TO OUR GUESTS  -  WELCOME  -  THANK YOU FOR BEING HERE TODAY!

St. Luke’s Episcopal Church is a Christian community composed of free thinkers who include: conservatives, moderates, & liberals; agnostics, skeptics & atheists. All spiritual seekers who are searching for an approach to faith that makes the most sense to them personally are welcome here!

PLEASE NOTE: During the 10:30 worship service, we normally video-record the sermon for posting on You-Tube. Your image may be captured during recording.

To view sermons, go to You-Tube and then search for “St. Luke’s Episcopal Church Park City.”


Image:
Redemption
Mordechai Rosenstein, Artist

Translation:
I will bring you out,
I will deliver you,
I will redeem you,
I will take you to me,
And I will bring you unto the land.

Exodus 6: 6-8

A BLESSING FOR LENT

May this season of Lent continue to be a journey of Joy,
the experience of the land of Freedom—
Freedom lived in
journeying with Jesus
on the path of suffering, compassion
and love of “the other.”
If you need pastoral support or know someone that does, please call Fr. Charles+, at 435-901-2131. Remember, Charles+ still can’t read minds so he will not know unless you tell him. Calls will be kept confidential.

In Need of Prayer of Home Communion? St.Luke’s Prayer Ministers are available during the 10:30 AM service to pray with you. If you would like a name added to our Prayer Chain, contact Tami Wrice with your request at 435-901-1128 or t-wrice@hotmail.com. If you know of someone who needs Home Communion, contact our Lay Eucharistic Visitor Team by calling or emailing the Church Office. Blessings!

PLEASE PRAY FOR..........

THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY:
Michael, our Presiding Bishop, and Scott, our Diocesan Bishop and for ALL the people and parishes in our diocese. Pray especially for All Saints Church in Salt Lake. All people within the world-wide Anglican Communion; pray for the people & leaders of The Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia.

OUR NATION & ITS LEADERS:
Our government leaders that they may live & work in a spirit of calm reason & cooperation on behalf of the common good.

THOSE WHO ARE FACING SUFFERING & HARDSHIP:
Robert++++ (husband of Iris Thompson), Pat++++ (Sanger), Rita++++ (wife of Kevin Tischner), Alexa++++ (granddaughter of Deedee Sihvonen), Gerry++++ (wife of Jim Brooks) Mildred & Tom++++ (mother and brother of Cheryl Popple) Gabrielle+++ (daughter of Richard & Bernadette Rothman) Joanne++++ (friend of Leslie Wood) Mary Gene++++ (mother of Sharon Christiansen) Laura+++ (sister in law of Deedee Sihvonen) Bonnie++++ (wife of Fr. Charles) John++++ (son of Dave & Nancy Garrison) Carolyn+++ (sister of Anne Bransford) Ethel++ (friend of Teresa McMillan)

THE HUMAN COMMUNITY AROUND THE WORLD:
† Safety for the communities that are affected by the severe storms that are hitting the Central US.
† An end to terrorism and the wisdom to find a way to live together in peace.
† An end to the conflicts in Yemen, Ukraine, Syria, Iraq & Afghanistan and healing for all victims.
† A lasting, permanent peace between Israel & her neighbors.

THOSE WHO HAVE DIED……

PLEASE GIVE THANKS FOR…..
For our Adult Nursery Coordinator, Jon Weinberg and his family.

For those having Birthdays this week: Lisa Alsop on Thursday.
The Scripture Passages
Fifth Sunday of Lent A - April 2, 2017

Collect of the Day:  Divine Love, when we feel the pain of the world encircling us like a dark tomb, may we have hope enough to use this experience to better reach out in compassion to those who may be experiencing similar or even greater pain and in so doing ease the pain of the world; with Jesus, our Brother, Teacher and Lord. Amen.

The Hebrew Scriptures:
Reader:  Today’s reading from the Hebrew tradition comes from the 130th Psalm. It is a prayer of devotion and hope. Please read with me by reading the parts in bold print…….Out of the depths have I called to you, O Lord; Lord, hear my voice; *

let your ears consider well the voice of my supplication.
If you, Lord, were to note what is done amiss, *

O Lord, who could stand?
For there is forgiveness with you; *

therefore you shall be feared.
I wait for the Lord; my soul waits for him; *

in his word is my hope.

Here ends the reading.

The Christian Gospels:  John 11:1-45
Priest:  The Holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

People:  Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, “Lord, he whom you love is ill.” But when Jesus heard it, he said, “This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God’s glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.”

Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was. Then after this he said to the disciples, “Let us go to Judea again.” The disciples said to him, “Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?” Jesus answered, “Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk during the day do not stumble, because they see the light of this world. But those who walk at night stumble, because the light is not in them.” After saying this, he told them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him.” The disciples said to him, “Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right.” Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. Then Jesus told them plainly, “Lazarus is dead. For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.”

