

The Steeple

December
22, 2021



- * Christmas Meditations with Dolores McCreary
– Thursday, December 23, 2 to 3 p.m.
- * Christmas Eve: Prelude Music – 4:30 p.m.
- * Christmas Eve: Holy Eucharist – 5:00 p.m.



The Weekly Newsletter of St. Luke's Episcopal Church

Towards the Feast of the Incarnation

One of my favorite Christmas hymns is “In the Bleak Midwinter.”¹ I don't know why but the third verse of the hymn has always stuck with me. Christina Rossetti writes,

Angels and archangels may have gathered there
cherubim and seraphim thronged the air
but only his mother, in her maiden bliss
worshipped the beloved with a kiss.

I love that. And, I absolutely love the music of this season. The hymns we will sing these next few weeks are some of the most beloved of all time. You might even say it isn't Christmas yet, until some of them are sung - take for instance Silent Night. I wonder what your favorite Christmas hymns are? And why? Hymns are more than just songs and there is always a story to tell about why that is the case.

In concert with the poetry and theology of our hymnody we approach one of the greatest mysteries of the Church's year of grace in the Incarnation. As is the case with the great mysteries of the Christmas and Easter, recounting the story is one of our greatest joys whether it be through poetry or prose. There is something that is deeply enchanting about what T.S. Elliot called “the still point of a turning world.” For such is Christmas.

That story is indeed rich, with a cast of familiar characters: shepherds and angels, wise men from the East, the innkeeper, and of course Mary and Joseph. I know that folks here at Luke's Place know the people of the inn quite well, however, with each passing year though much of the magic of the season stays the same, how we remember the story sometimes connects with us in different ways. Whatever way it does connect with you is important and I encourage you to follow where that connection leads you this season.

My friends, I want to wish you all a blessed Christmas. I hope that the good news of Christ's birth kindles in you the fire of both love and spirit in a new and exciting way. I hope that through the mystery of the Incarnation you come to know just how fiercely God loves you and that so does your church family too.

Every Blessing and I look forward to seeing you all on Friday night.

Nick+

Christmas Eve:

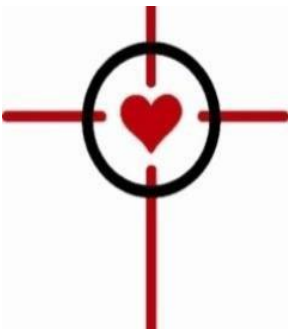
Prelude music by Lauren Green & Dolores McCreary – 4:30 p.m.

The Holy Eucharist: Rite II – 5:00 p.m.



**Please join us in the Nave for
Christmas Meditations with Dolores McCreary
Thursday, December 23rd, 2 to 3 p.m.**

Please Consider Volunteering at CONCERN!



Concern office and food pantry: Volunteers are always needed to check clients in at the front desk and answer the phone, or to provide intake assistance by determining the needs of our clients, or to pack pantry orders or to re-package bulk food or make “food runs” to the Tulsa Food bank or local stores. The time commitment is up to the volunteer: 2-4 hours once a week or once a month. Concern appreciates the help and will work with volunteers to make volunteering a good experience for all. Call 918.336.4693. Please visit: <http://www.concerncares.com/give-help.html>

Children’s Programming is Back!

On October 24, we began gathering with children again on Sundays. Drop your K-5th graders off upstairs at 10:15 am. Each week, we will alternate between music and Godly Play, giving children a chance to experience both! The children will rejoin their families in church before communion.

We are looking for people to serve as doorkeepers. Please reach out to Keeli Droege at keelidroege@gmail.com to sign up!

Weekly Words of Wellness

The Gift of Presence

By Scott Stoner & Holly Hughes Stoner

One of the highlights of Christmas for me as a child was my grandmother coming to visit and staying with us for a week. She lived far away, so a visit from her was always a special occasion. All this was magnified when she visited over the holidays. My sister and I would gather on the couch with her for hours, watching all the classic holiday movies. As I write this now, I vividly remember the magic of watching *Miracle on 34th Street* with her every year. And when we were done watching movies, it was off to the kitchen to make cookies together.

It's enlightening that I have so many powerful memories of her visits, yet I cannot remember one Christmas present that she ever gave to me. I do not doubt that she gave us all presents, it's just that I have no recollection of them. What I remember instead is her presence. That was indeed the greatest gift she could have given us, and she shared that gift abundantly.

If you celebrate the holidays by exchanging gifts and find yourself stressing out about finding just the right present, perhaps my story will be enlightening for you, too. I'm no Scrooge when it comes to presents; I just know that one of the best gifts we can give to family and friends is, to paraphrase Ralph Waldo Emerson, "a portion of ourselves."

The gift of our presence does not require any money, but it may require some internal work on our part. I know I cannot be truly present to someone if internally I am distracted. I also cannot be present if I am holding on to some kind of judgment, anger, or regret.

Many things can block our ability to show up fully in the important relationships in our lives. The holidays seem like a perfect time of year to let go of those barriers. It could turn out to be the best present we give to both ourselves and the people we love.

