

St. Luke's Episcopal Church

Newsletter Spring 2021

Letter from the Rector

What a year we've just been through and 2021 is better but not 'normal' yet. It sounds like we may be heading for another spike in some places as the vaccinations are being given at a record rate.

We (Lisa and I) wanted others in the parish to tell about their experiences in the past year and how this past year has changed you.

For me, I have never been as healthy over the past year; not even a sniffle and I attribute this to distancing, washing hands and wearing masks. That is the top benefit of 2020. Another positive point is that I have had to slow down and appreciate every little thing around me. The singing of the birds in the morning, the quiet of the snowfall last winter and the activities in the neighborhood have had a greater impact on me as I am not rushing off to the 'office'. I have also done a lot of jigsaw puzzles and traded many with Wendy (our housekeeper).

Some of the not-so-great things about 2020 were the number of cancellations from the Blueberry Festival in Wilton to Easter and Christmas services at St. Luke's.

Thankfully, with all the highs and lows of the year, one thing has remained the same. GOD. God is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. He is with us through all of this pandemic craziness. I have heard it said by some Christians that God will protect them and they don't need to wear masks, distance or wash hands. Well, guess what? God sends us scientists and medical people in order for us to be safe. It's like that story of the man who was in a flood and on the roof of

his house as the water rose higher and higher. He was waiting for God to help him so he refused the one in a rowboat and the helicopter who came by to rescue him. He drowned and went to heaven. When he asked God why he was God didn't save him the reply was this, "I sent you the rowboat and the helicopter, why didn't you use those?"

As you are laughing to yourself, remember the story. God gives us everything we need to weather these storms. And he is right there with us every step of the way.

Happy 2021!

Mother Sue+

Updates from the Parish Administrator

It has been a year. You all know what I've been up to personally. I have spent many, many, MANY days with my kids as they are both doing remote school at least three days per week. We really enjoyed last summer. Covid cases were low in Maine and we took advantage of the local swimming holes. We are now just trying to get through the rest of the school year.

As you know, last June I started a weeknight Compline service over Zoom. It's a great little 10-minute service that can be lay-led—a perfect way to end the day. I started it for selfish reasons—as a sort of prayer discipline for myself. I felt disconnected from my St. Luke's peeps but also from my ministry as Parish Admin and, to some degree, from God. We have about 10 regulars with a few more who come and go. Not only is it a time for prayer, it is also a lifeline. We check in with each other, we pray for one another and the parish and the country and the world. Contact me for the Zoom link. All are welcome.

Those of us participating in Compline decided to add a Bible study on Thursday nights at 7:45 pm. It is only 30 minutes and we are using a study guide to help us go deeper into the text. We are working our way through Mark at this time. Again, all are welcome.

In October, I was nominated and elected to the Standing Committee by the convention. What even is that? We consist of three lay people and three clergy

from around the diocese. We interview ordinands, consent to Episcopal elections in other dioceses, serve as a Council of Advice to the Bishop, and more. We are also the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese when there is a vacancy in the Episcopate. We meet monthly for a few hours by Zoom. It has become a sacred time for me.

Each month, I have a Zoom meeting with my fellow Parish Admins from around the diocese. These are led by Barbara Martin, Canon for Administration. We compare notes and often have a guest. This month we had Katie Clarke, Director of Communications. Katie is has been a godsend during Covid times as we have all gone more digital than ever before. We had a rather mind-blowing conversation about **PRIVACY** (with all caps)! Some things we were already doing but others...For example, for decades we have left the church directory out for anyone to take. No more. There is such an uptick in fraud and spam that this is now just dangerous. *If you are a church member and need a copy, please see me.* I won't be able to email that out anymore, either. There were many other things that most of us had just never thought of. I'm so grateful for these meetings and expert advice.

We are currently researching a couple of things. We are considering freshening up the logo design for the church (see separate article below) and upgrading our equipment for streaming our services from the church. The streaming is working over Zoom but we will look at boosting the wifi speed and at purchasing a webcam and perhaps sending our services out onto Facebook Live in addition to Zoom. Here's the GREAT news: We can apply for a grant from the diocese to update our technology for remote services. This has been a financial relief to congregations around the state.

The building and grounds are looking well. The labyrinth bricks need to be re-set and we will add some gravel and mulch to spruce it up. Annuals will be planted as in the past. John Sytsma is organizing volunteer groundskeepers. John and Scott Lindsay have also overseen the install of the new stove for the kitchen and I know Mary Kalel and others are thinking about the outreach we could do with that.

Thanks for hanging in there for the last 14 months. Keep staying safe. Many of us are either fully vaccinated or on our way. All of us have gotten used to distancing and masking. We are looking forward to some outdoor worship as the temps continue to warm. We have great attendance in person and over Zoom. We have music. We have Communion. We have stayed connected with one another. For years, bishops have asked us to think of “church” outside of the buildings. Covid-19 forced us to do just that. And I think as we are able, we will take these lessons with us into the community.

God bless. Happy Easter Season
Lisa Lindsay

Notes from Parishioners

I want to express my gratitude to Lisa for arranging and leading the weekday Compline on Zoom. These quiet services have been a wonderful experience for many of us. While very brief, they are very refreshing and spiritually strengthening. They provide an opportunity to grow closer to God – and to each other. I have found in the gathering a strong sense of intimate fellowship, companionship so badly needed these days. It is not easy to stop everyday worldly activities and tune in on the computer on time, but that is a good Lenten discipline, one providing an immediate reward. I encourage anyone who would like to come together for quiet prayer with a small group to join us at 7:30 pm Monday-Thursday (Bible Study follows Compline on Thursdays). The Zoom link is provided in the eWitness.

