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The Steeple



April 24, 2025



The Weekly Newsletter of St. Luke's Episcopal Church



May Pope Francis Rest in Peace and Rise in Glory.

Friends, there has been excellent journalism in the past few days on several news platforms as people around the world mourn the death of the Pontiff. My meager contribution to the conversation, if we can call it that, is just to add an awareness - that yes, the Holy Father died on Easter Monday but also that he died just days before the world observed Earth Day. The significance of Pope Francis' transition in between these two days of witness has left me pondering the timing of it all, especially since I was invited to read one of Francis's encyclicals in seminary about our care for creation.

A papal encyclical is a formal letter written by the Pope, addressed usually to bishops and the broader Church, and often the whole world. While it doesn't carry the weight of doctrine or infallible teaching, it is a significant pastoral and moral guide, meant to shine a light on issues of deep importance to the Church and the world.

So why should we, as Episcopalians, pay attention to what the Pope writes?

Well, as Episcopalians, we treasure our Anglican heritage and our commitment to the "via media," the middle way, where we often find ourselves drawing from the wisdom of both Protestant and Catholic traditions. And, when a Christian leader speaks with such moral clarity about the issues affecting God's creation—especially when they echo our own concerns and convictions—it is worth our time to listen. Pope Francis's encyclical entitled *Laudato Si*, subtitled "On Care for Our Common Home" is one such letter we should reflect on.

Published in 2015, *Laudato Si* is a sweeping call for ecological conversion. It's a cry of the heart that says our relationship with the earth is not just environmental or economic—it's deeply

spiritual. Drawing from Scripture, science, and the wisdom of St. Francis of Assisi, Pope Francis reminds us that the earth is not a resource to be exploited, but a sacred gift to be cherished, even... a neighbor to be loved.

It is interesting to me that critics of *Laudato Si* continue to be many however, many more consider it to be a powerful as well as modern Christian witness to deep ecology. That topic fundamentally resonates with our own Episcopal emphasis on creation care. The Episcopal Church, too, has affirmed that caring for the environment is part of our baptismal call to seek justice and respect the dignity of every human being—including those yet to be born who will inherit this planet.

In *Laudato Si*, Francis warns of the "throwaway culture"—where we discard people, relationships, and even entire ecosystems when they are no longer profitable. He challenges us to imagine a world where we live more simply, more gratefully, more attentively. These are not just environmental issues—they are spiritual issues.

And so, if you are interested, I invite you to read just a small portion of *Laudato Si*. Perhaps as a witness to Francis himself. Whatever you decide, for those of you who do read it, let it speak to your soul. And more than that—let it inspire us all to act, not out of guilt, but out of love. Love for this “fragile earth, our island home,” as we say in our Eucharistic prayer. Love for future generations. Love for God, whose creation reflects the beauty and goodness of the Creator.

Peace,
Nick+

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, Bob Baughman, Jean Mason, Adam Thomas, Tom Oakes, Bill Pendley, Mary Wallace, 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, Susie Manley, Fred Whitson, Melissa Whitaker, baby Colton, and Steve Clark.

Please add the following to your prayers for Holy Week

St John's, OKC St James, Antlers Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui



Theologians Corner: St. Mark the Evangelist

A disciple of Jesus, named Mark, appears in several places in the New Testament. If all references to Mark can be accepted as referring to the same person, we learn that he was the son of a woman who owned a house in Jerusalem. Church tradition suggests that Mark may have been the young man who fled naked when Jesus was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane.

In his letter to the Colossians, Paul refers to “Mark the cousin of Barnabas,” who was with him in his imprisonment. Mark set out with Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey, but he turned back for reasons which failed to satisfy Paul (Acts 15:36-40). When another journey was planned, Paul refused to have Mark with him. Instead, Mark went with Barnabas to Cyprus. The breach between Paul and Mark was later healed, and Mark became one of Paul’s companions in Rome, as well as a close friend of Peter’s.

An early tradition recorded by Papias, Bishop of Hieropolis in Asia Minor at the beginning of the second century, names Mark as the author of the Gospel bearing his name, drawing his information from the teachings of Peter. In his First Letter, Peter refers to “my son Mark,” which shows a close relationship between the two men (1 Peter 5:13).

