

TIDINGS

a newsletter of St. Luke's Episcopal Church & School

Lent & Easter



ST. LUKE'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH & SCHOOL

Vol. 64.2

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AN INVITATION TO A HOLY LENT

Letter from the Rector

Since the days of the early church, the season before Easter, which we now call Lent, has been a season of penitence and preparation. The seven weeks before Easter are set aside for self-examination, prayer, and reflection.

Many individuals use Lent as an opportunity to give something up, as a way of deepening their sense of dependence on the God who wants to carry us along our spiritual journeys. If you plan to give up something for Lent, I hope your abstinence draws you closer to God.

Conversely, the Church's custom is to add things during Lent, offering programs and other opportunities for people to nourish their souls. In this issue of Tidings, you can read about the "Concerts for a Cause" on Wednesday at lunchtime, opportunities to enjoy beautiful organ recitals and to support efforts to children facing homelessness. You can read about our Wednesday evening Lenten series and about other offerings throughout the season. I'm especially excited about **Vital Signs of Faith**, the Lenten Retreat that we're hosting on Saturday, March 4. You can read more about that opportunity on Page 14.

The Easter Vigil is the traditional time for

baptisms. Please contact me if you or a family member would like baptism on that occasion.

Take advantage of all that the Church offers during Lent: worship, educational offerings, and fellowship opportunities. May we all find ourselves on Easter morning better prepared to sing God's praises and to celebrate the miracle of the Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ.



The Rev. Irving Cutter, Rector

LENT & *at St. Luke's*

Tuesday, February 21, Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

5:30 pm Breakfast for dinner prepared by the youth group and Brotherhood of St. Andrew in the Parish Hall. Funds raised benefit a charity of the youth's choosing.

Wednesday, February 22, Ash Wednesday

8:00 am Ash Wednesday chapel service with St. Luke's School with the imposition of ashes
12:00 pm Spoken service with the imposition of ashes
6:00 pm Choral service with the imposition of ashes

Wednesdays, March 1-29, Lenten Dinner and Formation

5:30 pm Shared meal for all ages in the Parish Hall
6:00 pm Formation for adults in the Parish Hall
Formation for youth 6th-12th grade in the Youth Room
Formation for PreK-5th grade in Room 202

Wednesdays, March 1-29, Concerts for a Cause

12:15 pm Free organ concerts with Russell Jackson raising money for Stand Up for Kids

Saturday, March 4 Vital Signs of Faith: Lenten Retreat

9:00 am A Lenten retreat with the Very Rev. Kate Moorehead Carroll at St. Luke's

Would you like to know more?

↳ **Adult formation: Page 7**

↳ **Youth formation: Page 13**

↳ **Children's formation: Page 10**

EASTER

Sunday, April 2	The Sunday of the Passion: Palm Sunday The Palm Sunday liturgy and the reading of the Passion Gospel at all four services
Monday-Wednesday, April 3-5	
5:30 pm	Holy Communion in Christ the King Chapel
Thursday, April 6	Maundy Thursday
6:30 pm	An agape meal in the Parish Hall
7:30 pm	The Maundy Thursday Liturgy with footwashing in the church, concluding with the Stripping of the Altar; A Maundy Thursday Vigil will begin in the Christ the King Chapel around 8:00 pm and continue into Good Friday morning
Friday, April 7	Good Friday
12:00 pm	The Good Friday Liturgy in the church
Saturday, April 8	Holy Saturday
7:30 pm	The Great Vigil of Easter (with baptisms) in the church
Sunday, April 9	The Feast of the Resurrection: Easter Day
7:00 am	Holy Eucharist Rite One in the Outdoor Columbarium
9:00 am	Holy Eucharist Rite Two with organ, brass, and choir
10:15 am	Easter Egg Hunt and breakfast tacos on the South Lawn
11:00 am	Holy Eucharist Rite Two with organ, brass, and choir
6:00 pm	Holy Eucharist Rite Two

FROM THE ASSOCIATE RECTOR

“This is the desert. So many wonderful and important things happened to the people of God in the desert that we need to know what it’s like. The desert is a dangerous place. In the day it is very hot, at night it is very cold. When the wind blows the sand stings when it hits your skin. It is easy to get lost. The desert is a dangerous place. People only go there if they have to.”

