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The Steeple

Mar 19, 2026

The Weekly Newsletter of St. Luke's Episcopal Church

When the "Priest's" Texts Go Awry

It used to be that scams were easy to spot. Suspect grammar. Strange email addresses. Messages that felt just a little "off." But those days are quickly fading. With the rise of artificial intelligence and increasingly sophisticated phishing tactics, the messages circulating today can sound eerily human. They can mimic tone, personality, and even look like they came from me. And that is precisely the point.

Over the past couple of years, clergy across the country have seen a rise in scams where someone impersonates the rector. A message arrives, sometimes by email, sometimes by text, beginning with something like**:**

"Hi, this is Fr. Nick. Are you available?"

If you respond, the request escalates:

"I'm tied up in meetings and need a quick favor. Could you purchase a few gift cards and send me the codes? I'll reimburse you."

Or:

"I'm working on something confidential and need your help urgently. Please don't call right now just text back."

These messages are designed to create urgency, to bypass your better judgment, and to rely on your trust. They often sound polite, even pastoral. That's what makes them dangerous.

Let me be as clear as I can be: I will never ask you for money, gift cards, or sensitive information through email or text. Ever. Not on a busy day. Not in an emergency. Not even if I say "please". If I need something from you, we will speak directly. You will hear my voice, or better yet, you will see the whites of my eyes.

So what should you look for?

- Unexpected urgency: "I need this right now," or "I'm in a meeting and can't talk."
- Unusual requests: especially anything involving money, gift cards, or passwords.
- Subtle differences in contact info: an email that looks close to mine, but not quite right.
- Pressure to keep it quiet: "Don't call," or "This is confidential."

- A shift in tone: familiar, but just slightly off.

If you receive something like this, do this:

- Do not respond. Report it. Delete it.

There is something deeply human at work in these scams. They rely on trust, on generosity, on our instinct to help when asked. In a strange way, they exploit the very virtues we seek to cultivate in the Christian life. And that can leave us feeling embarrassed, or even a little foolish, if we fall for it.

But hear this clearly: being targeted is not a sign of weakness. It is a sign that you are part of a community where trust and care are real. The call, then, is not to become suspicious of one another, but to become wise. As our Lord says, to be "wise as serpents and innocent as doves." Not cynical. Not hardened. But attentive.

Thank you for your vigilance, your care for one another, and your willingness to protect this community we share. These small acts of attentiveness are, in their own way, part of our common life in Christ.

Peace,
Nick+

At Luke's Place: Mar 20th – Mar 26th

Mar 22nd	Holy Eucharist, Rite I, 8:00am, Chapel
	Faith Forum, 9:15am,
	Holy Eucharist, Rite II, 10:30am, Nave
Mar 23rd	Ladies Prayer Partners, 11:30am, Metcalf
Mar 24th	Spiritual Discovery, 9:30am, Library
Mar 25th	Choir, 5pm, Choir Room
	Midweek Manna Lenten Program, 6pm, Metcalf
Mar 26th	Men's Group, 7am, Metcalf
	Bible Study, 9:15am, Metcalf
	Green Country Morning Prayer, 1pm, GCV

Discussion Group will meet Tuesday, March 24th at 6:30pm in Rodgers Hall. Topic of discussion: Cast the First Stone

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 Fourth Week in Lent:
Church of the Redeemer, Okla City **The Anglican Church of Kenya**

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

Theologians Corner:

Joseph Guardian of our Lord
March 19th

All that we know of Joseph we learn from the first two chapters of Matthew and of Luke. Otherwise, he is mentioned only in passing in Luke 3:23; John 1:45; John 6:42 as the supposed father of Jesus. (Mark does not mention him at all.)

In the face of circumstances where a man of lesser character might have reacted very differently, Joseph graciously assumed the role of Jesus' father. He is well remembered in Christian tradition for the love he showed to the boy Jesus, and for his tender affection and care for Mary, during the twelve years and more that he was their protector.

Joseph was a pious Jew, a descendant of David, and a carpenter by trade. (The Gospels use the Greek word TEKTON, which means "builder," as in "architect." It has been suggested that he may have been a mason, a metalworker, or a building contractor. In favor of the traditional translation, we have a passage in the writings of Justin Martyr, who was born in Palestine, probably around 100, who tells us that he has seen plows and ox-yokes still in use which were said to have been made in the carpenter-shop at Nazareth.