Making It Personal

1. Can you think of someone who has given you the gift of presence, either when you were a child or in your adult life? How did/does that person make you feel?
2. To whom do you want to be sure you give the gift of presence this holiday season?
3. Are you aware of any internal barriers that might make it difficult for you to show up fully for those you love? If so, are you ready to let them go?

Pub Theology at El Maguey!

There will be no Pub Theology in December.

Please join us on January 28th!

The next meeting will be at 7 p.m. Thursday, January 28th at El Maguey.

What is 'Pub Theology'? It's a time to gather informally and talk about different subjects around our core values of faith. What feeds your faith? Where did you see Jesus this week?

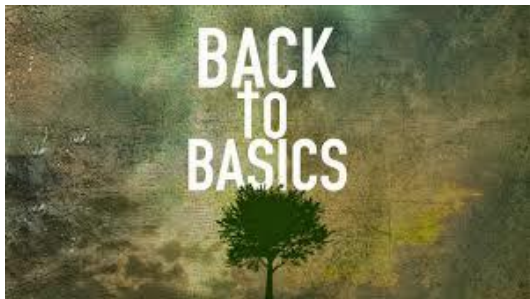
What literature are you reading that has had some inspiration for you?

If you have any questions, contact Fr. Nick, Penny Williams, or Nancy Megee.

We will be happy to share. Let's share some theology!



Faith Forum Series



**Sundays 9:15– 10:15 a.m.
in Metcalf Hall**

Rector's Bible Study



**Thursdays 9:00 a.m.
in Metcalf Hall**

St. Luke's Vestry Members

Dan Droege, Sr. Warden – 918-331-7936
dbdcomm.2@gmail.com

Doug McIver, Jr. Warden – 785-342-4328
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Jo Baughman – jybokla@aol.com

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Karen Lewey – kgrammy07@yahoo.com

Penny Williams – oklaborn@sbcglobal.net

Nancy Woods – Nancywoods120@gmail.com

Steve Van Aken – scvanaken@sbcglobal.net

Nancy Warring – newarring@cityofbartlesville.org

Katherine Powell – kmpbmp48@gmail.com

Nancy Megee – sc4me81@yahoo.com

St. Luke's Prayer List

Our Prayer List can be found in the Sunday bulletin and on our website.

Call or email our office
with prayer requests.

918-336-1212 or
StLukesBartlesville@outlook.com

Bereavement Team 2

Laura Birk, Kris Bonner,
Nancy Megee, Rita Childers,
Carol Murphy

St. Luke's Episcopal Church Contacts:

The Reverend Nick Phares, Rector

RevPhares@outlook.com 269-788-7063

Dolores McCreary, Choir Director/Organist

dolomc37@gmail.com 918-397-4828

Keeli Droege, Christian Education Coord.

keelidroege@gmail.com 918-697-8509

Birthdays and Anniversaries

December 23 – 29

Birthdays

Debbie Muegenborg - Dec 24

Sheila Taylor - Dec 24

Charlie Lee - Dec 29

Anniversaries

Doug & Connie Freebern - Dec 23

Bill & Cheryl Bridendolph – Dec 28

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!

Connecting with St. Luke's

To learn various ways to connect at St. Luke's,
visit our website at:

<http://episcopalbartlesville.org/>

SOLICITATIONS

Be aware – No one from St. Luke's will request gift cards or other monetary support through email. If you receive such a message in your email, it is fraudulent. All financial requests/special appeals at St. Luke's go through normal channels and any special requests will be made by phone or in person.

December Services – Clip & Save!

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| 22 nd | Morning Prayer Evening Prayer | Chapel Chapel | 9:00 a.m. 4:00 p.m. and Facebook Live |
| 23 rd | Morning Prayer Bible Study Holy Eucharist Rite I Advent Meditation Evening Prayer | Chapel Metcalf Hall Green Country Church Chapel | 9:00 a.m. 9:15 a.m. 1:00 p.m. 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. 4:00 p.m. and Facebook Live |
| 24 th | Prelude Music Holy Eucharist Rite II | Church Church | 4:30 p.m. Christmas Eve 5:00 p.m. Christmas Eve |
| 25 th | Holy Eucharist Rite I | Chancel | 10:00 a.m. Christmas Day |
| 26 th | First Sunday After Christmas Holy Eucharist Rite I Faith Forum Holy Eucharist Rite II | Chapel Metcalf Hall Church | 8:00 a.m. 9:15 a.m. 10:30 a.m. |
| 27 th | Morning Prayer Holy Eucharist Evening Prayer | Chapel Chapel Chapel | 9:00 a.m. 12:15 p.m. Feast of St. Stephen 4:00 p.m. and Facebook Live |
| 28 th | Morning Prayer Holy Eucharist Evening Prayer | Chapel Chapel Chapel | 9:00 a.m. 12:15 p.m. Feast of St. John 4:00 p.m. and Facebook Live |
| 29 th | Morning Prayer Holy Eucharist Evening Prayer | Chapel Chapel Chapel | 9:00 a.m. 12:15 p.m. Holy Innocents 4:00 p.m. and Facebook Live |
| 30 th | Morning Prayer Bible Study Holy Eucharist Rite I Evening Prayer | Chapel Metcalf Hall Green Country Chapel | 9:00 a.m. 9:15 a.m. 1:00 p.m. 4:00 p.m. and Facebook Live |