These are the opening lines to many a Godly Play story that has desert elements, such as the story of Abraham and Sarah, the Exodus, the Exile and Return, and more. The desert has literally and figuratively been a part of the Christian narrative almost since the beginning. It’s such a human experience that even Jesus, our incarnate God, was led into the desert wilderness for forty days. It is no coincidence then, that we are invited to this spiritual desert every year for the same amount of time: forty days.

We enter Lent and find that just like Jesus we are invited to see the wonder and beauty of the desert, alongside the desolate emptiness. We are given the power to remember how God saved the people in the wilderness over and over again, and how God’s presence is with us even as we enter with

trepidation. It is a place where just like Jesus, we are given the choice between money and power, or a life of following the Good Shepherd, the choice between stones-turned-to-bread at our own hand or bread that is everlasting. It is a place where we hunger and thirst, a place where we might feel in anguish or grief, and yet a place where angels will arrive to wait on us.

As we enter this season of Lent I hope you will hold our desert journey in awe and with intentionality. “The desert is a dangerous place,” but we also know, “so many wonderful things happened to the people of God in the desert that we need to know what it is like.” We need to know what it is like, so that even through our discomfort of self examination, doubt, and fear, we can know the presence of God for ourselves. We need to know that indeed God can set a table in the wilderness of our lives, right here and right now. I hope through our programming and offerings you will walk through this desert knowing God’s calling more deeply, God’s love for you more fully, and God’s desire for your life more clearly. Walk on, my friends, walk on.

The Rev. Reagan Gonzalez, Associate Rector

LENTEN DINNERS 2023

March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

5:30-6:00 pm Dinner

6:00-7:00 pm Formation

Childcare available

Dinner is \$7 per person or \$25 per family. You can register online at www.slecsa.org/lent. Payment can be made through our online giving portal. Select Wednesday Dinners from the menu.

Adult Formation: Preparing to Become the Beloved Community

This Lent, St. Luke's is invited into a journey to commit in new ways to growing loving, liberating, life-giving relationships across the human family of God through the use of the *Becoming the Beloved Community* curriculum. We make the journey not only as individual Christians and as a congregation, but as a whole church. This curriculum was put out by Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, the president of the House of Deputies, and their supporting officers. It is a new program that lays out the Episcopal Church's long-term commitment to racial healing, reconciliation, and justice.

Locations

Dinner for all ages: Parish Hall

Formation for adults: Parish Hall

Formation for youth 6th-12th grade: Youth Room

Formation for PreK-5th grade: Room 202



PREPARING TO BECOME THE
**BELOVED
COMMUNITY**

The journey is framed around the labyrinth. Why? In the ministry of racial healing and justice, none of us walks a straight line. We enter the labyrinth wherever God has provided an opening – telling the truth about our church’s story around race; discerning and proclaiming God’s dream of Beloved Community where we are; learning and practicing Jesus’ way of healing and love; and bravely working to transform systemic racial injustice. We keep moving from one quadrant to another and back. No one is ever really finished. That is the way of ongoing spiritual formation. As you “walk” sections of this labyrinth, we will gather as a group, and together engage the scriptures, reflections, and activities.

Why is St. Luke’s engaging in material related to racial reconciliation?

As leaders and staff we know that part of our role is to give you gospel language, as well as tools and teachings from Jesus to be able to engage our world with love and compassion. We know that in your daily lives you’re hearing buzz words like antiracism and hearing stories related to race and racism. We hope that through our common life, including worship and learning together, we will have better practice at approaching cultural topics as Jesus would. As Christians we are called to seek peace among all peoples, and we hope that we can serve and equip you to be bridge builders, peacekeepers, and to show the world what it really looks like to love our neighbors as ourselves, those we agree with and especially those we disagree with.

Our conversations will be Christ-centered, respectful, and filled with the Holy Spirit. We need not agree on anything to love one another. In Jesus Christ we have a firm foundation to enter dialogue that may make us uncomfortable at times, but ultimately leads us to a resurrection life filled with all God’s children.

