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# *The Steeple*



Mar 13, 2024



## **The Weekly Newsletter of St. Luke's Episcopal Church**



### **Let's Talk About the Weather.**

When I was growing up in Michigan, we would have these weather anomalies you know, like two feet of snow on Mother's Day or 95-degree days in February. I remember my grandparents saying something like, "It's Michigan, what do you expect?" and "Hey, if you don't like the weather around here, just wait five minutes." The funny thing is, for the longest time I thought that those statements were Michigan-centric. But no! I have heard them twice today... here... in OK.

It kind of reminds me of that story from Matthew that goes something like this:

The Pharisees and Sadducees came once to test Jesus and they asked him to show them a sign from heaven. He answered them, "When it is evening, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.' And in the morning, 'It will be stormy today, for the sky is red and threatening.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times!

So here is the sign for our time! "For as much money as we have spent on our A/C and heating this past year – the A/C at St. Luke's will not be turned on until April. So, dress accordingly." If it's hot on Sunday wear shorts because the heat will still be on regardless. If it remains cool, you're okay. If it gets too hot, we will turn off the blowers and open the doors. If all else fails – I'll shorten the sermon! That alone would cut the heating bill in half.

Of all the things that I could spend time talking about as your rector, you know that heating and air is right up there with Eucharistic theology! So be forewarned, my technical skills with Hayes schematics are improving as well as ways that diagnostics can be considered to be theological reflections worth of Steeple space.

Anyways... This weekend is Lent V and also the beginning of Spring Break for those who are in school. For those of you who are traveling, we pray for your safe return. For those of you who are staying home we pray for your rest and rejuvenation. For our catechumenates, no meeting next week! Enjoy some respite. Upon your return however, Holy Week dawns. And so, I encourage you

to reflect on how you will spend this Holy Week in prayer and in thanksgiving for the life of our savior, Jesus Christ.

Let us pray for that now: “Assist us mercifully with your help, O Lord God of our salvation, that we may enter with joy upon the contemplation of those mighty acts, whereby you have given us life and immortality, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Peace,  
Nick+

## Theologian's Corner:

Patrick

Bishop and Missionary of Ireland, 461



Patrick was born into a Christian family somewhere on the northwest coast of Britain in about 390. His grandfather had been a Christian priest and his father, Calpornius, a deacon. Calpornius was an important official in the late Roman imperial government of Britain. It was not unusual in this post-Constantinian period for such state officials to be in holy orders. When Patrick was about sixteen, he was captured by a band of Irish slave-raiders. He was carried off to Ireland and forced to serve as a shepherd. When he was about twenty-one, he escaped and returned to Britain, where he was educated as a Christian. He tells us that he took holy orders as both presbyter and bishop, although no particular see is known as his at this time. A vision then called him to return to Ireland. This he did about the year 431.

Tradition holds that Patrick landed not far from the place of his earlier captivity, near what is now known as Downpatrick (a “down” or “dun” is a fortified hill, the stronghold of a local Irish king). He then began a remarkable process of missionary conversion throughout the country that continued until his death, probably in 461. He made his appeal to the local kings and through them to their tribes. Christianizing the old pagan religion as he went, Patrick erected Christian churches over sites already regarded as sacred, had crosses carved on old druidic pillars, and put sacred wells and springs under the protection of Christian saints.

Many legends of Patrick's Irish missionary travels possess substrata of truth, especially those telling of his conversion of the three major Irish High Kings. At Armagh, he is said to have established his principal church. To this day, Armagh is regarded as the primatial see of all Ireland.

Two works are attributed to Patrick: an autobiographical Confession, in which he tells us, among other things, that he was criticized by his contemporaries for lack of learning, and a Letter to Coroticus, a British chieftain. The Lorica or St. Patrick's Breastplate ("I bind unto myself today") is probably not his, but it expresses his faith and zeal.

