

A WORD FROM OUR PRIEST

This year, we at St. Luke's, like millions of other Christians, will celebrate Ash Wednesday on the twenty-sixth of February. Ash Wednesday is a day mainline Christians set aside as a special day. It is a day to remember our humanness and mortality. It is a day we begin the season of Lent, a time for reflection, penitence, and preparation for Easter.



Nothing in Scripture requires Christians to celebrate Ash Wednesday or Lent. But as I searched for different ways to celebrate Ash Wednesday, I discovered that there is a wide array of Ash Wednesday traditions and practices. But the central meaning of these has to do with our humanness, mortality, weakness, and fallenness. When church leaders place ashes on people's foreheads, they usually say something like, "From dust you came, and to dust you will return." This is a quotation from Genesis 3:19, a verse where God delivered to Adam the bad news of what his sin had brought about. Whereas, Adam once enjoyed the reality of deathless life in God's perfect creation, now his body would die. In time, he would return to the dust from which he was made.

This was bad news for Adam and it is bad news for us. Like Adam, we have come from dust, and to dust we will return. Throughout our lives, our aging bodies remind us of our mortality, when they get sick, or when they work imperfectly, or when they stop working altogether. Often, our bodies are the instruments of sin, rather than of honoring God through our work and worship.

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THE STAFF

Priest-in-Charge —	Rev. Gene Sheppard
Office Administrator—	Beth Harris
Sexton—	John Brown
Co-Treasurer—	Hazel Boettcher
Co Treasurer—	Sandia Sommer

THE VESTRY

- Sr. Warden— James Wright (2021)
- Jr. Warden— Cliff Essig (2021)
- Clerk for the Vestry— Tracy Reifer
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- Becky Young (2021)
- Marybeth Peebles (2021)
- Mark McKarnin (2022)
- Grant Shepherd (2022)
- Mike Reifer (2023)
- Hazel Boettcher (2023)

A WORD FROM OUR PRIEST (*continued from page 1*)

Of course many good things come from our bodies, including new human life, fulfilling work, loving each other and acts of charity. The inherent goodness of our bodies has not been obliterated by sin, though it has been tarnished.

So Ash Wednesday begins with bad news, but it invites us into a time of extended meditation and repentance as we consider during Lent just how much we need to be saved from our sins. Ash Wednesday most importantly signifies hope. The ashes that are imposed on our foreheads form the shape of a cross. Sometimes these crosses are obvious to us but more often than not we tend to ignore the meaning of Ash Wednesday every other day of the year. But the very stuff that symbolizes our mortality and sin also shows us to that which will set us free. It reminds us that God has entered into our human condition in order to break the power of sin and welcome us into the fullness of his life.

Ash Wednesday is not Good Friday. It is not a day to focus on the cross so much as a time to begin to realize just how much we need the cross.

This will be my thirty first year celebrating Ash Wednesday. Like millions of Christians throughout the world, on Ash Wednesday I am reminded of my mortality. I have come from dust, and to dust I shall return. Thanks be to God, this is not the end of the story, but just the beginning, because God himself entered into my dustiness in Jesus Christ.

Fr. Gene+

*ST. LUKE'S BY
THE NUMBERS —
JANUARY*

Sunday Worship Attendance:

Jan 5 — 42
Jan 12 — 29
Jan 19 — 46
Jan 26 — 35

Crisis Intervention

Utilities: Electric — 1
Water — 1
Door-to-Door Meal Deliveries — 38

Average Jan 2020 — 38
Average Jan 2019 — 27

Transitions. It has been observed by someone wiser than I that life is a series of transitions. It seems we are constantly moving from one event to another: true in our own lives and in the lives of our groups. We find ourselves in transitions in our parish, the least of which is the change in the senior warden. This new fellow has violated a major rule in show business. He is following a better act.



We also wish to welcome a new Parish Administrator, Beth Harris. Her work will strengthen our service to God as she tackles the myriad assignments that comprise the duties of our Parish Administrator.

In our parish life, we are transitioning from Christmas and the excitement it brings into the season of Lent with the accompanying introspection and analysis it demands. May we all experience a fruitful and beneficial Lent. Just after we have a fun Shrove Tuesday/Mardi Gras celebration together, of course!

In keeping with the theme of transitions, in less than a year our parish will celebrate a major milestone. On New Year's Day, 2021, St. Luke's will celebrate our 195th Anniversary of working as a parish to discern God's will and fulfill our part in it. Truly, a remarkable occurrence, and one to be celebrated in a glorious way! I wish to hear from all of you as to how you think we should commemorate what should be a yearlong series of events.

In closing, I ask for your continued prayers. Prayers for our parish and for those placed in leadership. Prayers for our Priest, the Vestry and Wardens, and especially for me, your new senior warden. May God guide this parish in the direction we are to follow and may we have the wisdom and insight to discern that guidance and the true path for us.

James

2020 ANNUAL MEETING



The 194th meeting of St. Luke's Episcopal Church was held on January 19 in the Parish Hall. James Wright was elected as the Sr. Warden for 2020, and the parish said goodbye to Carol Cisler, our Sr. Warden for the past 3 years. Carol was presented with a gift card as well as a framed piece of sheet music of her favorite hymn, All Things Bright and Beautiful. St. Luke's is grateful for Carol's dedication to the parish.

St. Luke's Annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper will be on Tuesday, February 25 from 5:00 PM—7:00 PM in the Parish Hall. Pancakes, sausage and crepes will be served!



Ash Wednesday services will be held at Noon and 6:00 PM at St. Luke's.

*Happy
Birthday*

- 2 Nina Byer
- 9 Carol Cisler
- 14 Becky Young
- 25 Dee Crim
- 26 Dennis Boettcher
- 28 Gant Bleakley

MARCH 2020

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 The First Sunday in Lent HE 1 - 8:00 AM HE 2 - 10:30 AM FOOD BASKET COLLECTION	2 WOMEN'S WAY AA 6:30 - 8:30 PM (LIBRARY)	3 COMMUNITY DINNER 5:00 PM	4	5	6 Vestry Retreat AA - 8:30 PM	7 Parish Hall reserved for Private Event Barn - 3pm Vestry Retreat
8 The Second Sunday in Lent HE 1 - 8:00 AM HE 2 - 10:30 AM OUTREACH SUNDAY, DOOR TO DOOR - 1PM	9 WOMEN'S WAY AA 6:30 - 8:30 PM (LIBRARY)	10	11 DAISY TROOP 10129 4:00-5:30	12	13 AA - 8:30 PM	14
15 The Third Sunday in Lent HE 1 - 8:00 AM HE 2 - 10:30 AM Vestry Meeting - 11:45AM	16 WOMEN'S WAY AA 6:30 - 8:30 PM (LIBRARY)	17	18 LEGAL CLINIC 6:00 - 8:00 pm	19	20 AA - 8:30 PM	21
22 The Fourth Sunday in Lent HE 1 - 8:00 AM HE 2 - 10:30 AM	23 WOMEN'S WAY AA 6:30 - 8:30 PM (LIBRARY)	24	25 DAISY TROOP 10129 4:00-5:30	26	27 AA - 8:30 PM	28
29 The Fifth Sunday in Lent HE 1 - 8:00 AM HE 2 - 10:30 AM	30 GIRL SCOUTS - 6 PM (PARISH HALL) WOMEN'S WAY AA 6:30 - 8:30 PM (LIBRARY)	31				