Spring Inquirer’s Class

New to St. Luke’s? Want to learn more about the Episcopal Church? Desire to be confirmed by Bishop Reed in May? Join us for our Spring Inquirer’s Class on Sundays April 16 - May 14 during our 10 :00 am hour to learn more about our community and the whole church. Topics include church history, governance, worship, theology, and more. Contact Rev. Reagan to register or ask questions at reagang@stlukes-sa.net.

MUSIC AT ST. LUKE'S

Lent is another favorite season of mine; not so much due to its somber nature, but because of the musical richness inherent in the season. There's a saying that the English aren't happy unless they're sad. I'm not sure if that's correct, or more reflective of the person who perhaps said it, but it's quite true that there's more depth to be found in something that needs time to explore.



Virgil Fox once said, "All Strings tune to A; minor is richer than major, therefore we shall begin with Prelude and Fugue in A minor." There's something in our psyche that has a profound connection to this feeling. It's quite easy to enjoy Handel's *Hal-*

lelujah Chorus on Easter morning - it's immediately accessible to us. But the complexity of pathos has much deeper roots, even though not immediately visible. Maybe we're taught not to dwell on these topics, but without comprehension it's difficult to realize the imminent joy.

Lent is rich and intense, and dark and scary. It's more pleasant to gloss over it. But it's also temporary and part of the journey to Easter. As musicians, the choir must recognize feelings of sadness as well as joy in order to express the season realistically. I truly hope Lent won't be "business as usual." I hope we can all be part of this journey with knowledge and sincerity, and ultimately experience the truth and glory of Easter Day and the season that follows.

Some musical highlights:

Wednesdays in March: Free organ concerts 12:15 -12:45 pm

March 19: Howells's *Nunc dimittis* (Collegium Regale) & Wood's *Expectans expectavi* (Evensong)

Easter Day: Handel's *Hallelujah Chorus* & Hampton's *Repeating Alleluia*

Russell Jackson, Director of Music



TELL ME THE TRUTH ABOUT RACISM

Lenten Dinner Formation for Children

In our last Tidings article, we started by remembering that St. Luke's children, youth, and family ministries show Christ's love through certain values. The first value listed on our webpage is *Inclusivity* – Striving to love others as Christ loves us; all are welcome.

We are intentional about truly welcoming all. The books and materials we have in the Narthex and in our classrooms reflect the wonderful diversity of God's kingdom. As a church, how can we best build an inclusive community? I believe that this is ongoing, beautiful work. Being sure all have voice and are truly seen and respected will happen when we focus on how we are all brothers and sisters in Christ.

Dismantling racism starts with young children since they learn from following our lead in words, silence, action and from their own experiences. During our Lenten Dinners, we aim to provide brave spaces where children ages PreK - 5th grade can learn some of these stories and see a common thread of how we can live in solidarity and love. Some of our children and family ministry team members have been participating in a weekly cohort class to learn to better foster a brave environment in a Godly Play setting while telling a set of stories the

writers are calling *Tell Me the Truth about Racism*. I encourage you to read through their website and watch some of their videos so you can better understand their loving approach for all involved including those who are in the story.

www.tellmethetruthaboutracism.org

Each week during Lenten dinners we will be sharing the scripts of the stories along with discussion questions so you as parents will be in the know and can talk about the stories directly as a family.

In the words of the story writers: "We believe that framing racism in the context of our faith offers a powerful value system to ground an otherwise difficult discussion. Our approach defines racism as 'The lie in our world that some people are better than others based on the color of their skin.'" It is only because of the Truth we know from God, that all people are equally children of God, that we can clearly frame racism as a lie about our identity. Racism is a distortion from how God made us, even though most of us adults are so used to it that it's hard to notice. Before children absorb the lie that racism tells them about other people and even about themselves, we can expose how wrong it is with the Truth of God." - **Jennifer Holt Enriquez and William Bouvel**

Kristine Spilker, Director of Children & Family Ministry

MUSTARD SEED

The Mustard Seed is a ministry of St. Luke's Episcopal Church for children ages 18 months to three-years-old. We strive to provide a developmentally appropriate early childhood experience that allows each child to grow emotionally, cognitively, socially, spiritually and physically in a loving atmosphere. The Mustard Seed is a busy, happy, and creative place where young children are encouraged to explore and actively engage all of their senses. Children will be exposed daily to the word of God, nature, science, math, literacy, music and movement.