~Emily Scribner

Each year the Sunday School decides on a Lenten fund raising project. This year we again decided to assist Trinity Jubilee Center in Lewiston by raising \$550.00 to buy enough calzones from a local place that has donated to Trinity. This not only gives Trinity folks a special meal but also aids a local restaurant. St. Luke's raised \$1,000! I am a social person and living alone during this pandemic has been a challenge. I try to reach out to someone each day. During Lent I wrote to whomever the Lord put on my heart that day. Some in the congregation may have

already received a note. I have also received blessing back from folks. I have also read more books(joined 2 on line book clubs)and made many homemade soups. Now if I could only curb my addiction to mint patties.

~Justy Nazar

Pandemic Blessings: I have knitted my way through the Pandemic, knitting scarves, cowls, hats, baby blankets, dish cloths and socks. I reduced my yarn stash considerably but kept the on line yarn venders in business! In December I tied at least a dozen knitted items to my Anson Street fence with a sign titled, FREE. It only took a day for them to disappear....GRATEFUL! I am grateful for my dog, Sophie, Forward Day by Day, social media, all the sweets I can find and The Crown!

~Brenda Holman

Our Church Logo



Have you ever wondered why we have an ox for a logo (I have)? The symbol of Saint Luke the Evangelist is the winged ox. St. Luke emphasizes the sacrifice and the atonement of the Saviour. The biggest sacrifice was the ox. The wings show that this was a heavenly sacrifice. The shield is usually red and the ox is gold. St. Luke's day is October 18th. To the left is our flag (beautifully created by Barbara Black). Below is the letterhead. The letterhead is outdated (no email or website and the font should probably change). We don't use our letterhead a lot because we generally use email plus the paper has

yellowed over time. I am looking to update the look more so for the website and social media. We would love your input!

SAINT LUKE'S
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Lobster Roll??

Do we bring back the lobster roll fundraiser? That is the question. And if we do, **who** will be this year's manager and **when** will we have it and **where** will we sell the lunches? I have heard nothing about the Blueberry Festival and I'm not sure having a line of people to manage with distancing and masks is something we want to deal with. In that case, we consider deliveries and/or pre-ordered pick-up at the kitchen door. If someone would like to explore this options, please let Mother Sue or someone(s) from the vestry know. Thank you.

A Prayer to Mark One Year of Pandemic

(Prayer written by Elizabeth and Matthew Myer Boulton, owners of SALT Project)



Good shepherd, thank you for walking with us through this valley of the shadow of death: through the suffering, the anxiety, the loneliness, the boredom, the longing for closeness and the longing for personal space, the confusion and fear, the impatience and hope, the good days and the bad.

Forgive us for our suspicions of each other, the ways this ordeal has made us more divided, as a country and a world. Help us bridge our differences and come together — even as we are physically distant.

Thank you for all the ways, large and small, that this ordeal has strengthened us as a community: the acts of kindness, the new ways of doing things, the support we've offered and received.

Forgive us for the inequities this pandemic has exposed. Kindle in our hearts a new commitment to justice as we build and rebuild our community together. Keep us ever mindful of those most in need.

We pray especially for those of us who have lost loved ones, lost jobs, lost hope.

Let us be good company, even from afar; good neighbors; and good friends.

We pray especially for those on the front lines of the pandemic, for all who are in harm's way.

Gentle God, we ask that you continue to keep watch with those who work, or watch, or weep this day. Walk with those whose bodies are holding memories of sickness, of trauma, of pain, of confusion, of chaos, of isolation.

Give your angels charge over those who still cannot sleep because of anxiety or grief.

Tend the sick, give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous; all for your love's sake.

God of life and hope, lift our spirits as we dare to look ahead, dare to hope and dream about the new world to come. Strengthen our efforts, deepen our wisdom, so we might hasten that day.

And until that day, keep our eyes and hearts open to the signs of hope and life all around us.

For new ways to connect with each other, we give you thanks and praise!

For teachers and nurses and doctors and agricultural workers and grocery clerks and small business owners and frontline workers of all kinds, we give you thanks and praise!

For the beautiful hope of being together again in person one day, lifting our voices in song, passing the peace, sharing cups of coffee, being able to hug one another again — for that day that is surely coming, we give you thanks and praise!

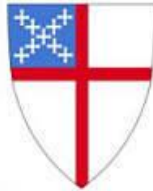
For the ways in which our eyes have been opened by this ordeal, for the ways in which our hearts have been broken and put back together differently, softer and more attuned to the needs of the most vulnerable, we give you thanks and praise!

For all of these things and more, gentle God, we give you thanks and praise in the name of Jesus, our crucified and risen Jesus,

Amen.



The
**EPISCOPAL
CHURCH**



Welcomes You

St. Luke's Episcopal Church

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Clergy: The Rev. Suzanne Cole Vestry: Chris Cox, Carolyn McLaughlin (Sr. Wardens), John Sytsma (Jr. Warden), Dick Condon (Treasurer), Jeannine LeVigne, Emily Scribner, Scott Lindsay

