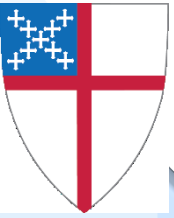


ST. LUKE'S

NEWSLETTER



11/2019

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St. Luke's Church Newsletter

Fall 2019

Summer and Fall Celebrations

Since our last newsletter there has been a lot going on here at St. Luke's. Over the course of the three months of Summer and the first two months of Autumn, our *AVERAGE* Sunday attendance has been 63 people, even with many of you on vacations, and having two holiday weekends. It is so gratifying that our community is growing and the conversation, laughter and singing have all been glorious. We touched off the last day of Summer with a large congregation of ninety people in attendance. That day we officially welcomed all of those who have joined is within the past year. Above you will see the beautiful picture that **Doug Abdelnour** took that day, a day filled with sunshine and celebration. Thank you all for the meaningful and spirit-filled first year of my ministry here.

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On September 22 we officially welcomed all those who have joined is within the past year.

Very soon after that welcoming, we celebrated **St. Francis Day** on October 6 with another large crowd of people who brought their animals for blessings during the service. The pews were filled with ninety-three people—that is unless the ushers could not tell the difference between our pets and parishioners! It was a day of celebration, both in the church, and outside on our lawn afterward, where we hosted several people from the **St. Matthew's Bedell Committee** for burgers and hot dogs; as well as several non-parishioner guests from Somers and around the area. Thanks to all who contributed food and person-power for this event, at which we enjoyed some cooler Autumn weather, and got to enjoy each other's company and a variety of savory picnic foods.





In our last newsletter, our first page reported on the Baptism of little Zachary Loveless, son of one of our new couples, Amanda and Ryan Loveless. In this newsletter, I am happy to report to you about another new couple, Corinne and Curtis Hoffman, whose son, Curtis, Jr. was baptized here on October 13. We had a wonderful contingent of parishioners on hand for that occasion, and there was a special coffee hour afterwards in which we welcomed the Hoffman family and their relatives and friends.

On Saturday, October 19, your Vestry and I engaged in what the Diocese calls **“Leadership Team Retreat and Mutual Ministry Valuation.”** This day-long workshop was a time where we shared Spiritual Reflection; developed guidelines for working together; clarified expectations of each other; reviewed goals accomplished and set goals for the future. This time together enabled us to determine what is working well and what needs our attention; if our goals have been implemented; if our expectations for ourselves and the parish are realistic and possible. Retreat facilitator **Rev. Joanne Izzo** did a wonderful job of giving us clarity and purpose.

New People in Worship Ministry

You all may have noticed that there are new people serving at the altar on many Sundays. **Karen Kellogg, Sue Willis, and Mary Churchill** have been taking turns with our other regulars, **Mike Basile** and **Duanne Simon**, Leading the Prayers of the People and assisting at the Lord’s Table. While **Pat Schilpp** and **Dorothea Mangieri** are not in the regular rotation on a weekly basis, they will continue to “step up to the plate” for special services, funeral services, and baptisms.

Something you may notice has been happening with some regularity is that we had a “lay preacher” in the pulpit on five different Sundays during September, October, and November. **Steven Siciliano** preached on September 8 and again on St Francis Sunday, October 6; **Joe Ciavardini** on September 29; **Sue Willis** on October 27, and **Mike Basile** on November 3. The original motivation for doing this was that I am asked by the Diocese to “take off” five Sundays a year, and I really did not want to be away from all of you for that many Sundays, so I have taken some “off” days during other weeks and just considered those five Sundays as “off” so that I could be here to celebrate the Eucharist. I am glad that I chose not to go away, because I heard some awesome preaching and enjoyed the Saturdays before those Sundays - just sitting on my deck and not having to think about a sermon! Thanks to Steven, Sue, Joe, and Mike for wonderful contributions of their time, talent, and spirit - and for the days off.



Steven Siciliano



Joe Ciavardini



Sue Willis



Mike Basile

Special non-Sunday Services

On November 1 we celebrated the Eucharist and had a very quiet and pensive service of readings and prayers in celebration of **All Saints' Day**. This day is our annual opportunity to expand our community's awareness of the communion of saints, and to give increased expression to the many and diverse ways in which Christ, through the Holy Spirit, has been present in the lives of women and men across the ages. Faced with circumstances most often very different from our own, these courageous souls bore witness to the death-defying love of Christ, in service, holiness of life, and in challenge to existing practices and perspectives within both the Church and society. From the earliest days of the Church we have rejoiced to recognize and commemorate those faithful departed who were extraordinary or heroic servants of God and God's people.

