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.

“Eternal One,
Silence from whom my words come;
Questioner from whom my questions arise;
Lover of whom all my loves are hints;
Disturber in whom alone I find my rest;
Mystery in whose depths I find healing and myself;
enfold me now in your presence;
restore to me your peace;
renew me through your power;
and ground me in your grace.”

Ted Loder
“Ground Me in Your Grace”

Naive drawing in the style of an ancient map of Jerusalem, 2011
To communicate Christian brotherhood and peace among Islam, Christianity, and Judaism
Vanderbilt University, Collection, Art in the Christian Tradition. Used by permission.

Today's Reading:
God is my chosen portion and my cup; you hold my lot. The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; I have a goodly heritage. I bless God who gives me counsel; in the night also my heart instructs me. I keep God always before me; because God is my right hand, I shall not be moved.  

Psalm 16:5-8
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 St. Barnabas’ Church in Tooele.
✓ All people within the world-wide Anglican Communion; pray for the people & leaders of The Church of Hong Kong and Macoa.

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) Tom++++ (brother of Joe Cordery) Arlan++ & Kelle++++ (step dad and mother of Aimee Altizer), Rick & Craig++++ (sons of Neil & Theresa Wilcox) Holly+++ (friend of Abbey Cordery) Tom++ (father of Theresa Wilcox), Judy+++ (Hanley) Linda++ (friend of Karl & Linda Sears) Joanne+ (friend of Leslie Wood) Mary Gene+ (mother of Sharon Christiansen)

THE HUMAN COMMUNITY AROUND THE WORLD:
✓ Safety for the 295 civilians kidnapped in Mosul by ISIS and an end to all of the violence.
✓ An end to terrorism and the wisdom to find a way to live together in peace.
✓ Recovery of all effected by Hurricane Matthew.
✓ 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........

Our Staff is There for You!
Please do not hesitate to contact us.
A full listing of all positions and ministries is available on the information table at the church.

The Rev. Charles Robinson, Rector
Cell Phone: 435-901-2131 Email: pastor@stlukespc.org

The Rev. Claudia Giacoma, Asst. Priest
435-513-0441 Email: giacomaclaudia@gmail.com

Our Parish Community Prayer list: ++ Please note that we will place a + after each name for each week the name is on our prayer list. After four weeks (++++) the name will be removed unless otherwise requested.
Collect of the Day: Blessed Lord, we are grateful for the wisdom, knowledge and insights shared within the human community and for minds capable of curiosity, learning and reason. Help us to encourage one another to learn and inwardly digest the knowledge and wisdom we discover that we may better, not only our own lives, but also the lives of every other living being; with Jesus, our Brother, Teacher and Lord. Amen

The Hebrew Scriptures:
Reader: Today’s reading from the Hebrew scriptures comes from the 12th chapter of the Book of the Prophet Isaiah. Chapter 12 provides a transition between Isaiah’s narrative of Judah’s history, marked by periods of obedience and disobedience to God’s will, and oracles of judgment against the nations. The chapter reflects the context of Judah living under the grip of Assyria’s domination, and it points to the theme of God’s comfort for those returned from Babylonian exile. Please read the passage with me by reading the parts in bold print…Surely, it is God who saves me; * I will trust in him and not be afraid. For the Lord is my stronghold and my sure defense, * and he will be my Savior.
Therefore you shall draw water with rejoicing * from the springs of salvation.
And on that day you shall say, * Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his Name; Make his deeds known among the peoples; * see that they remember that his Name is exalted. Sing the praises of the Lord, for he has done great things, *
and this is known in all the world. Cry aloud, inhabitants of Zion, ring out your joy, *
for the great one in the midst of you is the Holy One of Israel.

Here ends the reading.

The Buddhist Scriptures:
The prelude to the consummation of history and the appearance of the Messiah will be a time of tribulation and confusion. Many passages describe how in the Last Days wars, famines, plagues, and natural disasters will abound and civilization will reach its nadir. People will become engrossed in materialism and hedonism, and love will grow cold. Buddhist and Hindu texts affirm that when the consummation is nigh even the civilizations of the contemporary Kali age will plummet to their lowest point. Please read with me from the Buddhist Digha Nikaya by reading the parts in bold print…There will come a time, brethren, when immoral courses of action will flourish excessively; there will be no word for moral among humans—far less any moral agent. The world will fall into promiscuity, like goats and sheep, fowls and swine, dogs and jackals.