Together we pray: Almighty God, who in thy providence didst choose thy servant Patrick to be the apostle of the Irish people, to bring those who were wandering in darkness and error to the true light and knowledge of thee: Grant us so to walk in that light that we may come at last to the light of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

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**Please pray for:** Liz Green, Michelle Sheffield, Catherine Sheffield, David King, Pris Snow, Ben Baker, Diana Farris, Joel Hahn, Steve McCraw, Josh Harris, David Swindell, Norma Perrier, Connie Finch, Dorothy Buchanan, Peggy Kauffman, Ryan Kiesel, Tony Clapper, Bruce Neiswander, Jack & Karla Stoecker, Joseph, Tim, Shania Smith, Terry Grogan, Tyler Roberson, Jerry Nezam, Jim Brooks, Tom Martin, Don Doty, Luke Karel, Miriam Petrovich, Lynette Beebe, Nancy & Joe Norton, Jack Smith, , Sarah Winn, Danny Clem, David McAtee, Molly Ferguson, Tim Curry, Peggy & Joe Duncan, Shawn, Nancy Bradford, Stephanie Gallegos, Pat Sare, and Sherri & Steve Linn.

**Please add the following to your prayers this Fourth Week in Lent:**  
**Church of the Resurrection, OKC     St Augustine of Canterbury, Montevideo,**  
**Uruguay**

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**At Luke's Place Mar 14, 2024 -Mar 20, 2024**

**Mar 14<sup>th</sup> Men's Breakfast, 6:30 am, Metcalf**

**Rector's Bible Study, 9:15am, Metcalf**

**Green Country Eucharist, 1pm, GCV**

**Meditation Group, 3pm, Library**

**Mar 17<sup>th</sup> Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8am, Chapel**

**Faith Forum, 9:15am, Metcalf**

**Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10:30am**

**Brunch Bunch St Patrick's Day Celebration**

**Mar 20<sup>th</sup> Choir, 5pm, Choir Room**

**Midweek Manna Supper, 6pm, Metcalf, no program**



**Birthdays and Anniversaries, Mar 17<sup>th</sup> – Mar 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024**

**Birthdays**



**Cheryl Bridendolph (3/20)**

**Anniversaries**



**Bill Pendley & Camden Campbell  
(3/18)**

**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!**



**St Luke's Bookstore is celebrating St Patrick's  
Day March 1<sup>st</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> .**

**Any item with the color "green" any where  
on it will be 17% off the price.**

**Come and get your 'green' on!**

**And save some green'!**

**Bookstore Hours are: Tues 11:45am-1:45pm,  
Thurs 10:30am-12:30pm, and  
Sun 11:30am-12:30pm.**

**March Pack the Backpacks Item!**



**4 pack or individual PlayDoh**



**Need individuals of Bright Green,  
Blue, Orange, and Green !**

**Sometimes you find this item in the**

**the Toy Dept. Let's try to fill that basket this month!**

## Gracias Bacalao es Viernes



For those following along, and those who cheated and used Google Translate, it's time for Thank Cod it's Friday! As promised last week, I was going to take a walk on the wild side. No I didn't eat the mysterious worm at the bottom of a bottle of tequila in Tijuana, but it was a close second. This past Friday I found myself at Taco Mayo. Even for a fish sandwich lover as myself, sometimes we just need a break. And honestly, I'm glad I did.

Taco Mayo would be the last place I think I would find myself for a meal on Friday during Lent, as a traditional vegetarian meal just isn't my bag and if I'm being honest, rice and beans don't really do it for me. But, on a rainy Friday I walked in with one thing on my mind, shrimp tacos. Ordering fish or seafood from a place not known for fish can be

a bit frightening. Most of the time, I feel these items are on the menu for profiling purposes and Google searches for food. But, for a place like Mayo, I was pleasantly impressed. The shrimp is fried to order and is finished with the same seasoning as their Potato Locos. It's then topped with a chipotle slaw and fresh pico. These tacos actually packed a flavorful punch!

I would say they are the best Shrimp Tacos on the list, but they're the only ones on this list, so that wouldn't be fair. They're definitely something to try if you're looking for something different, fast, and Lent friendly. I'd give them a solid 7 and I'd go back for another round. I wasn't expecting them to be that good.

