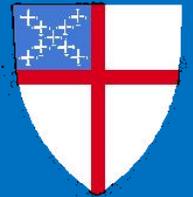


St. Luke's Episcopal Church

NEW VISIONS



January 2018

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By the Well, the Twelve Days of Christmas are ending in a burst of celebration and light. The Christmas cookies are nearly all eaten, even the fruitcake has been nibbled down, and the tree is starting to shed. The presents, every last one of them, are open -- and lots of them are already in use. Did you get everything you wanted? What? You didn't get seven swans a-swimming, or eleven lords a-leaping? Well, never mind. Maybe next year.

This year, at least, we got what we always get: the carols of joy, the angels' promise, the shining star, the glowing faces, the mysterious hush of the shepherds and animals, gathered around the newborn baby. And in them, we got the age-old promise: that there is peace, there is joy, there is hope. God will not leave us alone,

stranded, lost in darkness and misery. God will come to us in joy, in light, in peace.

Here, on these very last of days of Christmas, we celebrate another part of the promise: that God will come to us ALL, every one, if we seek his presence, if we invite him into our hearts.

Through these twelve days of Christmas, while angels and shepherds and donkeys and sheep have surrounded the baby, a group of three stargazers have slogged along their weary way, day after day, seeking the promise, coming to find the baby. And on the blessed day of Epiphany, they have arrived at last. Have you spied the three figures, on their camels, moving

St. Luke's Episcopal Church
Massachusetts Avenue
At Grant Street
Haworth, NJ 07641

Continued on Page 2

The Stable Door, continued from Page 1

closer, every day, to the creche? At last, here they are.

And who are they? Oh, you know: "We three Kings of Orient are, bearing gifts we traverse afar..." And you probably even know their names: Melchior, and Caspar, and Balthasar. And you know that they brought gold and frankincense and myrrh (whatever that is!). *But who are they?*

Well, friends, *they are us*. You may have noticed, when we read the gospel, that it doesn't say anything about "Caspar, and Melchior and Balthasar." Those names date from stories people told of them in the Middle Ages, not from the Bible. And the Bible doesn't even say that they are "kings." It calls them "magi" or "wise men." Scientists, scholars, learned students of the stars and the signs, they were, and not necessarily "kings" at all -- though Isaiah's prophecy, that "nations will stream to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawning," has helped us come to think of them as

royalty, not researchers.

But most important, the Bible says, they are "from the East." They are from outside Israel, outside the ancient covenant with the people of Israel. They are foreigners and strangers.

Throughout the Old Testament there is a struggle that goes on, an argument about just exactly who is included in the promises of God. One group of writers clearly believes that it is only the people of Israel who are, who ever will be, loved by God. They believe that everyone else, no matter how good they are, how moral they are, how righteous, is outside. Not in the covenant. Not beloved of God. If they are not in the bloodline and inheritance of Israel, they are forever outsiders.

But there is another school of thought that crops up throughout the history of Israel. These folks believe that when the Messiah comes, the promise is for

everyone who comes to believe. There's Isaiah, saying, "Foreign nations will stream to your light, and the rulers of the whole world will be drawn to you because you are a beacon of light, a sign of peace, of shalom." The writer of the Book of Ruth weighs into the argument by making a great point of reminding the readers that no less a personage than King David himself was the great-grandson of a foreigner, the Ruth of the title. And over and over, as the scriptures lay out the Law by which the Israelites are to conduct themselves, they are called upon to make room for the "stranger and sojourner," as the phrase goes: called to welcome the strangers, to offer hospitality to all comers, to receive those who would come to live among them.

This argument continues in full force in New Testament times. It's at the heart of Paul's argument with Peter, over whether the Gentiles -- the foreigners, the strangers and sojourners -- are to be received into the Body of Christ, or whether it is reserved only for those of Israelite blood and lineage. Paul is convinced that he has been called as an "apostle to the Gentiles"; Peter (and the Lord's brother, James) think the proclamation was for Jews only.

You know the outcome, of course. There's hardly a one of us here who would be here today if Peter had won that argument. Paul preached the good news to the foreigners, those considered to be outside the covenant, and so we -- we, the Gentiles -- are included in the Body of Christ.

But Matthew's story of the visit of the



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*Francois, Madeleine
and Gaspard Caloz*

New Visions, the newsletter of St. Luke's Episcopal Church, is published 10 times per year. Submissions for the upcoming month's issue should be *mailed* to *New Visions*, St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Massachusetts Ave. & Grant St., Haworth, NJ 07641; or *e-mailed* to claudiasmith@msn.com by **20th of month**. **Firm deadline for submissions is the 20th of each month.** **New Visions Board:** Editor: Janet Beddoe, Production: Claudia Smith. **Photography:** Janet Beddoe, Claudia Smith, Dreamtimes.com. **Advertising:** Jo Stephenson.

