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The Steeple

Sept 25, 2025

The Weekly Newsletter of St. Luke's Episcopal Church

Blessing of the Animals

My Friends,

Each October our prayers are offered in remembrance of one of the most beloved saints of the Church: Francis of Assisi. Born in Italy in the 12th century, Francis was the son of a wealthy merchant who gave up his inheritance to live in poverty and simplicity, seeking to follow Christ with his whole being. He gathered companions around him, founded the Franciscan order, and through his preaching, his joy, and his radical love for all creation, became a living witness to the Gospel.

In the Episcopal tradition, we venerate Francis not only for his holiness but also because his life reflects the way of Jesus through poverty of spirit, humility, reconciliation, and above all, love. His Canticle of the Sun, which praises God for "Brother Sun and Sister Moon," teaches us to see all creation as gift, and to recognize our kinship with every creature. One of the prayers attributed to him, beginning "Lord, make us instruments of your peace", is included in our Book of Common Prayer and it continues to shape the way we pray for reconciliation in our world.

Francis was renowned for his special relationship with God's creatures, seeing in them reflections of their Creator's beauty. When we bring our dogs, cats, spiders, fish, or even stuffed animals to be blessed, we are remembering that our faith is not abstract but embodied. These companions share our homes, comfort us in loneliness, and show us something of God's unconditional love. To bless them together is to give thanks for God's abundance and to rejoice in the life we share.

Practically speaking, many parishes, including St. Luke's, celebrate the Blessing of the Animals not on October 4 (the actual feast day) but on a day close to it. This allows the whole community to take part, making it not only an act of blessing but an act of fellowship. It is a moment when our

neighbors, children, and friends can see the Church celebrating God's good creation in a joyful and tangible way.

So, bring your pets to church on Wednesday October 1st at 6:00 p.m. Together, we will give thanks for St. Francis, for the lives of the creatures entrusted to our care, and for the Creator who made us all.

Peace to you,
Nick+

At Luke's Place: Sept 26th – Oct 2nd, 2025

Sept 28th	Holy Eucharist, Rite I, 8:00am, Chapel
	Faith Forum, 9:15am, Metcalf
	Holy Eucharist, Rite II, 10:30am, Nave
Sept 29th	Ladies Prayer Partners, 11:30am, Metcalf
	St Michael & All Angels, 12:15pm, Chapel
Sept 30th	Spiritual Discovery, 9:30am, Library
	Discussion Group, 6:30pm, Rodgers Hall
Oct 1st	Choir, 5:00pm, Choir Room
	YD, 6:00pm, Rodgers Hall- Blessings of the Animals
Oct 2nd	Men's Fellowship, 7am, Metcalf Hall
	Bible Study, 9:15am, Metcalf Hall
	Green Country Eucharist, 1pm, GCV

Theologian's Corner

Anna Ellison Butler Alexander
September 24, 1947

Anna, was the first and only African-American consecrated a Deaconess in the Episcopal Church. She served in the Episcopal Diocese of Georgia during her entire career

Anna Alexander was born in 1865 to recently-emancipated slaves on the Butler plantation on St. Simons Island, Glynn Co., Georgia. Her father had been taught to read by the English actress Fanny Kemble (who later wrote an influential book condemning slave life there). Perhaps this encouraged Anna's interest in education.

The Alexander family soon moved to Pennick, Georgia, just outside Brunswick, to take advantage of land south of the Altamaha River previously held by poor whites. Her father became a carpenter-builder and a community leader.

Anna first taught at the public school in Pennick. Later, she moved to Darien, Georgia, where her sister Mary founded a school affiliated with St. Cyprian's Episcopal Church, and all three sisters taught. In 1894, with the cooperation of the Brunswick priest, Anna founded a mission in Pennick, while still teaching at Darien during the week, making a 40 mile round trip by boat and foot.

The mission faltered when Anna accepted a position at St. Paul's Normal and Industrial School (as well as enrolled in the new teachers college there) in Lawrenceville, Virginia. In 1897, she returned to Pennick and revitalized the mission. The congregation was renamed Church of the Good Shepherd, and Alexander also started a school. She supported herself by taking in sewing, and managed to buy property in 1902, where her brother Charles Alexander and other men then erected a church.

In 1907, bishop Cleland Kinloch Nelson addressed the second annual meeting of the diocese's council of colored churchmen, held at the Church of the Good Shepherd, and consecrated Anna as a deaconess. She became the first and only African-American deaconess. She worked in the Altamaha River area for the rest of her life, teaching not only academic subjects, but also moral values.

The diocese of Georgia split in 1907 and Nelson chose to associate with the new Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta. His successor in the Diocese of Georgia, Frederick Focke Reese, excluded African-Americans from church government in the diocese, and extended almost no diocesan financial support to African-Americans. This forced Alexander and others to make do, as well as seek support from outside the diocese, including from the Episcopal Board of Missions. During the bad crop years of the late 1920s through the Great Depression, Alexander continued to work in her hardscrabble community, whose members built the current wooden church building in 1928.

Alexander died on September 24, 1947 and was buried at the cemetery at Camp Reese, a diocesan camp on St. Simons where she had worked. In 2004, she was reinterred at Good Shepherd Church in Pennick, which she had founded and where she had worked for many years.

Loving God, who didst call Anna Alexander as a deaconess in thy church: Grant unto us the wisdom to teach the gospel of Christ to whomever we meet, by word and by example, that all may

come to the enlightenment thou dost intend for thy people; through Jesus Christ, our Teacher and Savior. Amen.

DISCUSSION GROUP

Next Discussion 9/30: Discussion topic will be "The Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed."

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, **Dan** & **JoAnn** Gallery, **Freda** Bretz, **Kathleen** Turner, **Steve** Clark, **Lauren** Gandy, **Susan** Brooks, **Dea**n Zervas, and **Graham** Hunt.