The Mustard Seed children attend a weekly children's Chapel, led by the St. Luke's director of children and family ministries. The Mustard Seed is a four-day program, Tuesday-Friday, with classes from September – May. Regular school hours are 8:30-12:30, but early care (7:45-8:30) and after school care (12:30-1:30) options are available.

The Mustard Seed believes in the importance of play for our children. While children are playing, they learn cognitive skills (like math and problem solving), language skills (vocabulary), literacy skills (pre-reading and reading), physical abilities (balancing blocks and running), social skills (working



together and building friendships) and emotional skills (taking turns). Play is a healthy and very important part of childhood. We provide daily opportunities for our children to play both inside and outside and encourage them along the way.

The Mustard Seed is currently enrolling children for the 2023-24 school year. If you are interested in enrolling your child, or would like additional information about our program, please contact Jennie McLendon at mustardseed@stlukes-sa.net or call 210-828-6425 ext. 254.

Jennie McLendon, Director of the Mustard Seed

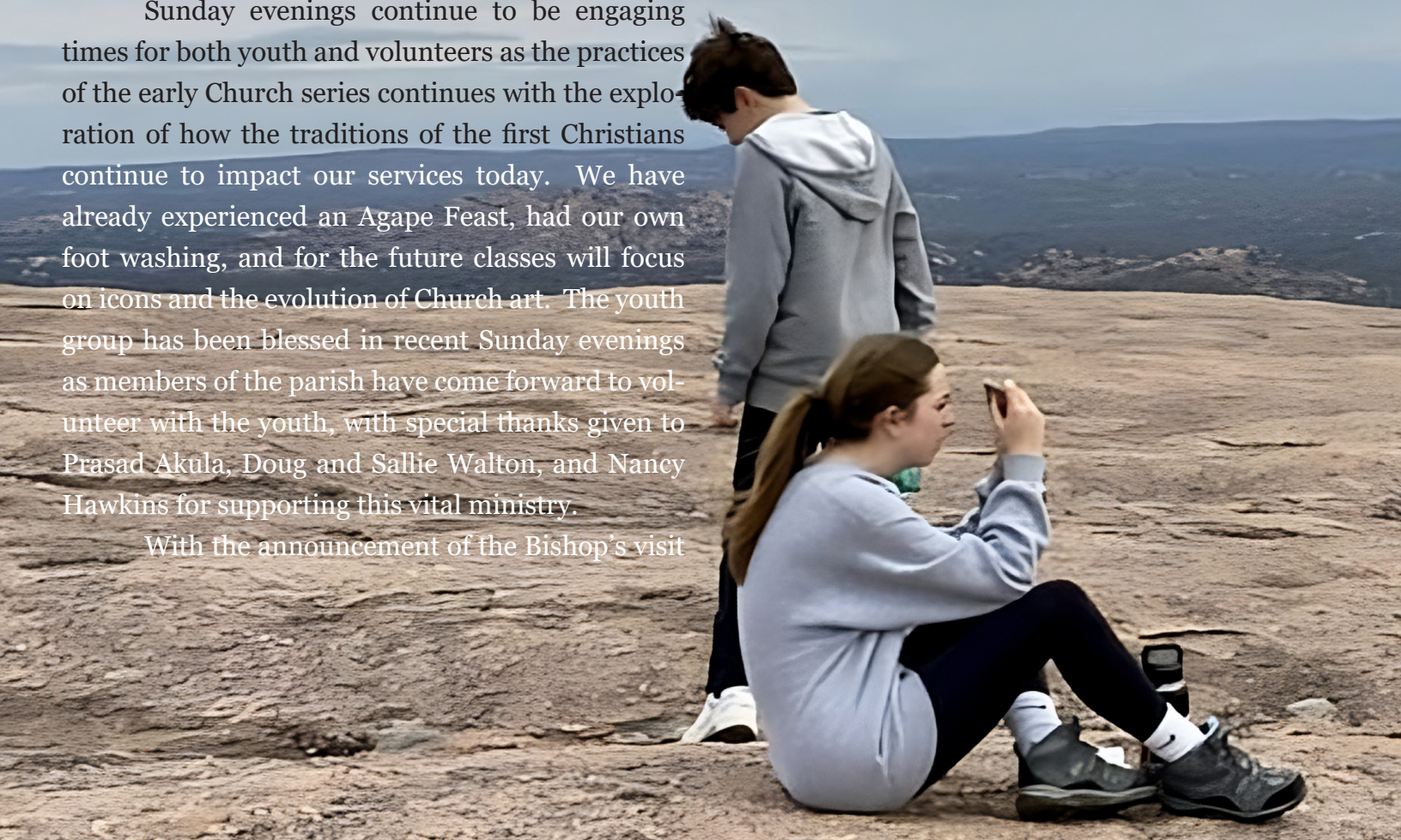
YOUTH MINISTRY

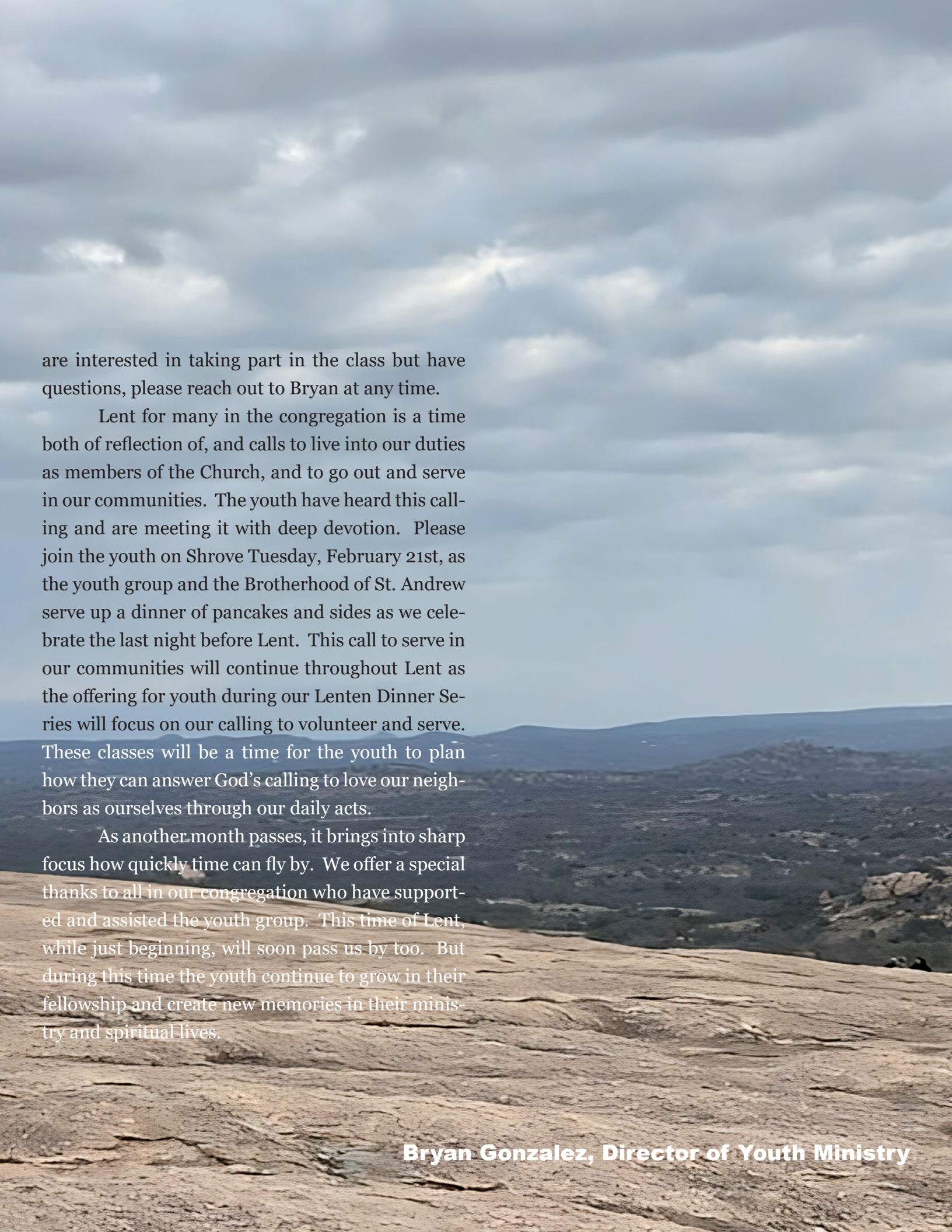
Since our last issue of Tidings, the youth group has been to the mountain top (and in record time). It took only a half hour for the youth to reach the top of Enchanted Rock, where we were able to gaze out upon creation as we pondered the deeper meanings of fellowship that were built during the first lock-in of the new year. As we move into February and the season of Lent, the youth group will continue carrying forward the momentum that carried them up Enchanted Rock so quickly with both new and continued offerings during the season.