Continued on Page 3

The Stable Door, continued from Page 2

Wise Men says that the matter was decided by God, long before Peter and Paul fought it out. These "wise men from the East" were Gentiles, who saw the star -- a sign from God -- and followed it. They followed it across deserts and mountains and across national barriers -- and across their own scholarly barriers of skepticism and disdain and fear -- and came at last to the place where the newborn King lay. And when they saw him, they knelt down and offered homage to him. In other words, they pledged their allegiance to him, and in that sign permanently committed themselves to follow him. And they were welcomed -- as we are.

How do we know they were welcomed? Well, their gifts were accepted. In fact, their gifts symbolize the whole meaning of the life of this newborn King. The gold, which represents wealth and royalty, was the sign that he would be king. The frankincense -- incense, which was burned daily in the Jerusalem temple as a holy offering to God -- was the sign that he was holy, our "Great High Priest," as the letter to the Hebrews calls him. And the myrrh, a bitter spice used to wrap the bodies of the dead, was the sign that, royal and holy though he was, he would die. And so it was.

This newborn baby was given by God to be a king of a new and spiritual kind for all the people who come to him. And this tiny infant is, as the song says, a "holy infant" who has become, in his dying, our "great High Priest." And die he did -- only to rise again, in glory, to transcend evil and death to lead us into life and light.

And we? We are the gentiles, called to be part of the covenant of love and peace, the promise of God given through the birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus, the Christ. We are called to transcend all the barriers to come to him. Well, no, not very many of us actually have to cross trackless desert on camelback. But we do have to transcend our own barriers: our skepticism, our self-centeredness, our pride. We are called out of ourselves and into Christ, to worship in silent awe at the cradle of this baby who is the creative force of the world.

But we are not alone. There are still strangers and sojourners in our world, people seeking light and truth, the love of God and the peace of Christ. The stable door is always open -- to all. And we, those of us who have arrived earlier, are called upon, like our Hebrew ancestors, to welcome the stranger and sojourner to the stable, to the table, to our hearts, and to the life in Christ.

This Feast of the Epiphany not only marks the end of the Season of Christmas, but the beginning of its own season, the season of Epiphany. Through centuries of tradition, Epiphany has been the season to remember and celebrate the mission of the



church, as it spreads throughout the world. As the light of the sun strengthens and lengthens each day of this season, so we are reminded that the light of Christ reaches ever further into our hearts and the hearts of the world -- even into its most troubled corners.

This Epiphany is a time to commit ourselves to be part of this spreading of the light, of the Gospel, to the ends of the earth. Having worshipped at the manger, the Wise Men carried the light of Christ out into the world with them, as they returned to their homes. So we, too, are called to rise from our worship at the manger and move steadily into the world, bearing the light of Christ -- to the places we work, the places we study, the places we play. And we are called always to welcome all who come to share in the light. The Light of Christ! Thanks be to God!

— Linda Strohmiere
January 6, 1996

<https://www.episcopalchurch.org>

Andrew Spector, DMD, FAGD, FICOI
Michael Migdal, DMD, FAGD, FICOI

Associates

Jennifer Hade, DMD, Family Dentistry
Aleksander Iofin, DMD, Endodontist
Adam Brisman, DMD, Oral Surgeon

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January Outreach: The Cart, The Center & The Santas



The Supermarket Cart Mystery

The supermarket cart in the Parish Hall filled with cardboard boxes — what's so special about that? Well, those boxes are full of packs of snacks — Mac 'n' cheese, fruit juices, fruit cups, milk and more — destined to be dropped off at the Center for Food Action for distribution to some local schoolchildren who might otherwise go hungry during the weekend, when school lunches are not available. The *what's* in the cart is not the mystery nor is the *who* put the packs there: it was Victoria and Rob, friends of Chris Emerizy, and their children, Ella and Chloe, who come and help St. Luke's every month with this outreach effort to the community.

The real mystery is *how* they assembled the snacks, packed them in the Ziploc bags, stuffed them in the boxes, cleaned up the recyclables, all

without anyone seeing them at work. Before the service, with the help of Maureen and Louise, the snacks were spread out on the pool table. Coming out of the service we found the table clear and the cart full. The clue lies perhaps in the tiny Santa sitting among the boxes. Are Victoria and Rob, Chloe and Ella really secret elves who can work silently and with incredible speed? Are they able to make themselves invisible? Next snack pack assembly time, let's try to catch them, take their photos, and celebrate their hard work with special snacks, just for them.