With that said, I don't think they'll top my list, which ends next week, as I have my favorite on the list. Even a place known for "having The Meats" can surprise you with what they offer that's "not The Meats."

Chase



### All Night Vigil at the Altar of Repose

When? Beginning at 9:00pm Maundy Thursday, March 28, and ending at 9:00am Good Friday, March 29.

Where? Chapel- enter from the south side through the Chapel door

For how long? There will be a sign up board in the Narthex with 1 hour slots that overlap. You may sign up for as many hours as you would like.

Why? In Matthew, Jesus asks the disciples "Could you not watch with me for one hour?" The hour can be spent praying, meditating, reading, or sitting quietly. It is your time waiting with Jesus.

# Midweek Manna

Next Wednesday (20<sup>th</sup>) will be our last Midweek Manna for Lent. We will have a fish fry dinner at 6pm and no program. So come and enjoy each other's company before we journey into Holy Week.



Concern is doing a fundraiser downtown apartment and loft tour on 4/16, including a reception with light refreshments. Cost for tickets is \$25. Two times available, either 4:30 or 5:30. For more information and tickets go to [concerncares.com](http://concerncares.com).



## *Life Challenges*



Growing up on a farm, we had challenges almost daily. Depending on the time of the year and what needed to be done. The day always started with a challenge of just getting up and getting ready to go to school or to get your chores done. Once you got one challenge done you went on to the next. You kept this up all day and then left things where you could pick up in the morning, and life continues.

Challenges occur every day in our life. Small ones, large ones, weird ones, and ones that make us wonder what happened. My Dad talked about his challenges, and I didn't realize it until later in my life. It took me over 25 years to understand one thing he informed me about when I was growing up. "It's hard to keep getting older when my friends keep getting younger." That's a big challenge. God will give you direction to continue without the friends you had by putting new friends in your life. This is one way the older generation can still be used to give direction to the younger generation. They may not understand what they hear at first, but it will come back to them when they least expect it. Memories are like that; they pop up when you least expect it. The challenge is remembering something that someone did to get a job done. Thinking outside the box and making it work.

Been working with Dan Droege on some projects around the church and it's surprising the challenges I am encountering. Replacing the 2 outside lights that were stolen from the SW corner was just the beginning. Doing research before starting and finding help with someone else that is now a good friend. Don, at Consolidated, was able to help me figure out what lights I needed and then get the correct mounting for both. They are both installed and look good. On to the next challenge in life.

When I decorated the pergola in the Garden for Christmas, I noticed that it needed replacement. After talking with Cathy to get her blessings, I started researching again on how to get this done. The one thing I found out real fast was people wanted to see the pergola replaced but were very unwilling to cut the vine down and let it start over. OK, some more research was needed. After going through several scenarios, I came up with one that will make everyone happy. Might take a little longer but the result will be beautiful. This challenge is going to need some help that I will ask for when needed. But that's the fun of a challenge, being able to work with friends and make the project about more than just one thing. God has never given me more than I can handle, he has always given me people to share my projects with to make them work. With a little Faith, any challenge can be accepted and completed if you have friends working with you.

Peace & Love  
Robert



THE BRUNCH BUNCH  
INVITES YOU TO A:

# St. Patrick's Day Celebration!

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Be ready to feel the Irish spirit!

Sunday, March 17  
after the 10:30AM service







YD is sponsoring an Easter  
Egg Hunt  
March 24<sup>th</sup>, 9:15am  
Meet in Metcalf and bring  
your basket  
Ages 0-10



Maundy Thursday Holy Eucharist RII  
@ 6:00 p.m.  
All Night Vigil from 9:00 p.m. to 9:00  
a.m.  
Good Friday Service RII @ 12:00 p.m.  
Holy Saturday Service @ 9:00 a.m.  
Easter Vigil @ 6:00 p.m.  
Easter Sunday Holy Eucharist RI @ 8:00  
a.m. Easter Sunday Holy Eucharist RII  
@ 10:30a.m.

The Spiritual Discovery Group soon will be beginning a new book study entitled : Living in God's Embrace by Michael Fonseca. This Group meets every Tuesday at 10am in the Library. Questions? See Mthr Andrea Jones. Note: There will be no class Mar 19<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup>. We will start back April 2<sup>nd</sup>.





