In this week's Steeple >>>

- Fr. Nick's message
- Theologian's Corner
- Discussion Group
- Lenten Dinner & Program
- Back to the Basics
- Brunch Bunch
- Pack the Backpacks request
- YD Game Night
- Maundy Thursday Vigil
- Holy Week
- Breakfast of Champions

The Steeple

Mar 12, 2026

The Weekly Newsletter of St. Luke's Episcopal Church

Refreshment Sunday

Dear friends,

One of the gifts of Lent is the invitation to slow down long enough to listen again to the Scriptures. In a season often associated with fasting and self-denial, the Church also gives us the equally important discipline of feeding our hearts and minds on the Word of God. Bible study during Lent is a wonderful devotional practice. It is one of the ways we place ourselves deliberately within the story of God's people and allow that story to shape us.

Our Rector's Bible Study is nearing the end of its long journey through the book of Genesis. What began with the creation of the world and the mysterious call of Abraham is now drawing toward its conclusion in the story of Joseph and the reconciliation of a divided family. Genesis reminds us again and again that God works through imperfect people, tangled histories, and unexpected turns. It is a fitting book to accompany us through the early part of Lent, because it teaches us how grace often appears in the middle of human frailty.

Meanwhile, our Lenten evening study on the Gospel of Nicodemus is approaching one of its most fascinating sections. In the coming weeks we will encounter what the tradition calls the Harrowing of Hell. This dramatic passage imagines Christ descending into the realm of the dead after the crucifixion to break open its gates and lead the righteous into freedom.

Whether one reads the story devotionally, historically, or imaginatively, it raises profound questions. How did early Christians picture the victory of Christ over death? What theological hopes were they expressing? And how do these stories function as both proclamation and interpretation of the Easter mystery? As with the rest of our study, we will continue asking the

kinds of questions that help us notice who is telling the story, what concerns they might have had, and how these writings shaped the faith and imagination of the early Church.

Lent, of course, is not only about study. It is also a season of spiritual discipline. Many of you have taken on practices of prayer, fasting, almsgiving, or intentional acts of service. Some have chosen to step back from habits that clutter our attention. Others have committed to daily prayer. However you have entered the season, I want to encourage you to keep going. The middle weeks of Lent are often when our enthusiasm fades, yet this is precisely the moment when steady faithfulness begins to bear fruit.

Remember that these disciplines are not meant to burden us. They are meant to clear space for God.

Finally, a joyful reminder: this Sunday will be Refreshment Sunday. In the midst of the Lenten journey, the Church pauses briefly for a moment of fellowship and encouragement. After the service we will gather for brunch, graciously hosted by the Brunch Bunch. This will be a wonderful chance to share a meal and enjoy one another's company before continuing the road toward Holy Week.

Peace to you,
Nick+

At Luke's Place: Mar 13th – Mar 19th

Mar 15th	Brunch Bunch Brunch, 11:30am, Metcalf
Mar 15th	Holy Eucharist, Rite I, 8:00am, Chapel
	Faith Forum, 9:15am,
	Holy Eucharist, Rite II, 10:30am, Nave
Mar 16th	Ladies Prayer Partners, 11:30am, Metcalf
Mar 17th	Spiritual Discovery, 9:30am, Library
Mar 18th	Choir, 5pm, Choir Room
	Midweek Manna Lenten Program, 6pm, Metcalf
Mar 19th	Men's Group, 7am, Metcalf
	Bible Study, 9:15am, Metcalf
	Green Country Morning Prayer, 1pm, GCV

Discussion Group will not meet March 17th

Prayer List

Please pray for: Ben Baker, **Steve** McCraw, **Josh** Harris, **David** Swindell, **Connie** Finch, **Terry** Grogan, **Tyler** Roberson, **Jerry** Nezam**, Lynette** Beebe, **Danny** Clem, **David** McAtee, **Steve** Linn, **Jean** Mason, **Adam** Thomas, **Bill** Pendley, **Mary** Wallace, **Lynda** Stephens, **Marcie** Zervas, **Audrey** Harris, **Peggy** Rockey, **Nan** Buhlinger, **Bill** Birk, **Carol** McSpadden, **Dionna** Cameron, **Betty** Rogers, **Dan** & **JoAnn** Gallery, **Kathleen** Turner, **Steve** Clark, **Lauren** Gandy, **Susan** Brooks, **Dea**n Zervas, **Frank** Molina, **Diane** Mitchell, **Frank** Traylor, **Steve** Hand, **Donna** Steward, **Clay** Smith, **Penny** Johnson, **Kim** Shipman, **Fred** Whitson, **and Dayna** Rathman.

