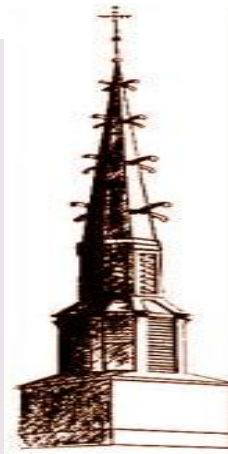


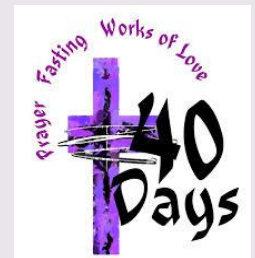
In this week's Steeple >>>

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The Steeple



March 13, 2025



The Weekly Newsletter of St. Luke's Episcopal Church



Dear Friends,

Last weekend, a few of us gathered for the Diocese of Oklahoma's Vestry Academy, where we were reminded of the deep and abiding call to Spiritual Friendship in our communities. Woven throughout the presentations was the reality that our faith is overwhelmingly enriched by the nature of relationships that draw us closer to God and one another.

Spiritual Friendship is more than companionship or casual acquaintance though; it is a bond rooted in shared faith, mutual encouragement, and a commitment to walking the journey of discipleship together. It is a relationship where we see Christ in one another, where we hold each other accountable, and where we help one another bear life's burdens.

As we reflect on this theme, I invite you to consider these questions:

- Who in your life has been a spiritual friend, encouraging you in your faith?
- How do we, as a congregation, foster relationships that go beyond Sunday morning conversations?
- Where is God calling you to invest more deeply in the friendships that sustain your soul?

At the heart of this idea is a profound truth spoken by Jesus himself:

"I do not call you servants any longer... but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father." (John 15:15)

With these words, Jesus reveals something astonishing—our faith is not about blind obedience or mere duty. Instead, Christ invites us into relationship—one of trust, love, and shared purpose. To be a disciple is not just to obey, but to trust and walk alongside Christ as a friend. And if we are called friends of Jesus, then we are also called to be friends to one another in the deepest and most meaningful ways.

As we enter more fully into this Holy Lent, may we embrace the invitation to grow in our relationships—not just as fellow parishioners, but as true friends in Christ. May we seek out, nurture, and strengthen the bonds of Spiritual Friendship in our parish and beyond, that we might continue to build up the Body of Christ together.

Faithfully,

Nick+

Theologians Corner:



Vincent De Paul Helper of the Poor

Vincent de Paul was born in Gascony in about 1580, of peasant stock. He was an intelligent lad, and his father sent him off to be educated. He was ordained at twenty, and at first was interested chiefly in a successful career. But when he was thirty, he accepted a post as chaplain and tutor in the household of Philip de Gondi, Count of Joigny. This brought him into contact with the peasants on the Gondi estate, and he became concerned for their needs both, physical and spiritual.

A peasant who believed himself to be dying confessed to him that his previous confessions for many years had been dishonest. Vincent began to preach in the local church on confession, repentance, forgiveness, and the love of God. His sermons drew such crowds of penitents that he had to call in a group of other priests to assist him. He took on the pastorate of a neighboring church attended by a more fashionable and aristocratic crowd, and there he likewise drew many of his listeners to repentance and amendment of life. Returning to Paris, he worked among the prisoners destined for the galleys who were being held at the Conciergerie.

*As to “galleys.” French convicts were often sentenced to pull the oars on ships. One of the best known accounts of this system is actually in the novel *Les Misérables*, by Victor Hugo. Hugo's novels often have long sections where the action stops completely, while the author explains to the reader some aspect of French culture or history.*

In 1625 de Paul established the Congregation of the Mission (now known as the Vincentians, or the Lazarists), a community of priests who undertook to renounce all ecclesiastical advancement and devote themselves to work in the small towns and villages of France. In an age not noted for "interdenominational courtesy," he instructed his missionaries that Protestants were to be treated as brothers, with respect and love, without patronage or condescension or contentiousness.

Wealthy men and women came to him, expressing a wish to amend their lives, and he organized them into a Confraternity of Charity, and set them to work caring for the poor and sick in hospitals and in home visits. In 1633 the Archbishop of Paris gave him the Priory of St Lazare as a headquarters. There he offered retreats six times a year for those who were preparing for the ministry. These lasted two weeks each, and each involved about eighty students. He then began to offer similar retreats for laypersons of all classes and widely varying backgrounds. He said (identifying Lazarus of the Parable with Lazarus of Bethany):

This house was formerly used as a retreat for lepers, and not one of them was cured. Now it is used to receive sinners, who are sick men covered with spiritual leprosy, but are cured by the grace of God. Nay, rather, they are dead men brought back to life. What a joy it is to think that the house of St Lazare is a house of resurrection! Lazarus, after he had been four days in the tomb, came out alive, and our Lord who raised him up still gives the same grace to many who, after staying here some days as in the grave of Lazarus, come out with a new life.