Thomas, who was called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with him.” When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.” Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” Martha said to him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.” Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?” She said to him, “Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.”

When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary, and told her privately, “The Teacher is here and is calling for you.” And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him. Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. The Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there. When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. He said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to him, “Lord, come and see.” Jesus began to weep. So the Jews said, “See how he loved him!” But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?” Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. Jesus said, “Take away the stone.” Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, “Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days.” Jesus said to her, “Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?” So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, “Father, I thank you for having heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me.” When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Unbind him, and let him go.” Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.

Priest:  The Gospel of the Lord.


Offertery Sentence:
Priest:  My brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus, when you come to the Table of the Lord, come not only to receive the presence of the Lord, but also to give your life completely to Him. As Jesus said, the Greatest Commandments are these:  

People:  You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. And you shall love your neighbor as yourself.

[Hebrew & Christian scripture passages are reprinted with permission from the World Council of Churches. Passages from extra-biblical sources are reprinted with permission from World Scriptures.]
You may recall that last December and January, we touched a couple of times on the ideas of the Jewish thinker, Martin Buber. Buber was a prominent twentieth century philosopher, religious thinker, political activist and educator. Born in Austria, he spent most of his life in Germany and Israel, writing in German and Hebrew. He is best known for his 1923 book, *I and Thou*, which distinguishes between “I-Thou” (intimate) and “I-It” (objectifying) modes of existence. His great contribution was to insist that we see ourselves as fundamentally relational beings. We are born, we live and we die in relationship with others. I would like to use some of his ideas to reflect upon today’s Gospel story.

But first, allow me to acknowledge the traditional explanation. Today’s Gospel is found in the Gospel of John. Recall that John wrote his Gospel at the end of the first century about 60 to 70 years after the death of Jesus. His interpretation of the Jesus tradition included a number of features. John elevated the person of Jesus of Nazareth to the status of the God of Israel, i.e., the “Logos” or mind of the Creator. He suggested, therefore, that Jesus was a god-man or THE God in human form and that commitment to this doctrine is essential to human salvation and wholeness.

To make his case, John used the literary devices of his day and time. These include the idea of a powerful god-man capable of performing supernatural miracles. John has Jesus deliberately delay his arrival in Bethany until Lazarus has been dead and buried for four days so that he might publicly display his divine powers in resuscitating Lazarus. Stories of resuscitation or resurrection were common in the ancient world in part due to the fact that people of that day and time understood death, not as the termination of a person, but rather as the relocation of a still-living soul to a place in the afterlife. Resuscitation would, thereby, have been understood to be the act of bringing someone back from their relocation.

The popular interpretation of this story suggests that we should read it as a literal historical event. The historical god-man Jesus exercises his supernatural powers to restore Lazarus’ relocated soul to his decaying body and, thereby, publicly demonstrate his divinity. Therefore, John insists, you should accept that the rabbi from Nazareth was God in human flesh and commit yourself to that doctrine. If that is how you interpret this story, you are probably in the majority and, here at St. Luke’s, each of us is free to think for ourselves.

To me, however, it does not make much sense to take these stories literally. It seems a bit more reasonable to understand these stories as stories about humanity and the human journey written from within the cultural context of the author’s day and time and using familiar images, idioms and symbols.

One way to approach today’s Gospel story humanistically is to think about it using the ideas of Martin Buber. Rather than interpret this story as historical and factual, let’s think of it as a story about us, about human nature and about the necessary connection between human life and human relationships. Let’s think about death as the end result of a disease, but this disease is not of the body, it is a disease of the mind, the heart, the soul. Fundamentally, one could say that the name of this disease is Mutual Abandonment. It is the disease process in which you and I continually avoid seeing one another as a precious gift, the most precious of all gifts. We run away from the honest and open truth about who we really are as we deflect from any willingness to see the person in front of us as he or she really is. We keep things superficial and we insist upon objectifying one another. We ignore the truth that, under the proper conditions, we are a source of life and well-being for others and they for us. We have a tendency to abandon the profundity of one another and exchange it for the safe, the comfortable, the false and the incomplete.

To really appreciate this, we have to take a step back and wrestle with what we mean when we refer to “God,” the Divine, or the Sacred. We have to wrestle and then choose; is God a supernatural, super-being similar in some ways to us living “up there,” or can we give ourselves permission to think of “God” as an eternal mystery continually present within each of us calling us, urging us, drawing us toward deep, honest relationships with ourselves and all others; God as the Ground of Relations?