Don't forget that on **Thanksgiving Day** we will also celebrate a holiday Eucharist of Thanksgiving at 10:00am. Although many of you will be preparing your special Thanksgiving day feasts, it is a wonderful time to break away from your routine and join those who like to engage in the special offering of Thanks to God for the provisions of our lives, and to demonstrate our gratitude for all that we have.

Pledge Sunday and other Matters of Finance

By the time you receive this newsletter, you should have received your **Stewardship Letter** from the Vestry, as well as pledge cards that were sent out at the end of October. If you did not receive a pledge card and would like to pledge, please pick up a card from the table at the back of the church, or call **Janet Repman** at the church office and she will send you one.

And while we're on the subject of Treasure, I wanted to let all of you know, if you have not already heard, that we have a new bookkeeper, **Debra Ramnarace**. Debra joined us earlier this Summer, and has taken on the role smoothly. She is a delight and extremely knowledgeable about how our financial affairs are handled. We are happy to have her on our team.

Lastly, I wanted to let you know that we will soon be making a transition to a new Treasurer. **Denis Braithwaite** has handled the job of Treasurer impeccably for the past several years. Denis and Nicole will be moving away from the area in the near future, and so Denis will be giving up the role. I, the Vestry and Wardens, owe a deep debt of gratitude to Denis. He has served during a time when money has been extremely tight, and has helped us to recover through some times when the books have not been in as good an order as we would have liked. Denis worked tirelessly and graciously, kept the Vestry on a good financial footing, and probably lost many hours of sleep getting things back in order. Working alongside Denis the whole time has been **Marion Comins**, who has now been bestowed, by the Vestry, with the title, *Senior Finance Committee Chair* - which means she is the one who oversees the daily and weekly receipt and expenditure of funds. Marion has been a vigilant and conscientious overseer, and we could not run the financial end of the office without her talents. While it has not been ascertained with certainty who the new Treasurer will be, that announcement is getting close, and we expect to be able to appoint the new person soon!

Upcoming Events



We are excited to announce the **Second Annual Holiday Bazaar** which will be held on **Saturday, November 23, from 10:00am to 4:00pm**. Last year's event was a fun and lively one, at which we raised quite a bit of money and had a large number of visitors. At this year's event there will be hundreds of decorations and gifts, vintage hand-blown German ornaments, hand-knitted baby blankets and sweaters, specially-created gift baskets to win at raffle, home-made baked goods, plus coffee, tea, lunch, and much more. There are still opportunities to help, either by contributing items or baked goods to the sale, or helping to sell items at a table on the 23rd.

Please email **Janet Howard** at jgguthrie@optonline.net if you'd like to participate.



For all of you who attended our **Messiah** concert last year, you know what a wonderful time was had by all. **The Westchester Oratorio Society**, with soloists and choir, puts on a grand performance, with the best part being that we get to sing along! Last year we had standing room only. This year's event is on **Sunday, December 8**, beginning at **3:00pm**. We share the proceeds with the Society, and best of all, this place rocks with fantastic sounds from the voices of all in attendance. Afterwards we have cookies, cakes, munchies, coffee and tea, and a community spirit that really kicks off the Christmas season. Tickets may be purchased for \$25 at the door, or ordered on-line at www.westchesteroratorio.org. The

event was a sellout last year, so get your tickets early. You will not be disappointed!

Don't forget that we always put up our Christmas tree and decorate for the event (which is actually blasphemy because we are not liturgically "ready" for decorating before Christmas Eve).

So stay around after church on the 8th, if you can, to help us look really festive for the **Messiah**.



For the last three years, St Luke's parishioners have contributed Christmas gifts to both teenagers and older adults who are cared for by **Cardinal McCloskey Community Services**. This year, however, there is a special need for helping teens who seek shelter in the two Drop-In Centers in the Bronx. These centers are not shelters, but are places that offer young, homeless people a place to sleep, take a hot shower, and have a warm meal.

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If you would like to contribute to this year's **Cardinal McCloskey** gift gathering, suggested items include:

Towels, blankets and bedspreads

Personal Care Packages (toiletries) - e.g., toothbrush and toothpaste, shampoo, body wash deodorant, moisturizer/hand cream, hand sanitizer, socks, gloves

Please do NOT wrap items: place in bag or box.