Among such humans, keen mutual enmity will become the rule, keen ill will, keen animosity, passionate thoughts even of killing, in a mother towards her child, in a child towards its mother, in a father towards his child and a child towards its father, in brother to brother, in brother to sister, in sister to brother. Just as a sportsman feels towards game that he sees, so will they feel. Here ends the reading.

People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.
When some were speaking about the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and gifts dedicated to God, Jesus said, "As for these things that you see, the days will come when not one stone will be left upon another; all will be thrown down." They asked him, "Teacher, when will this be, and what will be the sign that this is about to take place?" And he said, "Beware that you are not led astray; for many will come in my name and say, 'I am he!' and, 'The time is near!' Do not go after them. "When you hear of wars and insurrections, do not be terrified; for these things must take place first, but the end will not follow immediately." Then he said to them, "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and plagues; and there will be dreadful portents and great signs from heaven. "But before all this occurs, they will arrest you and persecute you; they will hand you over to synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors because of my name. This will give you an opportunity to testify. So make up your minds not to prepare your defense in advance; for I will give you words and a wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to withstand or contradict. You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, by relatives and friends; and they will put some of you to death. You will be hated by all because of my name. But not a hair of your head will perish. By your endurance you will gain your souls." Priest: The Gospel of the Lord.
People: Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Offertory 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.]
The Voice of Love in the Midst of Suffering
Proper 28c - Nov. 13, 2016

“Life is difficult. This is a great truth, one of the greatest truths. It is a great truth because once we truly see this truth, we transcend it.” —M. Scott Peck. Professor Gilberto Ruiz - Assistant Professor of Theology, Saint Anselm College, Manchester, NH - writes, “Whenever a disaster strikes, it doesn’t take long for some prominent Christians to blame it on the secularization or moral permissiveness of society.” He noted that on a September 13, 2001, appearance on “The 700 Club,” the Rev. Jerry Falwell blamed the 9/11 terrorist attacks on liberals and members of the LGBT community for promoting “an alternative lifestyle” and trying to “secularize America.” Austrian priest Rev. Gerhard Wagner wrote in a 2005 parish newsletter that Hurricane Katrina resulted from the indescribable amoral conditions of New Orleans. Pat Robertson conveyed the same idea. We could go on and on.

Anyone who wants to justify their belief that God uses wars and natural disasters to punish people for something with which they disagree can use today’s Gospel. Our passage has often been seen as Jesus literally predicting the destruction of the Jerusalem temple as well as more general catastrophes that will be preceded by an intense persecution of Christians. But does such a literal interpretation make sense? Is it possible to interpret this passage in a manner that does not require affirmation of an angry, punishing supernatural deity?

Remember that Luke’s Gospel is dated to about 85 CE, 15 years or so after the destruction of the Jerusalem temple by the Romans in 70 CE and about 55 years after the death of Jesus. Also remember that the author of the Gospel of Luke most likely never met the historical Jesus. It’s very likely, therefore, that Luke’s Jesus is less an accurate reporting on the historical Jesus’ precise words than the main character of a literary device reminding readers of what happened in recent history. Luke uses the destruction of this magnificent temple to make a statement on the impermanence of human structures. In response to their wonder at the temple’s beauty, Jesus attempts to divert the attention of his audience from their fascination with “these things that you see.” Those listening to Jesus teach in the temple, however, remain concerned with what will happen to the building. In response, Jesus moves from discussing a specific catastrophic event to more general statements about the coming of false prophets, wars, and other calamities.

Dr. Ruiz point out that here Luke employs language and imagery that is conventional in apocalyptic literature from this period. As readers we now have to decide how we are going to interpret this apocalyptic language. Are we going to read it as literal predictions (fortune-telling) by Jesus, or are we going to read this section in light of the aims of apocalyptic literature? If a story begins “Once upon a time,” do we take literally the story’s events, or do we adjust our expectations because we recognize it as a fairy tale that is trying to entertain even as it conveys a moral or lesson? The decision we have to make in interpreting today’s Gospel passage is similar.

Apocalyptic literature paradoxically uses unsettling, hyperbolic, frightening language and imagery as a means to prepare its audience for the inevitability of suffering in this life and to encourage them to keep their hope and optimism about the future even when facing the most challenging of circumstances. That reminds me of a little story….Doctor: I have good news and bad news. Patient: Go with the good news first. Doctor: You have 24 hours to live. Patient: What!?! How about the bad news? Doctor: Um…..I meant to tell you yesterday.

