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July 24, 2025



The Weekly Newsletter of St. Luke's Episcopal Church



Return

Dear Friends,

There's something holy in returning to one's hometown and something holy, too, in coming back to where one has made their home.

Over the past couple of weeks, my family and I relished traveling back to Battle Creek, Michigan, our hometown. Battle Creek, as you probably can imagine, is a place of grain silos and cereal factories, a city whose mornings smell faintly of cornflakes and whose streets still carry echoes of industry and manufacturing. There, people know how to weather the seasons, whether that be snow or sorrow, and the Episcopal presence at St. Thomas, offers a steady liturgy of hope for a community that's learned how to rise and rebuild.

Back in Bartlesville, I see a different landscape: prairie winds and open sky, a city shaped by oil booms, artistry, and the hearty pulse of small-town Americana. Here, the rhythms of life beat to both heritage and innovation. And yet, standing in the sanctuaries of both cities one in southern Michigan and one in northeastern Oklahoma the differences seem to fall away.

The prayers are the same. The table is set the same. The people come with the same longing: to be seen, to be fed, and to be reminded of God's abiding presence.

In both places, the Episcopal Church stands as a kind of home for those who call it that - a place where mercy isn't rationed, where tradition embraces change, and where education, justice, and compassion still matter deeply to everyone. I love that. I hope you do to.

While I was away, I was filled with gratitude for our own volunteers and staff who kept the ministries of our congregation not only afloat, but vibrant. The energy that sustains our worship,

our outreach, and our fellowship doesn't come from one person it comes from the Spirit breathing through all of you. So, thank-you!

This is especially evident in our shared commitment to the Pack the Backpack program through Washington County's School Supply Drive. Each backpack that is filled here isn't just a bag of crayons and notebooks, it's a blessing. It is hope packed with care. It's a reminder to a child that their future matters, that their learning has dignity, and that their story belongs not only in the classroom but to something bigger.

As we prepare for the start of school, (Yes, we are almost there) I invite us all to reflect on space: the sacred space of our churches, the learning space of our classrooms, and the generous space we make in our hearts through stewardship. For when we give of time, treasure, or talent we are not simply meeting a budget; we are opening space for transformation.

The Episcopal tradition has always honored education as a pathway to fuller life in God. Whether in catechism or chemistry class, our church holds fast to the belief that wisdom and faith walk hand in hand. And so, supporting students, equipping classrooms, and nurturing young minds is holy work and it's one we are called to share. So, when it's time to pack the backpacks, I hope you'll be the first to show up.

Friends, whether you are just returning from a trip like me, settling in from the summer, or if you are preparing children and grandchildren for school, I hope you know how enriched we are to have you call St. Luke's HOME.

See you Sunday,

Nick+

At Luke's Place: July 25th – July 31st, 2025

July 27th	Holy Eucharist, Rite I, 8:00am, Chapel
	Faith Forum, 9:15am, Metcalf
	Holy Eucharist, Rite II, 10:30am, Nave
	Pack the Backpacks move into Metcalf
July 31st	Men's Fellowship, 7am, Metcalf Hall
	Bible Study, 9:15am, Metcalf Hall
	Green Country Eucharist, 1pm, GCV



Theologian's Corner Thomas A' Kempis

Priest, Monk, Writer July 24th, 1471

Thomas Hammerken was born at Kempen (hence the "A Kempis") in the duchy of Cleves in Germany around 1380. He was educated by a religious order called the Brethren of the Common Life, and in due course joined the order, was ordained a priest, became sub-prior of his house (in the low Countries), and died 25 July 1471 (his feast is observed a day early to avoid conflict with that of James bar-Zebedee the Apostle).