Please add the following to your prayers for the Fifteenth Week of Pentecost
St Patrick's, Broken Arrow **Province of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan**

Concerns current needs are: canned chicken, Spam and small jars of peanut butter; and for the homeless: unisex deodorant, toothpaste and bars of soap.

Birthdays and Anniversaries Sept 28th – Oct 4th, 2025

Birthdays **Anniversaries**

Bryan Megee	**(9/21)**
Joan Heidorn	**(9/29)**
Oliver Ellis	**(10/3)**
Cheryl VanAken	**(10/3)**

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!

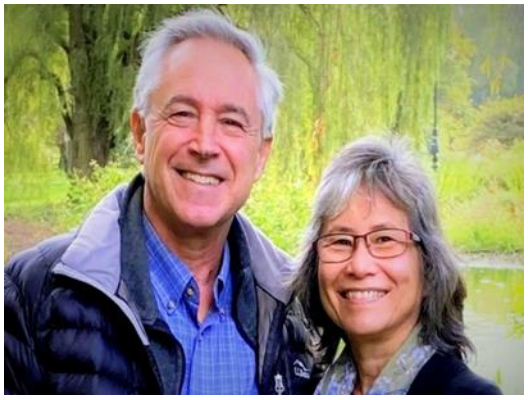
For September please collect either small packages of 8 to 12 count pencils or large packages of 16 to 24 count pencils. Either size should be number 2 pencils with the eraser. Don't spend the extra money for sharpened pencils. The pictures are Walmart or Staples brands of the large packages. Price should be about $0.50 for the small packages and $1.00 for the large.

Collection basket is in Nartex.

STEWARDSHIP CORNER

Did you know?

Our currency of space supports several groups that meet at St. Luke's! Some of these include Pack the Backpacks, (2700 bags were packed and distributed this summer), Children's Musical Theatre, Washington County Election Board, Casa Hispana, Scouting Jane Phillips Elementary Graduation, and OKM Music.



News from the Greens

Hi friends,

Roger and I will depart on Monday (Sept. 22) for our return to Thailand. Please ask God to launch us with His breath, His strength and vitality from His Spirit.

Our prayer requests:

1) Some of Roger's Bible apps on Google Play Store were recently taken down and made unavailable to new users. (This does not affect the minority-language speakers who already have the app on their phones.) Please ask God to guide Roger in how to make the minority-language Bible apps available again on the Play Store.

2) Roger and I recently attended a conference here in the Chicago area, where **DMM (Disciple Making Movement)** was showcased. (This site gives a simple introduction to DMM: https://japaneseparsley.org/dmm/) After the conference I felt refreshed in the potential for a specific Bible study method called Discovery Bible Study (https://www.necchurch.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Discovery-Bible-Study-Guide-1.336.pdf) to equip Christians to share their faith and to go on to coach others in the same way. The word "Movement" in **DMM** signifies the planning involved to prepare each member of the Bible study to branch out to start their own groups. It's a big vision to embrace. Please ask God to help Roger and me to introduce basic DMM concepts to the four multilingual Thai teen-agers we've been meeting with and also to our other contacts. In addition, the biggest part of the DMM process is prayer, so I want to keep leaning more and more into praying for people I'm reaching out to.

3) I finished pulling together some verses for a pocket-sized book. Then I sent the document to our team so they can add topics or verses especially relevant to their country's situation. I have attached the verses. Please let me know if you have comments or additions. Your feedback is very welcome. May God help this project to be finalized quickly and a pocket-sized book printed and made available in the national and regional languages of the country near to Thailand, for any of the teams that request it and think the product will be useful.

4) We thank God for our time in California, Idaho, Texas and Illinois. The time has been good. We thank God for His mercy and watch care over our family members in these places. Please ask God to keep our spread-out family members strong in following Him wholeheartedly.

5) Who does God want us all to be as we observe what is happening in our own countries and in the world? May God strengthen us all by His Spirit to be gentle, humble, courageous, faithful, wise and steadfast in our neighborhoods and communities. Nothing is too hard for the Lord.

Thank you for praying with us. We are grateful for you, Joanne

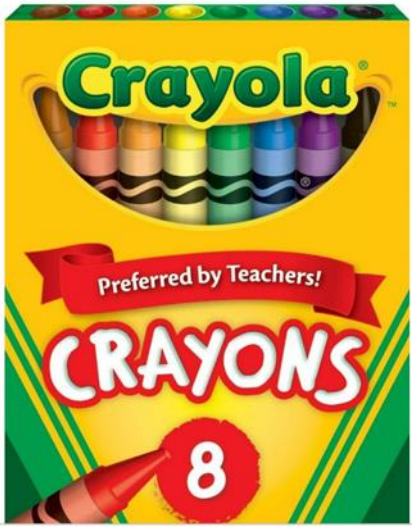
YD Activities

We enjoyed a delicious dinner from the Cutts last week, learned from Father Nick, filled 15 care packages for our YD alumni in college, and even had time leftover for a game of SPUD!

Orbit

3M

3M



Pack the Backpacks School Supply Item for October

For October please collect
Crayola Crayons 8 count. Please stay with the Crayola brand

Concern Fundraiser : Lip Sync Battle in Bartlesville
This Saturday at 6pm, Hilton Garden Inn
Tickets: $75

Saint Michael and All Angels September 29th

Everlasting God, you have ordained and constituted in a wonderful order the ministries of angels and mortals: Mercifully grant that, as your holy angels always serve and worship you in heaven, so by your appointment they may help and defend us here on earth; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.* *BCP*

Eucharist will be celebrated Monday, September 29th, 12:15pm, chapel

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
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- Robert Lonski- rjtazski@yahoo.com

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

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