Continued on next page………..
Sure enough, while describing the terrible events, Jesus tells his listeners not to be afraid. There is nothing particularly original or specific about Jesus’ “predictions” here. We will misread this passage if we think Jesus is describing a specific set of calamities. The point is that when bad things happen - and they will - we should “not be terrified” or follow anyone proclaiming that the present calamities are an indication that an angry deity is about to destroy the world. Instead, the wiser course of action is to hold on to a trust in the quiet, persistent Voice of love, hope and compassion that remains present in our lives.

Jesus then details the persecution that his followers can expect to face: arrests; persecution; trials before government authorities; betrayal by family and friends; hatred on account of Jesus’ name; and even execution. Why persecution? Throughout his Gospel, Luke depicts Jesus as a prophetic figure who risks rejection and death as a result of his habit of speaking out against the prejudices and injustices practiced by the people of his nation. Anyone who follows Jesus can expect the same hostility that Jesus and Israel’s great prophets endured. And just as Moses and other prophets found within themselves the sacred capacity to speak to and confront those who sought to do evil and practice cruelty, those who follow the spiritual path of Jesus will also find the strength and wisdom to do the same. Using a proverb that signifies divine protection, Jesus tells them that not a hair on their head will perish. In other words, ultimately, anyone who is mistreated, persecuted or even killed because of their willingness and courage to stand for love, compassion and justice will find victory within their souls; they will discover a fullness of life and the meaning of “a life worth living.”

Professor Ruiz asserts that a close reading of this apocalyptic literature shows that using this passage as a springboard for proclaiming that some kind of supernatural punishment has been poured out on a suffering society would miss the point. Rather, the passage warns us about becoming too fixated on the machinery of religion and on that which is already passing away. Instead, we should live in response to the Voice that calls us to compassion and justice. We should attend to the Voice that urges us to love and care for the poor in our community as we would our own families.

This passage also urges us to never stop seeking after and listening to the Voice of goodness, hope and optimism no matter how profound our suffering. Despite its language and imagery of destruction, this passage is grounded in hope — in the hope that Love remains present in the world and in one’s life even when things have gotten so bad that it feels like the world is closing in on us. “Life is difficult. This is a great truth, one of the greatest truths. It is a great truth because once we truly see this truth, we transcend it.” —M. Scott

Primary Source: https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=3059

Blessings,

Charles+
PROCEDURES REPORT

Per the request of the Episcopal Diocese of Utah, we have performed a review, by questionnaire, of agreed-upon procedures as of December 31, 2015 of St. Luke’s Episcopal Church’s adherence to audit guidelines taken from Chapter VI of the Manual of Business Methods in Church Affairs. The following summarizes Scope and Objectives, Documents Reviewed, and Findings and Recommendations:

SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

The scope of the review included procedures related to the following financial elements:

1. Annual required reports
2. Vestry minutes and annual budget
3. Cash receipts and disbursements
4. Bank account reconciliations
5. Investments and Trust Accounts (where applicable)
6. Restricted gifts and income
7. Property and equipment
8. Payroll procedures (where applicable)
9. Computer systems and data backup procedures

DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

The following documents were reviewed as part of the examination:

1. Annual financial report to parish
2. Treasurer's monthly financial report - July 31, 2015 and December 31, 2015
3. Vestry minutes
4. Prior year's annual inspection report
5. Bank statements, deposits, and bank reconciliations - July 31, 2015 and December 31, 2015
6. Sample of vendor invoices

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We noted no matters involving the internal control structure and its operation that we consider to be a material weakness. A material weakness is a condition in which the design or operation of specific internal control structure elements does not reduce to a relatively low level the risk that errors or irregularities in amounts that would be material in relation to the financial reports may occur and not be detected within a timely period by financial officers of the Church in the normal course of performing their assigned functions.

Though not considered material weaknesses, items are sometimes noted during the course of our engagement and presented as recommendations for improvement in financial and reporting controls.