## Faithful Innovations

In late 2022 the Ministry Partners piloted Faithful Innovation with a diverse set of five congregations from across the Diocese of Oklahoma. We are now excited to offer this opportunity to all congregations in our diocese!

### So, what is Faithful Innovation?

Faithful Innovation is a simple, structured process of learning new ways to embody our Christian identity in a rapidly changing cultural context. Through listening to God, each other, and our neighbors, participant teams discern new ways of intentionally engaging the communities around them to help our congregations discover God's mission for them in the world.

As a part of Jeff's diaconal formation, he has lead us ever so gently into this work below are his reflections:

### Faithful Innovations - God Questions St. Luke's, Bartlesville - 2024 March - Jeff Birk

**Dwelling in the Word** -- What was God "up to" in Acts 16:6-15? -- God was a "facilitator":

- He led both Paul and Lydia great distances to a riverbank in Philippi, where Paul preached the gospel. Already a believer in God, the Lord opened Lydia's heart to Paul's message. She was receptive to baptism, as were other members of her household.
- God graced Paul with the ability and opportunity to share the gospel. God graced Lydia with her prior beliefs, and her receptiveness to the gospel shared by Paul. As a result, Lydia converted to Christianity, and influenced others to do the same.

**Sharing Our Stories** -- What is God "up to"?

- **Parishioner's comments:** *Although I've always felt welcome at church, I'm aware that some folks don't feel that way. Our "welcome" toward everyone must be intentional. It is important to connect with people, intentionally.* -- God is raising awareness that we need to connect with one another, regardless of whether we are already friends, or whether we notice unfamiliar faces in our midst.
- **Neighbor's comments:** *I see God in the kindness of neighbors, in the beautiful trees, and in the hymns that resonate all around when nearby church bells ring. Even so, I wish our neighborhood had an active*

*association that would organize activities as a community, to facilitate a more "connected" neighborhood. -- Again, God is expressing the need to connect with one another.*

- **Community Leader's comments:** *It brings me great joy to connect with, and assist, people new to this country. Our organization facilitates communication with DHS, schools, doctors, Immigration, and the like. We conduct ESL classes, help students apply for financial assistance, help them apply for Medicaid/Soonercare, operate a thrift shop where we sell second-hand clothing and other items for \$0.25 each, and we provide other services as well. -- In this case, God facilitates connections between people in need, and people who can help meet those needs. This is not unlike God's leading of Paul and Lydia to the same place at the same time, for a purpose, I'd say.*

**Dwelling in the World** -- What is God "up to"?

- Most of what we "know" about the neighbors around St. Luke's is based on the appearance of their properties, (well-kept vs. not), and that there is little crime and conflict in our neighborhood. In other words, we assume our neighbors are more friendly than hostile, and some are more financially well-off than others.
- Perhaps God led our "Dwelling in the World" group to make these observations, so that we would do something about it! Meaning, so we would somehow connect with our neighbors. And, that some (yet unknown) good things might result.

**What might God be saying to us?    How might He be leading us?**

- God is urging us to connect with our neighbors, somehow.
- God is also urging us to make others feel welcome, regardless of whether they are new to our parish community, whether they regularly attend worship services, and/or actively participate in fellowship, whether they were once regular/active members, and have been absent for a while, whether they are homebound by physical limitations, etc.

You may be asking yourself, "Why do we need Faithful Innovation?" From Canon Steve Carlsen: "One of the primary takeaways from our research on congregational vitality is the essential need to engage our broader communities. Over the course of working with congregations through the CVA process, we have heard our congregations name similar struggles - from the rapidly shifting community landscape, to aging congregations, to a desire for connection more deeply in community but not knowing where/how to start.

We know that Christ is actively calling us into new relationships with our communities and to an engagement with God's mission in the world.

Thanks Jeff for getting us started.