Center for Food Action

St. Luke's has received "Thank you" letters from the Center for Food Action for the financial donations collected from our congregation by Donna Sisti to help with Thanksgiving dinners distributed by CFA and also donations given at the Interfaith Thanksgiving Service. Here is an extract:

"CFA provides more than 4,600 emergency food packages monthly. Annually, CFA gives out more than \$5,000,000 worth of food and aids the most vulnerable of these families and seniors with housing and utility assistance. This year, CFA will pay approximately \$800,000 to landlords

and utility companies to ensure they can stay in their homes through difficult times... An important component of CFA's mission is to offer counseling and advocacy. None of the services offered would be possible without your compassion and generosity..."

YCS Secret Santas and More

As always, St. Luke's responded generously to Secret Santa requests from some young people residing in group homes supported by Youth Consultation Services and Roberta delivered the 12 gifts to YCS's headquarters in Hackensack. Some of these gifts were donated by the ECW, others from members of the congregation as a whole. We had only committed to 12 gifts, but it's clear from the response that we could have fulfilled many more wishes. The good news is that you can support YCS not just at Christmas but throughout the year. YCS's "thank you" email to St. Luke's detailed some of the great and diverse work they did in 2017 in our community: "71 new Mothers and their healthy babies were welcomed into the world with the help of our Nurse Family Partnership. 29 Students graduated high school and 3 Youths received GEDs. 3 Teens entered college, 5 Doctoral Interns graduated from the YCS Institute for Infant & Preschool Mental health. 15 Children found comfort and safety in YCS specialized foster homes and 3 Teens were adopted by their foster parents. 375 Families received counseling at our Institute and H.M. Strauss Clinic. 62 Youths found part time employment with the help of career counselling. 4 new permanent Sawtelle Homes opened across the state for young adults with complex I/DD challenges."

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Soul Food: The Power of Prayer

By Maureen Bownes



Maureen's cactus plant "Spike," a sign of God's grace

As some of you may be aware, my sister-in-more-than-law as I call her was diagnosed a few months ago with stage 4 Primary Peritoneal Cancer. Elaine was my friend in high school. She met my brother, Jim, there and they were married in 1961.

I have been praying for her since her diagnosis, and she is now in remission. TBTG!

She still needs some surgery, so the praying will not stop, but I have every confidence that she will have a complete recovery.

Here is the reason that I am sharing this story with you: For ten years I have been caring for my flowerless cactus, Spike. Two days after I got the good news about Elaine, Spike produced several beautiful budding flowers. To me, my friends, that is a symbol of the power of prayer.

*You can't always get what you want
But if you try sometimes
You just might find
You get what you need!*

— Mick Jagger



It's a DIM SUM Saturday!



Siu Chan has suggested a St. Luke's luncheon outing on Sat., Feb. 3 to Dim Sum Dynasty, a Cantonese restaurant located at 75 Franklin Ave. in Ridgewood.

The menu appears both extensive and authentic. To check it out, [click here](#).

If you're interested in going, let Siu know — and there will be a sign-up sheet in the Parish Hall. Carpooling will probably be best. All are welcome!



LEARN ART WITH JO

Jo Stephenson's art classes start on January 9 at the Cresskill Senior Center located behind the Post Office. Every Tuesday from. 1:30-3:30. \$60 for total of 10 classes. Or \$10/class. If interested, call Jo at 201-767-1998.



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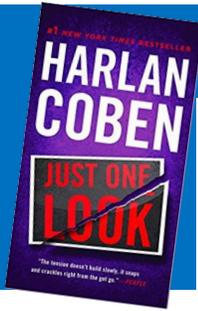
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Book Club Wine & Cheese Party

Jan. 31 @ Rectory
7:30 PM



An ordinary snapshot causes a mother's world to unravel in #1 *New York Times* bestselling author Harlan Coben's shocking thriller.

When Grace Lawson picks up a newly developed set of family photographs, there is a picture that doesn't belong—a photo from at least twenty years ago with a man in it who looks strikingly like her husband, Jack. And though Jack denies it's him, he disappears that night, taking the photo with him. Now, to save her family from a fierce, silent killer who will stop at nothing to get the photo, Grace must confront the dark corners of her own tragic past...

Suggested Reading for the Rest of 2018

Between the Lines Book Club meets on last Wednesdays at 7:30 P.M.