There were no items noted during the review that constitute needed improvements to internal controls or financial reporting.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REQUESTED BY DIOCESE

Date of Review: June 30, 2016

Attended by: Becky Raemer, Treasurer

Accounting software in use: Church Windows

The Treasurer, Officers, and Clergy-in-Charge of St. Luke’s Episcopal Church are to be commended for their faithful stewardship of the resources at their disposal. We wish to express our appreciation for the cooperation and assistance that we received from the finance officers of St. Luke’s Episcopal Church throughout the course of the examination. We appreciate the opportunity to serve you and look forward to continuing a mutually beneficial relationship. If you have any questions regarding any of the matters discussed in this report, please do not hesitate to contact us at your convenience.
Our Annual Winter Coats & Supplies Collection Has Begun

Every year St. Luke's Church holds a clothing and bedding drive to assist The Road Home Homeless Shelter in Salt Lake City. The Road Home is the largest homeless shelter in Utah and has been around since 1923.

Please donate anything you think may help someone survive the winter on the streets of SLC.....Winter Coats, Sleeping Bags, Blankets and Quilts, Long Underwear, Winter Hats. Whatever you think a man, woman, or child may use. Please give generously.

Please drop off the various items at the Church, 4595 North Silver Springs Drive. Our goal is to repeatedly fill up the vestibule of the Big Church with these life-saving supplies. Donations will be taken to the Road Home in Salt Lake City for distribution to the poor in need. We hope to fill up a van by early December and deliver it and then a second van by the end of December.

It’s our way of trying to bring a little kindness and compassion into this world, kindness and compassion toward those without visibility and voice.

From The Road Home Website (theroadhome.org):
The Road Home operates the largest homeless shelter in Utah, with beds for men, women, and families. Our downtown Salt Lake shelter is open 365 days a year, including holidays to help meet the needs of our community. While some nights the shelter is more full than others, we do not turn people away if they are in need of a place to stay. The only qualification for staying at our shelter is that you have nowhere else to go.

In addition to our Salt Lake shelter, they also operate a seasonal shelter in Midvale for families. The Community Winter Shelter is typically open November through March to meet the increased need of families in our community.

By providing life-saving emergency shelter, we are able to connect people with life-changing services through our housing programs, case management, and community partners.
EXCITING HAPPENINGS

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.

AUTUMN GOSPEL GROUP FOR WOMEN 50ish & UP: FOURTH SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH AT 10:00 AM  Meets on the fourth Saturday of each month, 10:00 - NOON. We are beginning a new book, “Autumn Gospel” by Kathleen Fischer. Please join us for coffee, fellowship and a lively discussion! For more info please call Dyan Pignatelli, 435-782-3330 or Joyce Pearson, 435-659-0724.

TAI-CHI Tai Chi will meet on Wednesdays at 5:10 PM. However, registration is closed until next round. Many thanks to those who have shown interest.

CHECK OUT OUR NEW WEBSITE: WWW.STLUKESPARKCITY.ORG
We are still working on a few sections, but there is enough content to make it worth a visit. On the website 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. Happy exploring!!!

ACIM GROUP Each Wednesday at 4:00 our ACIM Study Group meets in the church library. A Course in Miracles focuses on undoing unconscious guilt in our minds, and we support each other on our journeys of healing relationships through forgiveness.

For more info, visit acim.org, or call Ann Fiery at 304-617-5714. You are always welcome to join us!

ART & SOUL SATURDAYS meets the first Saturday of each month at 10 a.m. at the church. Our focus this year is the spiritual lives of “Monks and Mystics”. We use a variety of art medium, especially “soul collage”, to explore personal connections with each one, gaining insight and wisdom for our own spiritual journey. Focus for December is “Mary, Mother of God”; for January, “Thomas Merton”; for February, “Francis of Assisi”. Call Mother Claudia+ or email her for more information. Donation for materials is suggested. Phone 435-513-0441; email giacomaclaudia@gmail.com.

WOMEN’S BIBLE STUDY We will be starting our new study “What Love Is” by Kelly Minter on the books of 1,2,3 John. It will be 7 weeks beginning Nov. 2nd, Wednesday nights 6:30-8:00 PM. We will not meet Wed. Nov. 23rd for Thanksgiving and will finish Wed. December 21st.

WOMEN’S GET TOGETHER Please join us on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 PM. Come and enjoy the fellowship. We gather to get to know and support one another.

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.

CENTERING PRAYER Meets Monday mornings at 9:30 AM & Friday mornings at 10:00 AM in the Jerusalem room. Please join us in this contemplative practice of Holy Silence. For any questions contact Jan at jan.e.hafner@gmail.com

REMEMBER that you can now donate online through our website to contribute to our church and its missions. Click in the “Make an online donation” button and you’ll be able to use your credit or debit card. www.stlukespc.org  You can also fill out an offering card found in the pews to make a Credit Card donation.