Out of his Confraternity of Charity there arose an order of nuns called the Daughters (or Sisters) of Charity, devoted to nursing those who were sick and poor. He said of them, "Their convent is the sick-room, their chapel the parish church, their cloister the streets of the city." Many babies were abandoned in Paris every year, and when Vincent saw some of them, he established an orphanage for them, and thereafter often wandered through the slums, looking in corners for abandoned babies, which he carried back to the orphanage.

de Paul complained to the King that ecclesiastical posts were distributed simply as political favors, and that the spiritual qualifications of the appointees were simply ignored. The King responded by creating a Council of Conscience to remedy the matter, with Vincent at the head. On one occasion, a noblewoman of the court, furious with Vincent because he refused to nominate her son for a position as bishop, threw a stool at him. He left the room with a stream of blood pouring from his forehead, and said to a companion who was waiting for him, "Is it not wonderful how strong a mother's love for her son can be?" He died 27 September 1660.

Together we pray: Most Gracious God, who hast bidden us to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly before thee; Teach us, like thy servants Vincent de Paul and Louise de Marillac, to see and to serve Christ by feeding the hungry, welcoming the stranger, clothing the naked, and caring for the sick; that we may know him to be the giver of all good things, through the same, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer List

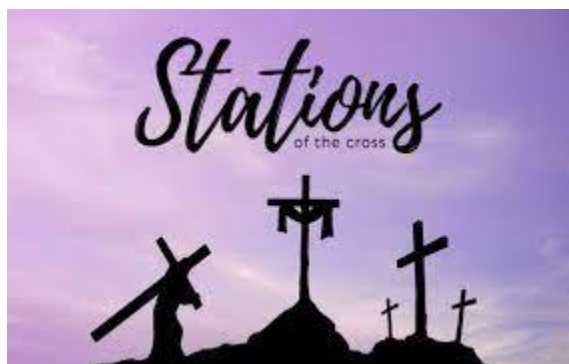
Please pray for: Liz Green, Ben Baker, Steve McCraw, Josh Harris, David Swindell, Connie Finch, Tony Clapper, Terry Grogan, Tyler Roberson, Jerry Nezam, Miriam Petrovich, Lynette Beebe, Jack Smith, Danny Clem, David McAtee, Shawn, Stephanie Gallegos, Pat Sare, Steve Linn, Bob Baughman, Jean Mason, Adam Thomas, Tom Oakes, Bill Pendley, Mary Wallace, Connie Freebern, Lynda Stephens, Marcie Zervas, Margaret Holden, Audrey Harris, Henri Richard, Peggy Rockey, Lauren Barlowe, Ken Harvey, Nan Buhlinger, Bill Birk, Carol McSpadden, Rebecca Landreth, Dionna Cameron, Betty Rogers, David Anderson, Joann Gallery, Freda Bretz, Kathleen Turner, Susan Dick, and Susie Manley.

Please add the following to your prayers for the First Sunday in Lent

St John's, Norman

St Anselm Canterbury- OU Campus Ministry

The Anglican Church of Canada



Stations of the Cross every Friday in Lent at 6pm in the Nave. Join us!

Birthdays and Anniversaries Mar 16th – Mar 22nd, 2025

Birthdays



Anniversaries



Cheryl Bridendolph (3/20) 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!

At Luke's Place : Mar 14th– Mar 20th , 2025

- Mar 14th Stations of the Cross, Nave , 6:00pm
Mar 16th Morning Prayer, Rite I, 8:00am, Chapel
Morning Prayer, Rite II, 10:30am, Nave
Mar 17th Ladies' Prayer Partners, 11:30am, classroom
Mar 18th Spiritual Discovery Book Study, 9:30am, Library
Mar 19th Midweek Manna, 6pm, Metcalf
Choir, 5pm, Choir Room
Mar 20th Men's Fellowship, 7am, Metcalf Hall
Bible Study, 9:15am, Metcalf Hall
Green Country Eucharist, 1pm, GCV
-

March Pack the Backpacks Item



3in X 5in Ruled Index Cards 100 count package. They need to be the same size, quantity and "ruled".