Please add the following to your prayers for the Third Week in Lent:
Emmanuel, Shawnee **The Nippon Sei Ko Kai** **St. John's, Norman**
St Anselm Canterbury-OU Campus Ministry **The Episcopal Church in Jerusalem & the Middle East**

Please consider donating for the Easter Lilies that adorn the altar during the Easter Season. Envelopes are in the Narthex

March requested Item:

3in X 5in Ruled Index Cards 100 count package

Maundy Thursday Vigil

Every year during Holy Week, we have an all night vigil beginning on Maundy Thursday night and into Good Friday morning. This vigil is held in the chapel and the chapel door is left unlock all night as people come and go to pray. Sign up for one hour time slots will be in the Narthex until then.

"Then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, "So, could you not stay awake with me one hour? Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak" Matt. 26: 40-41

The final amount of the Breakfast of Champions food drive was 380#! Thank you so much! Attached is a photo of the label on the syrup showing that it's from St. Luke's. All for a very good cause and the syrup is a nice treat for the clients:) Pam Hanson

Theologians Corner:
Gregory the Great
March 12th

Only two popes, Leo I and Gregory I, have been given the popular title of "the Great." Both served during difficult times of invasion in Italy; and during Gregory's term of office, Rome was also faced with famine and deadly epidemics.

Gregory was born around 540, of a politically influential family, and in 573 he became Prefect of Rome; but shortly afterwards he resigned his office and began to live as a monk. In 579 he was made apocrisiarius (representative of the Pope to the Patriarch of Constantinople). Shortly after his return home, the Pope died of the plague, and in 590 Gregory was elected Pope.

Like Leo before him, he became practical governor of central Italy, because the job needed to be done and there was no one else to do it. When the Lombards invaded, he organized the defense of Rome against them, and the eventual signing of a treaty with them. When there was a shortage of food, he organized the importation and distribution of grain from Sicily.

His influence on the forms of public worship throughout Western Europe was enormous. He founded a school for the training of church musicians, and Gregorian chant (plainchant) is named for him. The schedule of Scripture readings for the various Sundays of the year, and the accompanying prayers (many of them written by him), in use throughout most of Western Christendom for the next thirteen centuries, is largely due to his passion for organization. His treatise, On Pastoral Care, while not a work of creative imagination, shows a dedication to duty, and an understanding of what is required of a minister in charge of a Christian congregation. His sermons are still readable today, and it is not without reason that he is accounted (along with Ambrose, Jerome, and Augustine of Hippo) as one of the Four Latin Doctors of the ancient Church. (Athanasius, Gregory of Nazianzen, Basil the Great, and John Chrysostom are the Four Greek Doctors.)

English-speaking Christians will remember Gregory for sending a party of missionaries headed by Augustine of Canterbury (not to be confused with the more famous Augustine of Hippo) to preach the Gospel to the Anglo-Saxon tribes that had invaded England and largely conquered or displaced the Celtic Christians previously living there. Gregory had originally hoped to go to England as a missionary himself, but was pressed into service elsewhere, first as apocrisiarius and then as bishop of Rome. He accordingly sent others, but took an active interest in their work, writing numerous letters both to Augustine and his monks and to their English converts.

Together we pray: Almighty and merciful God, who didst raise up Gregory of Rome to be a servant of the servants of God, and didst inspire him to send missionaries to preach the Gospel to the English people: Preserve thy Church in the catholic and apostolic faith, that thy people, being fruitful in every good work, may receive the crown of glory that never fades away; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Birthdays & Anniversaries for March 15th – 21st

Birthdays		Anniversaries	
Jim Lindsey	(3/15)	Bill Pendley & Camden Campbell	(3/18)
Cheryl Bridendolph	(3/20)		

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.

Concern

Concern's current needs are : Spam and for homeless : small pull top canned vegetables, single serve fruit cups and pudding, and single serve dry milk.

Lent(il) Study and Supper

When? Every Wednesday in Lent, 6pm
Where? Metcalf Hall
What? Light Supper of soup and bread, then study on the Gospel of Nicodemus or the Acts of Pilate

JOIN US

Lenten Dinners sign up is on the bulletin board across from the office. It's the usual request of soup, bread, and cookies. The YD will be joining us for dinner. <u>We still need volunteers for March 18th & 25th .</u>

Back to the Basics!