* Please note the change of date for our February and March meetings

February 22 - *If the Creek Don't Rise* - Leah Weiss
(appetizers-3 people)

March 29 - *My Grandmother Asked Me to Tell You She's Sorry* - Fredrik Backman (potluck supper)

April 25 - *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* - Rebecca Skloot
(dessert-4 people)

May 30 - *The House of the Spirits* - Isabel Allende (pizza)

June 27 - *The Other Einstein* - Marie Bedict (dinner out)

July 25 - *All the Missing Girls* - Megan Miranda (Chinese)

August 29 - *The Handmaid's Tale* - Margaret Atwood
(dessert-4 people)

September 26 - *Lilac Girls* - Martha Hall Kelly (wine/cheese)

October 24 - *Before We Were Yours* - Lisa Wingate
(potluck supper)

November - No Meeting

December 5 - Dinner

EPIPHANY PAGEANT and PARTY!

This year, the children of the parish (and relatives and friends) will present the annual **Sunday School Pageant on Sun., Jan. 7 during the service at 10:30 A.M.** If you have children — or know children — who might like to participate or if you might like to help with costumes, please see Tammy Lynch. Or call 201-638- 9384, Rehearsal 10 A.M. Sat. Jan. 6



Join us for the annual Parish Wine & Cheese Party at the Rectory! This year, we will hold it on **Sun., Jan. 7 at 4 P.M.** St. Luke's will provide the wine. If you have a favorite cheese, munchie or other beverage, please bring it to share.

St. Luke's Annual Parish Meeting

The Annual Parish Meeting will take place on **Sunday, January 28** with a potluck luncheon.

Committee chairs are asked to get their reports to Sue Gonci by **Jan. 15.**

JARS FOR CHANGE COLLECTION



You who have been stocking up change in your **Jars for Change for St. Luke's** with the jars personalized by Heidi Plinio can bring them to church on **Sunday, March 4** Proceeds go to St. Luke's Operating Expenses. Little bits of change when added up can make **BIG** changes for our parish!



Thanks to the Altar Guild and everyone who helped get our house ready for Christmas. And thanks to the Rev. Fletcher Harper for being with us to lead our worship services.

Save the Dates

Choir Rehearsal

Sunday Warm-ups at 9:30 A.M.



Bible Study

Next: Jan. 2, 16 @ 7:30 P.M.

In adult Bible Study we will be studying the Psalms, All are welcome.

Sunday School

Next: January 7, 14, 21, 28

Sunday School will be on Sunday mornings right after our 10:30 service at church. The class is for pre-school through sixth grade.

Vestry Meeting

Next: Jan. 9 @ 7:30 P.M.

Anyone is welcome to attend

Snack Pack Assembly

Note Change - Next: Jan. 21

Parish Fun Night

3rd Sundays 6 P.M. Next: Jan. 21

Book Club

Next Jan. 31 See Page 6

Tri-Valley Restaurant Parish Fundraiser

Have breakfast, lunch or dinner at **Tri-Valley Restaurant** on Monday and Wednesday and St. Luke's will receive 10% of your bill. Tri-Valley is located on the corner of Knickerbocker Rd. and DeLong Ave. in Dumont.

Be sure to tell the cashier that you are a member of St. Luke's so we get credit for your visit!

Monthly Food Ingathering for Center for Food Action Sunday, Jan. 14

Support our monthly food drives for Center for Food Action in Englewood.

The grocery cart is filled and blessed for the CFA food pantry on the second Sunday of every month.

Help our less fortunate neighbors. To learn more about CFA, click here:

<http://cfanj.org/who-we-are/>

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For all that has been.
For all that is.
For all that is yet to be.

We give you thanks, O Lord!

— Dag Hammarskjöld

Parish Prayer List

Please keep in your thoughts and prayers these members of our parish and extended family:



Edith Biondi, Claudia Smith, Rachel Lynch, Roxanne Gabriel, Maryellen Pais, Sue Pastore, Quinn Rosa, Marie Romano, Linda Stephenson, Patricia Stephenson, Doug Lynch, the Nobleman Family, Bill & Grace Repp, the family of Stephanie Cash, Angela Stabler, Deborah Holden-Holloway, Patti Kennelly, Stephanie Bailey, Rich Gonci Jr., Cathy O'Donnell, Michael Snyder, the family of Jean Tandyrak, Kenny Calderon, the family of Michael Kelley, Diane Kansas

To add names to our prayer list, please call: Sue Gonci., 201-220-3090 OR **Email the Church office at Office@StLukesHaworth.org** Our Prayer List will now be reviewed on a monthly basis to keep it current and manageable for those who pray regularly. Please contact the office if you wish to keep people on the list for prayers. You may also write names in the book on the Chapel Altar. Loved ones may also be remembered in prayer during the service of Healing, held on the 3rd Sunday right after our 10:30 Holy Eucharist.