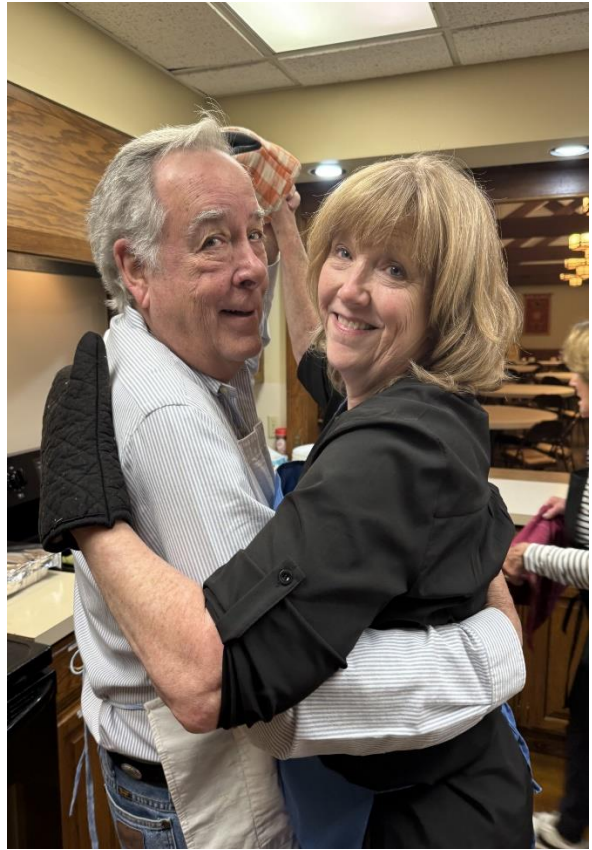
Walmart price is \$0.72 per package. This is a comparison price.

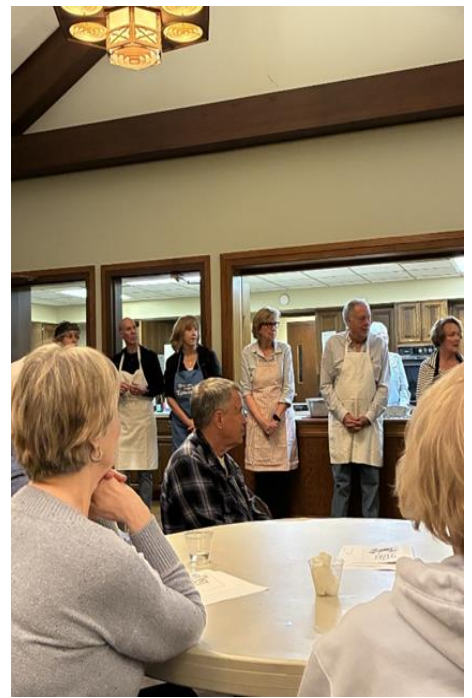
This past year we distributed over 1,100 of the 3in X 5in Ruled Index Cards. Our current inventory shows we have 120.

Midweek Manna During Lent

Poetry in Lent will be presented along with Vespers every Wednesday during Lent, 6pm, Metcalf Hall.. Please check the Nathex for the poems and booklet. A light supper will be served before the program. Please sign up to help with soup, bread, or cookies one week. The sign up is on the bulletin board in the hallway across from the office.

2025 Shrove Tuesday





Burning of the Palms





And then..... Ash Wednesday with our YD





2025 STEWARDSHIP WEBINARS

Webinars are provided by TENS, The Episcopal Network for Stewardship. The Diocese subscribes annually to TENS and congregations are able to use this subscription to access resources and annual pledge campaign materials. This year they have made these webinars available to be offered in our diocese to our congregations.

**APRIL
1ST
6:30-8PM**

The Economic Halo of Your Church

Your church is an important part of the economic, social, and cultural landscape of your community. Learn to understand and leverage data.

**MAY
6TH
6:30-8PM**

Time & Talent- Focusing on "the Other T's"

Learn best practices and tips for identifying and recruiting an effective stewardship team and supporting them in their ministry.

**AUG.
19TH
6:30-8PM**

Recruiting & Training a Stewardship Committee

Time, Talent, and Treasure are the building blocks of Stewardship Ministry. Learn how to ensure that each gift is recognized.

**SEPT.
23RD
6:30-8PM**

Stewardship Campaign Best Practices

Get ready for your annual pledge campaign with a review of best practices, tools, and strategies to maximize your members' engagement.

REGISTER HERE!



St. Luke's Vestry Members

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- Karole Cozby, Jr Warden – kscozby916@gmail.com
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- Fred Whitson-
- Robert Lonski- rjtazski@yahoo.com

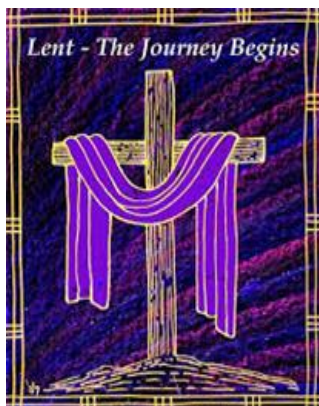
Bereavement Team 3

Becky Liehr, Kate Carroll, Cathy
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