Kindly bring your donation to St. Luke's by Sunday, December 8th at the latest;
Cardinal McCloskey staff will collect the following day.

For further information, contact **Ann Hansen** 914/617-9639 ann.hansen860@gmail.com

St. Luke's Christmas Services 2019



Christmas Eve 4.30 and 10.30pm

Christmas Day 10.00am

Annual Meeting 2020

Our **Annual Meeting** will be held on **Sunday, January 19, 2020**. The meeting takes place after the Sunday Eucharist, and we will either adjourn to the Undercroft or stay in the Sanctuary. It really sounds strange to hear the year "2020," but it is fast approaching and we have to accept that we are almost there!

It is our custom and responsibility to report to the entire parish annually about important events in the parish, to give information about the financial and business aspects of the parish, to vote on the Vestry positions, and conduct other necessary business. This year we will be electing four new Vestry members (normally we only elect three, but there was a temporary change to the Vestry Constitution during 2018 so there is an additional spot that we need to fill.)

Longer-term Future Events

- ***Don't Walk By, New York City***

All of you have heard me speak about two outreach activities that are planned for the future. In February, I will be making a trip to the city to participate in an outreach to the homeless in Manhattan. The event is called “**Don't Walk By,**” and it involves people going into the streets of Manhattan every Saturday in February to reach out to the homeless and invite them to a local church or shelter for a hot meal, medical care, and a place to sleep. I have participated in this mission for the past eight years and have found the work very rewarding. I have signed up to be what is called a “hospitality volunteer” on February 22. **Steven Siciliano** has also signed up.

If you would like to join Steven and me, go to dontwalkby.org. When you click on it, a page will open where you can ***click on the green tab labeled “register.”*** There are several different types of services for which you can volunteer, and the one we will do is called “***hospitality volunteer,***” the third one down the page. Hospitality volunteers are those who will serve soup and bread to the guests who come to receive a meal. You will click on the number “***1***” in the box and it will then ask for some information about you—in the box for “which church” put “***other.***”

If you do volunteer, please let me know. We can arrange for those of you who wish to carpool with either me, Steven, or another volunteer from the church.

- ***McDowell County, West Virginia Mission Trip***

This mission is a week-long trip to McDowell County, the poorest county in the country in terms of income, unemployment, and also the place where many children are living in poverty and with inadequate shelter. I have been there many times, and I can tell you that our efforts are desperately needed. We will be working with the diocese to find the family with whom we will meet to restore their home to make it more livable. The Bishop of West Virginia has revamped the program in recent years, and I have been a part of it during the revamping.

I already have lined up several contractors from our area, and **Eric Hough**, one of our parishioners, will be going along as well. Eric is very experienced in the building trades, and will be helping organize the teams of workers that come along. Anyone 17 years of age or older is invited; our goal is to get about 15-17 workers. We will drive down in cars if I can get enough people to volunteer to drive. The cost of the trip will be around \$400 per person, which will cover meals and housing at the center where we will stay. In past years when I have taken groups it has been a fun and fulfilling time for everyone. The trip is scheduled for the week of July 19-26, 2020. If you would like to join us, email me and I will let you know more.

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Mike +



The St. Luke's Newsletter is one of the publications produced by the Communications Committee.

Our charge is to implement St. Luke's Mission by sharing news of our worship and ministries to the parish and to the larger community.

Current members: **Doug Abdelnour**, Graphics; **Kathi Casella**, Contributor; **Angela DeSiena**, Social Media; **Ann Hanson**, Contributor; **Lynda Magrath**, Editor; **Janet Repman**, Parish Office Liaison; **Duanne Simon**, Vestry Liaison; **Fr. Mike Watson**, *ex officio*.

We thank everyone who submitted their photos for this issue, and invite parishioners to share suggestions and material for future Newsletters.

A special thank you to Fr. Mike for contributing every piece in this issue!

Saint Luke's Episcopal Church

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The Rev'd **Michael Watson**, Priest-in-Charge

Joyce Ottinger, Director of Music

Lester Ottinger, Organist

Janet Repman, Parish Administrator

Debra Ramnarace, Bookkeeper

Santos Cardona, Sexton



Saint Luke's Vestry

Duanne Simon, Senior Warden

Christian Sundahl, Junior Warden

Denis Brathwaite, Treasurer

Class of 2020:

Mike Basile
Steve Siciliano
Joe Ciavardini

Class of 2021:

John Currie
Duanne Simon
Sue Willis

Class of 2022:

Michelle Kessell
Regina Davenport