O God, by the leading of a star you manifested your only Son to the Peoples of the earth: Lead us, who know you now by faith, to your presence, where we may see your glory face to face; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

January Birthdays & Anniversaries

- 3 John Rios
- 4 Jack Klie
- 5 Bob Plinio
- 8 Christine Emerizy
Heidi Plinio
- 9 Claudia Smith
- 10 Christopher Plunkett
- 12 Tom Caloz, Sr.
- 18 Jeffrey & Susan
Coleman
- 20 Sue & Rich Gonci

If you don't see your special day in our monthly listings, please e-mail the editors and we'll gladly add it!



O God of heavenly powers, by the might of your command you drive away from our bodies all sickness and all infirmity: Be present in your goodness with your servants, that their weakness may be banished and their strength restored; and that, their health being renewed, they may bless your holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



St. Luke's symbol is the ox. This may explain that he is his also patron of butchers. In art, Luke is represented by a winged ox. The ox represents the sacrificial aspect of Jesus' ministry and the wings remind us that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is to travel throughout the world.

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◀ December		January 2018					February ▶
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
	1 New Year's Day 10 AM – AA Women's Mtg	2 5-7:30AM Jesus Dream Church 7:30 PM Bible Study	3 5-7:30AM Jesus Dream Church 5-7 PM Jesus Dream Church	4 5-7:30AM Jesus Dream Church 10 AM – AA Women's Mtg	5 5-7:30AM Jesus Dream Church	6 5-7:30AM Jesus Dream Church 7-9 PM AA Open Meeting	
7 Epiphany 1 9:30 Choir Warm-up 10:30 Holy Eucharist & Sunday School/Coffee Hour/Fellowship 1-5 JDChurch	8 10 AM – AA Women's Mtg	9 5-7:30AM Jesus Dream Church 7:30 PM Vestry	10 5-7:30AM Jesus Dream Church 5-7 PM Jesus Dream Church	11 5-7:30AM Jesus Dream Church 10 AM – AA Women's Mtg	12 5-7:30AM Jesus Dream Church	13 5-7:30AM Jesus Dream Church 7-9 PM AA Open Meeting	
14 Epiphany 2 9:30 Choir Warm-up 10:30 Holy Eucharist & Sunday School/Coffee Hour/Fellowship CFA Ingathering 1-5 JDChurch	15 Martin Luther King 10 AM – AA Women's Mtg	16 5-7:30AM Jesus Dream Church 7:30 PM Bible Study	17 5-7:30AM Jesus Dream Church 5-7 PM Jesus Dream Church	18 5-7:30AM Jesus Dream Church 10 AM – AA Women's Mtg	19 5-7:30AM Jesus Dream Church	20 5-7:30AM Jesus Dream Church 7-9 PM AA Open Meeting	
21 Epiphany 3 9:30 Choir Warm-up 10:30 Holy Eucharist/ Healing/ Sunday School/ Coffee Hour Fellowship/ Noon - Snack Pack Assembly 1-5 JDChurch	22 10 AM – AA Women's Mtg	23 5-7:30AM Jesus Dream Church	24 5-7:30AM Jesus Dream Church 5-7 PM Jesus Dream Church	25 5-7:30AM Jesus Dream Church 10 AM – AA Women's Mtg	26 5-7:30AM Jesus Dream Church	27 5-7:30AM Jesus Dream Church 7-9 PM AA Open Meeting	
28 Epiphany 4 9:30 Choir Warm-up 10:30 Holy Eucharist & Sunday School/Coffee Hour/Fellowship Noon – Annual Parish Meeting & Potluck Luncheon 1-5 JDChurch	29 10 AM – AA Women's Mtg	30 5-7:30AM Jesus Dream Church	31 5-7:30AM Jesus Dream Church 5-7 PM Jesus Dream Church				

St. Luke's Episcopal Church

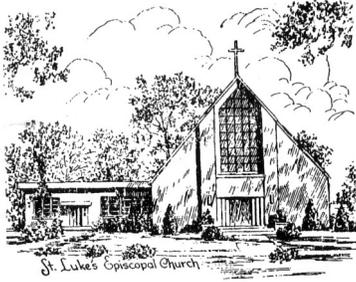
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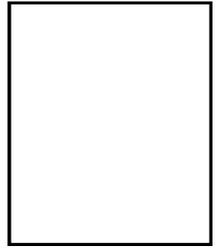


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call or message
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**Check It
Out!**

Why Is This Cactus
A Sign of God's
Grace?

See inside,
P. 5