Continued on Next Page.............
Buber once declared, “If to believe in God means to be able to talk about him in the third person, then I do not believe in God. If to believe in him means to be able to talk to him, then I believe in God….The God to whom [the Prophet] Daniel prays in his suffering is my God and the God of all.” God, for Buber therefore, is not a super Being above all beings, but a mysterious presence within each of us that constantly invites us into relationship with one another. Buber’s name for God is “The Eternal Thou” which is glimpsed in every human act of moving toward another; “the You that cannot become an It.” In other words, we can think of God as the subtle inner voice that urges us into an acknowledgement of our universal need for one another and the eternal possibility of finding new life through the courage to gaze into the eyes and heart of another and to be gazed upon and seen as we really are by the other. The Eternal Thou is our essence as relational beings, our relational center, the reality of our connection to and desire for unity with all living beings.

Lazarus is the every-human who experiences death through human rejection and abandonment. Our strategies for avoiding deep contact with one another are legion. Here are a few: deep selfishness in all its forms; willfulness; the practice of pushing others away with thoughts of criticism and negativity; and any form of seeing and judging another that is reductionistic. We reduce one another when we see a label instead of a person, see an ideology instead of a multi-faceted, complex human being, and look at another as an object, a thing to be used rather than as a mystery to be explored. These are some of the ways we prevent ourselves from discovering the Sacred in our gaze upon and the gaze of another. The tomb in which the dead body of Lazarus was kept was made of the bricks and cement of human rejection, avoidance and abandonment. And the stone that was its door was loneliness; deep, profound, all encompassing loneliness.

Jesus represents the eternal possibility of seeing and being seen, of life-giving mutual connection and of the courage two people share in mutually dropping all of the facades, the games, the judgments and the distancing strategies in order to enter fully into mutual self-revelation and the mutual acceptance of one another. Jesus is the teacher who brings the Good News of the buried and hidden relational power of humanity. He is the one who both speaks about and manifests in his way of living the potential for any and all of us to experience abundance rather than abandonment, to taste the sweet nectar of self-giving love and to find wholeness through the practice of the courageous mutual, reciprocal gaze.

Resuscitation, that is, the discovery of new life in the pain and grief of death by abandonment is experienced when two people “turn” toward one another. This is the meaning of the encounter between Jesus and Lazarus. Turning represents the deliberate shift within the consciousness of two or more people away from selfishness and toward the preciousness and supreme value of another; away from the security of hiddenness, self-deception and self-protection toward an openness that is courageous, honest and vulnerable; and away from withdrawal and rejection toward a deep hunger to know and to be known by the other. As Buber notes, “Turning is the recognition of the Center and the act of turning again to it. In this act of being, the buried relational power of man rises again, the wave that carries all the spheres of relation swells and living strains to give new life to our world.” Every time we turn towards one another in vulnerability and self-giving love, we give one another and ourselves the gift of life.

Blessings,
Charles+
PLEASE GIVE GENEROUSLY TO OUR ST. LUKE’S MISSIONS FUND DURING THIS LENTEN SEASON

During Lent each year, we appeal to all of the members of our parish community to make a generous donation in support of our missions for the coming year.

All donations are combined and are used where it is most needed. The Executive Missions Committee (the leaders of each of our mission enterprises) meet together to have a conversation about the amount of financial support needed by each mission. The Committee then allocates the money in the Mission Fund to each mission according to their need.

Please examine the Missions Fund catalogue. It describes the purpose and needs of each of our mission enterprises. Also, please be generous in giving for the continued work of our missions, both locally and regionally. 100% of all donations are used for missions.

To donate to the St. Luke’s Missions Fund, please make a check out to St. Luke’s and write “Missions” in the memo line.

OR you can go to our website and make a donation towards "Missions.” For those of you that have already made a donation in Tithe.ly, just change the giving line from offering to Mission. It’s so easy! THANK YOU VERY MUCH!!

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Stations of the Cross will be led every Wednesday during Lent by Harriet Stephens. Please join her at noon at the church on Wednesdays.

COFFEE HOUR COORDINATOR

Sharon Christensen is stepping down as coffee hour coordinator. Thank you, Sharon for your hard work and service in this important ministry. Barbara Wine will be serving as the interim coordinator, and in an effort to recruit more families to join the "coffee hour" ministry, she is suggesting two changes.

1. The possibility of two families sharing a coffee hour and
2. That ONLY cookies or donuts be served, making it easier and less costly.

We would love your input, please talk to Barbara Wine, e mail wine1466@comcast.net, or call her at 435-640-3770.

We will need a new coordinator, if you’re interested please let Father Charles know. How about talking to a friend about job sharing? Barbara will be happy to answer any questions.
THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING TO HOST COFFEE HOUR

Please arrive one half hour early to start preparing. You will need to bring a bottle of Apple Juice, half and half and cookies or donuts. All other supplies will be provided.