## **It's a Small World After-all**

### **By: Blair Reyburn**

In January I spent two weeks in India for work. By the time I reached Paris on the way home I'd already been traveling for 30 hours – including an eight hour flight that left me feeling as stiff as starched pants. My coworker and I had a five hour layover, so we walked as much as we could, as quickly as we could.

I noticed a woman going the other direction. She had long, jet black hair and a red Oklahoma Sooners sweatshirt. Being from Stillwater, we were always in competition with the folks over in Norman. I smiled.

Small world, I guess.

The airport was thick with travelers, even though it was 7 in the morning. We got some coffee and sought out a less populated gate. I sat down, and noticed a man in his early 30s quietly talking on his phone. He nodded, said some things in French, and became very still. I saw a tear tumble down his face. Then a flood. I nudged my coworker, who reached into her purse and handed him a tissue.

He nodded his thanks, dabbed his face and runny nose, and continued on in French. He ended his call and looked at us with reddened eyes.

“Thank you,” he said with a thick French accent.

His body shook, he began to sob, and his face contorted inward like he'd eaten something incredibly sour.

“Hey. Hey brother,” I said softly. “I'm so sorry. Would ... would you like a hug?” I reached out slowly with both hands and made a hugging motion, unsure how much English he understood.

“Yes,” he cried. “I just learned my father passed away.”

We stood, and I held him. “I'm so sorry, brother. I'm sorry.” I gave his forearms a gentle squeeze as he let go. “My mom just passed a few months ago. I know it feels terrible. I am so sorry.” He hugged me again.

“I am sorry for you too,” he sniffled.



I gave him a big squeeze. “Since we know this pain together, I want you to know you are not alone in your sorrow. I am sorry.”

My calves were tightening up again - time to get back in motion. We stayed with him a few moments longer, and then made our leave.

We were on our second loop of the airport. I stepped briskly onto a descending escalator. I looked down and saw the lady with the Sooner’s sweatshirt again.

Small world, I guess.

“Pardon me, ma’am,” I said. She turned.

“Can’t help but think the most Oklahoman thing possible is to have to travel all the way to Paris in order to see another Okie.”

She smiled broadly, like we were sharing the same inside joke – because we were. There are so few of us, any time we see an Oklahoma plate, or OU/OSU sticker, or an Eskimo Joe’s shirt ... we just have to say something to each other. She laughed loudly and boldly.

“Where are you from?” she asked.

Ten minutes later, we’d run down our life stories. I am from Stillwater, she was from Pawnee. I told her we used to play baseball against Pawnee, just thirty miles away. I explained I lived in Minnesota now; she North Dakota. We both had family “back home,” but we didn’t visit as much as we wanted. Her brother, husband, and two adult daughters soon joined us, and we chatted a bit more.

Turns out they were part of a Native American troupe called the Youngbirds. They were all in Paris for the Louis Vuitton fashion show, where they performed Native music and dance. They shared some videos of the event, and it was wonderful to see them get recognized for their talent and their heritage.

“Uh, I am sorry if this is weird,” I began haltingly. “There’s a young man a few gates away, sitting alone. He just found out his father died this morning. He didn’t make it in time to say goodbye. If it’s in your heart, would you all please say a prayer for him? My pops used to take me to see the Fancy Dancers, and I know you all have power in your songs.”

“We will,” she said. They nodded. Hand shakes all around, and then we parted ways.

I expected them to say a little something for a stranger, and then move on. About a half hour later I was deep in my breakfast. Someone set a pair of cookies down on our table. I looked up, and it was the young Frenchman.

“Your friends,” he began, and started to cry. “They came by and asked if I lost someone today. I said yes, and they began to sing a song for me and dance at the gate. Thank you for sending them to me.”

“I didn’t send them,” I said gently, “they chose to find you. It’s their way. I’m sorry about your father. The world wants you to know you are not alone.”

“None of us will see each other again,” he started, “but I will not forget you and your friends.”

Small world, I guess.



Next week is Spring Break here in Bartlesville and all of Oklahoma. If you are traveling, prayers lifted for your journey! If you are staying home or on a short trip, enjoy your rest and respite. Holy Week is coming and we all will need our energy to travel the path to Calvary and beyond.



Manna Mischief

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