The Church of Alexandria in Egypt claimed Mark as its first bishop and most illustrious martyr, and the great Church of St. Mark in Venice commemorates the disciple who progressed from turning back while on a missionary journey with Paul and Barnabas to proclaiming in his Gospel Jesus of Nazareth as Son of God, and bearing witness to that faith in his later life as friend and companion to the apostles Peter and Paul.

Together we pray: Almighty God, who by the hand of Mark the evangelist hast given to thy church the Gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God: We thank thee for this witness, and pray that we may be firmly grounded in its truth; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Birthdays and Anniversaries April 27th – May 3rd, 2025

Birthdays



Travis Luke (4/27)
Connie Freebern (4/29)
Roberta Johansen (5/1)
Betty Rheingans (5/1)
Luke Olsen (5/3)

Anniversaries



Jim & Sheila Taylor (4/29)

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 : April 25th – May 1st, 2025

- April 26th Casa Hispana Spaghetti Dinner, 5-7pm, Metcalf \$12
Concern Bingo, 6pm, Cooper & Mills
- April 27th Holy Eucharist, Rite I, 8:00am, Chapel
Faith Forum, 9:15am, Metcalf
Holy Eucharist, Rite II, 10:30am, Nave
- April 28th St Mark's Feast Day Eucharist, 12:15pm, chapel
- April 29th Spiritual Discovery Book Study, 9:30am, Library
- April 30th Choir, 5pm, Choir Room
YD, 6pm, Rodgers
- May 1st Men's Fellowship, 7am, Metcalf Hall
Bible Study, 9:15am, Metcalf Hall
Green Country Eucharist, 1pm, GCV
- May 4th Brunch Bunch Brunch, 11:35am, Metcalf



April Pack the Backpacks Item

8-Digit Display Handheld Calculator, Portable,
Elementary School

You may find some at the Dollar Tree for \$1.25

Concern's current needs - canned tuna and 16oz peanut butter, canned meats, individual serving canned meats, 15oz. tomato sauce, canned beans.

Casa Hispana Fundraiser

Spaghetti dinner with Peruvian meat sauce!

\$12/dine in or carry out



Saturday April 26, 2025

5pm – 7pm

St. Luke's Episcopal Church

918-907-1584

CasaHispana.Bartlesville@gmail.com

\$12/dinner includes spaghetti with meat sauce and water / vegetarian sauce available

Family carry out special (serving for 4) \$40



Shop the Bookstore

All Handmade Tea Towels now \$10.00

Bookstore Hours: Tues & Thurs 11am-1pm and following the 10:30 service on Sundays

Images of Holy Week





**THE LIGHT OF CHRIST
THANKS BE TO GOD!**



Is at it again! They will be serving up brunch Sunday, May 4th after the 10:30am service in Metcalf Hall. Please plan to stick around with your appetites.

Easter Egg Hunt Prep and Discussion with Mthr Andrea



CONCERN PRESENTS

BINGO



11	18	39	55	75
27	30	31	46	62
3	21		52	65
9	14	45	60	70
13	20	38	57	63

**\$27
presale/10
games**

**AGES
13 & UP**

**Silent
Auction**



SATURDAY | COOPER & MILL
APRIL 26TH | STARTS 6 PM

INFO AND TICKETS AT CONCERNCARES.COM

St. Luke's Vestry Members

- Nancy Woods, Sr. Warden – Nancywoods120@gmail.com
- Sherry Deason -
- Karole Cozby, Jr Warden – kscozby916@gmail.com
- Chad Ellis – w.chadwick.ellis@gmail.com
- Karen Lewey – kgrammy07@yahoo.com
- Laura Birk – lpbirk73@gmail.com
- Steve Heidorn- sgheidorn@yahoo.com
- Dolores McCreary – dolomc37@gmail.com
- Steve Roper- sdroper2006@yahoo.com
- Fred Whitson-
- Robert Lonski- rjtazski@yahoo.com

Bereavement Team

St. Luke's Episcopal Church Contacts:

The Reverend Nick Phares, Rector
269-788-7063; RevPhares@outlook.com

Keeli Droege, Choir Director/Organist
918-697-8509 keelidroege@gmail.com



HE IS RISEN!

St. Luke's Episcopal Church
210 East 9th St., Bartlesville, OK 74003
Office Hours: 9am-4pm, M-F
Email: StLukesBartlesville@outlook.com
918-336-1212
Or contact
Penny Williams, secretary 918-766-2157