Sunday evenings continue to be engaging times for both youth and volunteers as the practices of the early Church series continues with the exploration of how the traditions of the first Christians continue to impact our services today. We have already experienced an Agape Feast, had our own foot washing, and for the future classes will focus on icons and the evolution of Church art. The youth group has been blessed in recent Sunday evenings as members of the parish have come forward to volunteer with the youth, with special thanks given to Prasad Akula, Doug and Sallie Walton, and Nancy Hawkins for supporting this vital ministry.

With the announcement of the Bishop's visit

this May, many of our youth will begin preparing for the joy of being confirmed in the Church. Beginning February 19th, during the 10:00 am formation hour, we will begin offering a Catechism class that will allow the youth to discover just what it means to be a member of the Episcopal Church. This class is open to all youth between 6th and 12th grade and we'll be using the "Confirm Not Conform" curriculum used in previous years. For our 8th grade youth, this class will serve as their Confirmation class and will last for a total of 12 weeks. If you or your youth



The background of the page is a photograph of a vast, rocky landscape under a heavy, grey sky. In the foreground, there are large, flat, light-brown rock slabs. Beyond them, the terrain drops into a series of dark, jagged ridges and valleys. The sky is filled with thick, layered clouds, with a small patch of lighter sky visible near the center. The overall mood is contemplative and expansive.

are interested in taking part in the class but have questions, please reach out to Bryan at any time.

Lent for many in the congregation is a time both of reflection of, and calls to live into our duties as members of the Church, and to go out and serve in our communities. The youth have heard this calling and are meeting it with deep devotion. Please join the youth on Shrove Tuesday, February 21st, as the youth group and the Brotherhood of St. Andrew serve up a dinner of pancakes and sides as we celebrate the last night before Lent. This call to serve in our communities will continue throughout Lent as the offering for youth during our Lenten Dinner Series will focus on our calling to volunteer and serve. These classes will be a time for the youth to plan how they can answer God's calling to love our neighbors as ourselves through our daily acts.

As another month passes, it brings into sharp focus how quickly time can fly by. We offer a special thanks to all in our congregation who have supported and assisted the youth group. This time of Lent, while just beginning, will soon pass us by too. But during this time the youth continue to grow in their fellowship and create new memories in their ministry and spiritual lives.

Bryan Gonzalez, Director of Youth Ministry



Vital Signs of Faith: Learning how to Nurture your Spiritual Life

Vital Signs of Faith is a Lenten retreat with the Very Rev. Kate Moorehead Carroll, co-sponsored by St. Luke's Episcopal Church and St. Mark's Episcopal Church.

Americans know how to care for our physical bodies. We know to go to the doctor, how to exercise, and eat right. But how do we care for ourselves spiritually? Join Dean Kate as she guides you through an exploration of what it looks like for you to be spiritually healthy. What is the best way for you to pray given your nature? How do you find spiritual fulfillment and how can you best discern God's will for your life? This retreat will give you the tools to care for yourself in new and exciting ways.

The Very Rev. Kate Moorehead Carroll is the 10th Dean of St. John's Cathedral, Jacksonville, Florida. Kate is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Vassar College, a Carpenter Scholar at Yale Divinity School, and has a Masters in Divinity *cum laude* from Virginia Theological Seminary. She is the author of eight books; the most recent are *Vital Signs of Faith: Finding Health in Your Spiritual Life*, *Angels of the Bible*, and *Healed: How Mary Magdalene Was Made Well*.