Thomas is known almost entirely for composing or compiling a manual of spiritual advice known as *The Imitation of Christ*, in which he urges the reader to seek to follow the example of Jesus Christ and to be conformed in all things to His will. An extract follows:

When God bestows Spiritual comfort, receive it with a grateful heart; but remember that it comes of God's free gift, and not of your own merit. Do not be proud, nor over joyful, nor foolishly presumptuous; rather, be the more humble for this gift, more cautious, and more prudent in all your doings, for this hour will pass, and temptation will follow it. When comfort is withdrawn, do not immediately despair, but humbly and patiently await the will of Heaven; for God is able to restore you to a consolation even richer than before. This is nothing new or strange to those who know the ways of God, for the great Saints and Prophets of old often experienced these changes. ...Indeed, the temptation that precedes is often a sign of comfort to follow. For heavenly comfort is promised to those who have been tried and tempted. "To him who overcomes," says God, "I will give to eat of the Tree of Life."

Together we pray: Holy Father, who hast nourished and strengthened thy church by the writings of thy servant Thomas à Kempis: Grant that we may learn from him to know what is necessary to be known, to love what is to be loved, to praise what highly pleases thee, and always to seek to know and to follow thy will; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Prayer List

Please pray for: Ben Baker, Steve McCraw, Josh Harris, David Swindell, Connie Finch, Terry Grogan, Tyler Roberson, Jerry Nezam, Miriam Petrovich, 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, **David** Anderson, **Dan & JoAnn** Gallery, **Freda** Bretz, **Kathleen** Turner, **Susan** Dick, **Steve** Clark, **Lauren** Gandy, and **Betty** Hardin.

Please add the following to your prayers for the Sixth Week of Pentecost
St Crispin's Conference Center, Wewoka The Church of Pakistan (United)

Birthdays and Anniversaries July 27th – Aug 2nd, 2025

Birthdays



Arason Ellis (7/29)



Anniversaries

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



News From the Greens:

Hi friends,

After our coworkers in a country near Thailand requested it, I received a testimony from a U.S. coworker who was a single mom when she raised her son. I attached it, because I thought her testimony was especially beautiful. I'll keep looking for more testimonies and resources for our

coworkers who are seeking to encourage single parents in the country near to Thailand.

Another request is--Do you know of resources or testimonies from Christians who have gone through a **divorce**? That would also be useful to our coworkers in a country close to Thailand.

In addition, do you know of resources or testimonies from Christians who have become **widows/widowers**? And how about resources from Christian couples who have had to deal with **infertility** issues? It's not easy to go through these things, and our coworkers would like

to gather resources for how to support people in their country. The resources need to be succinct and easy to access, because English is a second language for our coworkers. If you have a different kind of testimony about how God encouraged you through His Word at a hard time in your life, please also send that to me. It might make a big difference to someone in the country near Thailand.

We hope to send a more complete update soon, but I wanted to send this first to ask for your help.

The recent horrible Texas flooding happened about 100 miles west of Austin. We have been sad about the suffering of many people. It's been raining again today. May God stop the rain and help the many clean-up efforts.

Two of our coworkers in Thailand are having to move to another house, because rainy season is causing early flooding in our city. The canals have not been completely dug out from when the last flooding happened back in September. Our one coworker is still looking for a different house to move into. May God help her to find a house so she can continue her work of reaching out to a minority language people group which started immigrating to Thailand many years ago.

Thank you for thinking about whether you can help with my requests. Thank you too for praying,
Joanne



Spiritual Discovery Group
will start back August 19th,
9:30am , in the Library.
We will share and refresh
and then discuss studying
chapter 13 of The Good
Book by Peter Gomes.
Everyone is welcome to
join us

4th ANNUAL
LIP SYNC
**BATTLE IN
BARTLESVILLE**

September 27 | 2025
Hilton Garden Inn | 6 pm

Such a fun time that
kept the toes a tapping
and some good hardy
laughs. A wonderfully
fun family event!

Ronda Riden-Wilson

**WATCH LOCAL
CELEBRITIES BATTLE
HUNGER**

Admission of \$75 includes
the Battle, a festival style
buffet and 2 adult drinks.

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A Collect for the Martyrdom of St James the Apostle (July 25): O gracious God, we remember before you today your servant and apostle James, first among the Twelve to suffer martyrdom for the Name of Jesus Christ; and we pray that you will pour out upon the leaders of your Church that spirit of self-denying service by which alone they may have true authority among your people; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.* (BCP 242)

Last Sunday 7-20-2025

(pics by Mark Peterson)



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