked if it was not appropriate to keep the candles the way they were – spent.

In that moment came the prayer, "Come Holy Spirit and kindle in us the fire of your love." Let them be replaced. Let the wreath give off its light. Let us name them as we light them. In the face of all that overwhelms us, we are to light these candles and remember what they mean! We are to remember that hope is a life force all too often that spends most of its life unseen but nevertheless springs eternal; that peace is not just to be desired but made and kept; and that joy is capacious enough to hold sorrow and wonder even in the face of terror and death.

And so, I say yes… light the candles friends and remember their names: Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love. Remember that these lights burn brighter than despair, war, apathy, and hatred.

We keep these lamps burning friends, for everyone until our Lord's return.

Maranatha,

Nick+

## At Luke's Place: Dec 19th – Dec 25th, 2025

| | |
|---|---|
| **Dec 21st** | **Holy Eucharist, Rite I, 8:00am, Chapel** |
| | **Faith Forum, 9:15am, Metcalf** |
| | **Holy Eucharist, Rite II, 10:30am, Nave** |
| **Dec 22nd** | **Community Soup Night, 4-8pm,Metcalf** |
| **Dec 24th** | **Christmas Eve Service, 4:00pm** |
| | **Small Reception after service** |
| **Dec 25th** | **Christmas Day Service, 10am** |

## *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, **Frank** Traylor, and **Steve** Hand.

**Please add the following to your prayers for the Third Week of Advent :**

**St Matthew's, Enid** **Igreja Episcopal Anglicana do Brasil**

### Theologians Corner: William Lloyd Garrison
### December 10, 1805 – May 24, 1879

William Lloyd Garrison was a prominent American Christian, abolitionist, journalist, suffragist, and social reformer. He is best known for his widely read antislavery newspaper The Liberator, which he founded in 1831 and published in Boston until slavery in the United States was abolished by constitutional amendment in 1865. Garrison initially opposed violence as a principle and advocated for Christian nonresistance against evil; at the outbreak of the Civil War, he abandoned his previous principles and embraced the armed struggle and the Lincoln administration. He was one of the founders of the American Anti-Slavery Society and promoted immediate and uncompensated, as opposed to gradual and compensated, emancipation of slaves in the United States.

Like the other major abolitionist printer-publisher, the martyred Elijah Lovejoy, a price was on his head; Garrison was burned in effigy and a gallows was erected in front of his Boston office as a threat.

Such was his fervor in spite of all this that Garrison once proclaimed, "The apathy of the people is enough to make every statue leap from its pedestal and hasten the resurrection of the dead!"

Hailed as a prophet of the times, may we too be filled with such zeal in respecting the dignity of every human being.

Together we pray: God, in whose service alone is perfect freedom: We thank you for William Lloyd Garrison, who witnessed that all are made in your image and likeness. Fill us with such

perseverance that we might break every chain of enslavement and that by your Holy Spirit, your people may overcome the bondage of sin and ignorance; through the merits of Jesus Christ our redeemer, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

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

Pack the Backpacks December item

Black Dry Erase Markers with chisel tips

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 21st - Dec 27th**

| **Birthdays** | | **Anniversaries** | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Jim Carroll | (12/21) | Doug & Connie Freebern | (12/17) |
| Logan Warring | (12/21) | | |
| Debbie Mueggenborg | (12/24) | | |
| Sheila Taylor | (12/24) | | |

**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 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

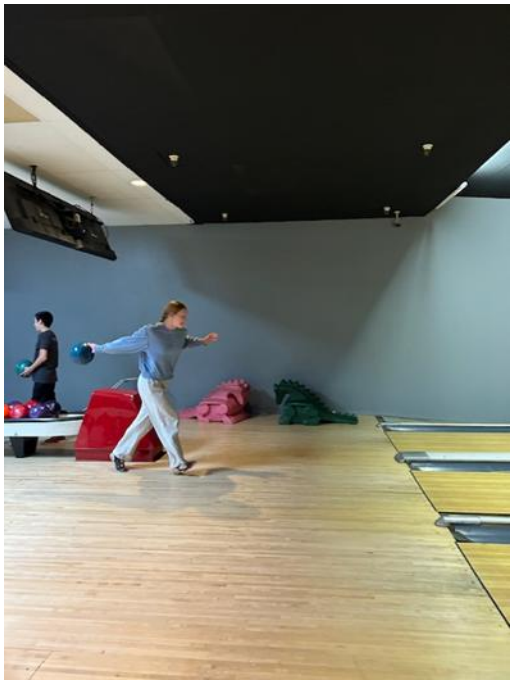
Saint Paul's Episcopal Cathedral
127 NW Seventh Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73102

Reception to follow

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

**Live Stream Ordinations**

# YD Bowl with the Men's Group



# 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.

**Monday is the feast of Saint Thomas, Apostle. Eucharist, 12:15pm, Chapel**

Everliving God, who strengthened your apostle Thomas with firm and certain faith in your Son's resurrection: Grant us so perfectly and without doubt to believe in Jesus Christ, our Lord and our God, that our faith may never be found wanting in your sight; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

St. Thomas the Apostle, remembered on December 21, is often portrayed as a man of both loyalty and honest doubt. The Gospel of John shows him ready to follow Jesus even unto death, questioning at the Last Supper about the way to the Father, and finally confessing the risen Christ with the profound declaration, "My Lord and my God!" Though history has labeled him "Doubting Thomas," his story reveals not stubborn disbelief but a deep desire for truth and assurance. Jesus met him in that longing, releasing the faith already within him and blessing future generations who would believe without seeing. Tradition holds that Thomas carried the gospel eastward, first to Persia and then to India, where his burial place in Chennai remains a pilgrimage site for Christians to this day. His legacy of courage, questioning, and ultimate faith continues to inspire believers who wrestle with doubt yet seek to follow Christ with integrity. **Episcopal Church**

## St. Luke's Vestry Members

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

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