Registration

Vital Signs of Faith will take place at St. Luke's Episcopal Church on Saturday, March 4, from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm. The address is 11 St. Luke's Lane, San Antonio, TX 78209. Childcare will be provided.

Registration is now open online at www.slecsa.org/retreat. The cost for the event is \$15 and includes lunch.



St. Luke's Episcopal Church
Executive Summary
2023 Annual Budget - General Operating Fund
(\$ in Thousands)

	Budget 2023	Actual 2022	(Budget) 2023-B vs. 2022-A \$	(Actual) %	Budget 2022	(Budget) 2023-B vs. 2022-B \$	(Budget) %
Revenues and Public Support							
Current year pledges	\$ 1,020.8	\$ 967.8	\$ 53.0	5.5%	\$ 979.4	\$ 41.4	4.2%
Current year pledges buffer	\$ (30.6)		\$ (30.6)		\$ -	\$ (30.6)	N/A
Non-pledged + Past year pledges	181.0	207.2	\$ (26.2)	-12.6%	228.0	(47.0)	-20.6%
Open Plate Offerings	18.0	19.8	\$ (1.8)	-9.1%	16.0	2.0	12.5%
Net contributions	1,189.2	1,194.8	(5.6)	-0.5%	1,223.4	(34.2)	-2.8%
PET distribution	177.4	176.6	0.8	0.5%	176.6	0.8	0.5%
Other revenue	104.9	99.3	5.6	5.6%	70.6	34.3	48.6%
Total Revenues	1,471.5	1,470.7	0.8	0.1%	1,470.6	0.9	0.1%
Program and Operating Expenses							
Salaries and wages	671.5	607.6	63.9	10.5%	641.4	30.1	4.7%
Employee related benefits	215.1	197.1	18.0	9.1%	212.0	3.1	1.5%
Diocesan apportionment	249.6	241.6	8.0	3.3%	241.6	8.0	3.3%
Church ministry	94.5	64.7	29.8	46.1%	68.0	26.5	39.0%
Administration and operations	84.0	77.9	6.1	8%	81.8	2.2	2.7%
Church building and grounds	300.0	258.4	41.6	16.1%	263.0	37.0	14.1%
Interest on debt	-	-	-	0.0%	-	-	0.0%
Total Program and Operating Expenses	1,614.8	1,447.3	167.5	11.6%	1,507.8	107.0	7.1%
Income (loss) from operations	\$ (143.3)	\$ 23.4	\$ (168.3)	-712.4%	\$ (37.2)	\$ (106.1)	-285.2%
Other Cash Flow Considerations							
Available cash at beginning of year	\$ 98.8						
Employee Retention Credit	75.0						
Accounts Payable	-						
Operating Cash Flow at end of year	\$ 30.5						

The Permanent Endowment Trust

Your estate plan is one last and meaningful way to demonstrate what's important to you. In our estate plans we may make provisions to take care of our families and we may make arrangements to support those causes that are important to us.

At St. Luke's Church, we appreciate people who remember the church in their estate plans. The gifts we receive go into a fund that provides financial support for the church for years to come.

That fund is known as the Permanent Endowment Trust (PET). Because of bequests we have received over the years, the PET's value at the end of 2022 was \$3,296,690. Every year Trustees approve a distribution from the Trust to support the church's ministries.

We learned in January that longtime parishioner Truman McCord, who died last March, remembered the church in his own estate plan by making a significant bequest to St. Luke's. St. Luke's was important to him: he was involved in so many

ministries, and some of his closest friends were fellow members of the church. We appreciate his generosity, and we know that his bequest will continue to support the church that meant so much to him.

If you're inspired to remember St. Luke's in your own estate plan, please talk to your financial advisor. If you'd like to learn about different ways of leaving a bequest to the church, you can learn more at the Episcopal Church Foundation's page on Legacy Giving or you can talk to any of the current Trustees of the PET: Bill Bayern (chair), Bill Goetz, Seth McCabe, Kirstin Silberschlag, or the Rev. Irv Cutter.



Scan this for Legacy Giving

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ST. LUKE'S
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