STILL TIME TO SIGN UP!- We will meet once per month for ninety minutes starting in March and ending in October. A total of eight meetings. If you are interested in this program or would like to learn more about it, please call our Lay Catechist, Tom Reyburn at 970-209-4695 or email him at SjMtnMan@gmail.com.

Brunch Bunch is at it again!

Our wonderful Brunch Bunch is serving up brunch *<u>this Sunday</u>* after the 10:30am service. Come and join in for joyful fellowship and delicious food. And maybe a libation or two.

YD Game Night

YD will not meet March 18th

March 29th , 10:30am Service: Meet in Metcalf Hall. The service will begin in there and then process to the Nave.

Palm Sunday in the Episcopal Church, also known as the Sunday of the Passion, marks the start of Holy Week by commemorating Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, immediately followed by the reading of his Passion and Crucifixion. It is a "both/and" day, transitioning from joyful celebration with palm branches to the somber anticipation of Good Friday.

Which begins HOLY WEEK

Maundy Thursday Service:
April 2nd, 6:00pm. This service will include Washing of the Feet

Maundy Thursday is the Thursday of Holy Week that commemorates the Last Supper, marking the institution of the Eucharist and Jesus' "new commandment" (*mandatum*) to love one another. It is the start of the Triduum (three holy days), featuring the washing of feet, the stripping of the altar, and a focus on servant leadership, humility, and the Eucharist.

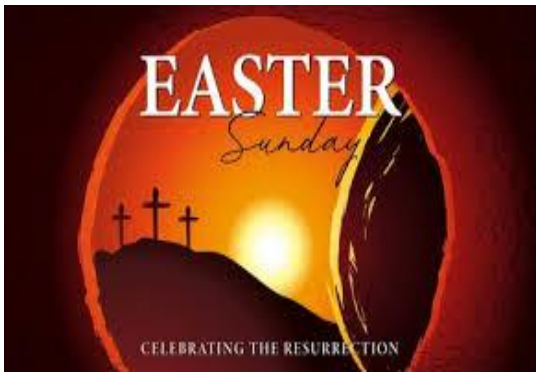
Good Friday Service:
April 3rd, 12:00pm. Eucharist from the Reserve

In the Episcopal Church, Good Friday is a solemn day of fasting, prayer, and self-denial commemorating the crucifixion and death of Jesus Christ. As part of the Triduum (along with Maundy Thursday and Easter), it focuses on the Passion story, the theme of redemption, and the "good" (or holy) nature of Christ's sacrifice.

Holy Saturday Service:
April 4th , 9:00am.

Holy Saturday is a quiet day of waiting, fasting, and prayer, marking the time between Christ's crucifixion on Good Friday and his resurrection on Easter. It commemorates Jesus resting in the tomb and his "harrowing of hell," or descent to the dead. It is a solemn day with no Eucharist, featuring a simple, brief liturgy.

Great Easter Vigil Service:
April 4th , 7:00pm. Meet in Courtyard to begin service.
The Great Easter Vigil is the primary, 2000-year-old service marking the first celebration of Jesus' resurrection, held in darkness between sunset on Holy Saturday and sunrise on Easter. It symbolizes the transition from darkness to light and death to life, acting as the culmination of the Triduum.



Easter Services:
April 5th , 8:am & 10:30am
Easter is the central feast celebrating the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ, marking his victory over sin and death. It is not just one day, but the start of a 50-day season ("Great Fifty Days") lasting until Pentecost. It signifies the ultimate fulfillment of God's promises and the triumph of light over darkness.

St. Luke's Vestry Members

- Karole Cozby, Sr. Warden- kscozby916@gmail.com
- Karen Lewey, Jr Warden - kgrammy07@yahoo.com
- Becky Liehr – jbliehr@gmail.com
- Chase Almy – chasealmy88@gmail.com
- Lisa Beeman – lisabeeman89@gmail.com
- Steve Heidorn- sgheidorn@yahoo.com
- Dolores McCreary –dolomc37@gmail.com
- Steve VanAken- scvanaken@sbcglobal.net
- Fred Whitson- sandyswhit@gmail.com
- Robert Lonski- rjtazski@yahoo.com
- Cathy Perrier – bling4mimi@hotmail.com

Bereavement Team 3

Becky Liehr, Cathy Perrier, Kris Bonner, Mary Jo Peterson

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

St. Luke's Episcopal Church
210 East 9th St., Bartlesville, OK 74003
Office Hours: 9am-4pm, M-F
Email: StLukesBartlesville@outlook.com
918-336-1212
Or contact
Penny Williams, secretary 918-766-2157