Following is a check list of procedures. We hope this will make your job easier. All the kitchen cupboards are labeled to help you find needed supplies.

SET UP:
Coffee Hour will follow the 10:30 am service
Hot water for tea is prepared in one of the pump pots
Coffee making instructions are posted on the refrigerator

YOU MUST FIRST PRIME THE COFFEE MAKER (POUR ONE PITCHER OF WATER INTO THE COFFEE MAKER WITHOUT A FILTER OR COFFEE GROUNDS)
If you use the hot water coffee pot when priming, you can use this for the tea.

SET UP ONE TABLE SIDE WITH:
• Hot Cups (white cups)
• Stirrers
• Creamer and Sugars
• Half and Half
• Tea Bags
• Donation Basket

SET UP OTHER TABLE SIDE WITH:
• Napkins
• Cold Cups (colored cups)
• Apple Juice
• Cookies or Donuts

CLEAN UP: This is not as much fun, but very important
Brush off table cloths
Rinse coffee pots and pumps
Empty all trash cans and take to the dumpster
Extra cups, plates, condiments etc. put back away
Counter tops cleaned and wiped down
Dirty laundry put in the laundry basket at the end of the counter

We have another church using our facility on Sunday nights. Out of consideration to them, please do not leave anything in the dish drainer or on the counters.

Thank You!! Coffee hour has become an important part of our service. Without your help, it wouldn’t be possible! If for any reason you are unable to host coffee hour, please call Barbara Wine at 435-640-3770.
ANNUAL EASTER EGG HUNT
The Sunday School is now gratefully accepting donations of candy and/or empty plastic Easter Eggs for our annual Easter Egg Hunt. If you would like to contribute, please bring items to the church office OR leave them in the basket by the entrance to the sanctuary no later than Wed April 12th. We ask that all candy be individually wrapped, and please: no candy with peanuts/nuts or peanut butter. Thank you so much for your support!

A COURSE IN MIRACLES  Join us in the St. Luke's Library each Wednesday at 4:00 to read and discuss this spiritual mind-training course. It is not necessary to have been attending in the past--you are welcome to come join this fun and lively group anytime. For more information, call or text Ann Fiery at 304-617-5714. Or you can visit www.acim.org

TAI-CHI: Tai Chi will meet on Wednesdays at 5:10. There will be no class on April 12th. Registration for new students is currently closed until the next round begins in mid May.

AUTUMN GOSPEL GROUP FOR WOMEN 50ish & UP: Autumn Gospel meets the fourth Saturday morning of each month from 10 to noon, in members' homes. We use books as a springboard to share and discuss our own spiritual journeys at this stage of our lives, and are currently reading "Autumn Gospel" by Kathleen Fischer. Please join us for coffee, fellowship and a lively discussion! For more info please call Ann Deyo, 435-615-7478 or Judy Hanley, 435-649-7607.

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY: We are reading the Beth Moore Study “Stepping Up” on the Psalms of ascent, running through April 5 (Wednesday before Palm Sunday). We meet on Wednesday nights 6:30-8:00 PM.

HOSPITALITY GROUNDS COMMUNITY GARDEN: Spring is here, and if you’re wondering about gardening, you might consider a plot at Hospitality Grounds Community Garden on the other side of the St. Luke's parking lot. Garden areas are $25 each for a 4’ x 5’ raised bed plot. To learn more and to register, please visit the website HospitalityGrounds.com or email hospitalitygrounds@gmail.com. We also have a Facebook page you might be interested in taking a look at. We will have an informal get together at the picnic table by the garden at Noon Sunday, April 9, for all those planning on gardening this year.

CHECK OUT OUR NEW WEBSITE: www.stlukesparkcity.org Newcomers will find info about our church and what to expect when they visit. In addition, there is information about all of our missions, finances and programs. You can view previous sermons through a link to You-Tube on your phone or home computer. Go to You Tube, then St Luke’s Episcopal Church Park City, UT.

CENTERING PRAYER Meets Monday and Friday mornings at 10:00 AM in the Library. Please join us in this contemplative practice of Holy Silence.

CONSIDERING JOINING THE ST. LUKE'S COMMUNITY? JUST WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH? Our rector would be delighted to make an appointment to meet with you. He will do his best to answer your questions and to help you to feel welcomed and included at St. Luke's. When you are ready to have a conversation, just let him know at either: pastor@stlukespc.org or 435-901-2131.

ST. LUKE’S CARE GUILD If you or someone you know has any requests or needs, please contact Katherine at katherinemartz@comcast.net or Harriet, harrietmstephens@gmail.com, (435)655-1888.