We may not believe that the particular claims were all accurate, but they are testimony to what the Christians of Palestine in the early second century believed that Joseph's occupation had been, and this may be an idea continuously handed down in the community there since the early first century.) Because of the silence of the Gospels, and because Jesus entrusted Mary to the care of John, it is generally believed that Joseph died a natural death after the visit to Jerusalem when Jesus was twelve (Luke 2:41-51), but before the Baptism of Jesus when He was thirty. Joseph's influence during those early years must have been tremendous. When Jesus spoke of God as being like a loving Father, He was using a word that he had first learned as a child to apply to Joseph. Joseph stands as a testimony to the value of simple everyday human things, and especially that human thing called "fatherhood."

Together we pray: O God, who from the family of thy servant David didst raise up Joseph to be the guardian of thy incarnate Son and the spouse of his virgin mother: Give us grace to imitate his uprightness of life and his obedience to thy commands; through the same thy Son 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 22nd- 28th

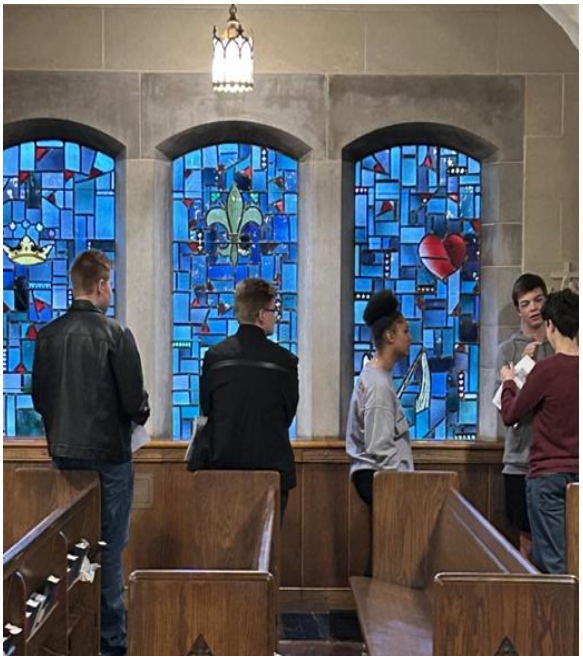
Birthdays		Anniversaries
Sandi Dice	(3/25)	
Blair Ellis	(3/25)	
Vicki Travaglini	(3/28)	
Nancy Vano	(3/28)	

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.

YD learned about St Luke's stained glass windows with the help of Dolores McCreary



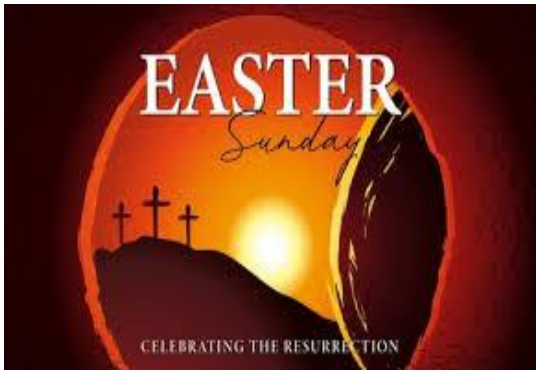
March 29th , 10:30am Service: Meet in Metcalf Hall. The service will begin in there and then process to the Nave.

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

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

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

Great Easter Vigil Service:
April 4th , 6:00pm. Meet in Courtyard to begin service.



Easter Services:
April 5th , 8:am & 10:30am

to

The Feast of the Annunciation is celebrated annually on **March 25** to commemorate the Angel Gabriel's announcement the Virgin Mary that she would conceive Jesus Christ. Also known as the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord, it marks the Incarnation, occurring exactly nine months before Christmas.

Brunch Bunch fed us well!

St. Luke's Vestry Members

- Karole Cozby, Sr. Warden- kscozby916@gmail.com
- Karen Lewey, Jr Warden - kgrammy07@yahoo.com
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Bereavement Team 3

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

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