

# ACTS of ST. LUKE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

FEBRUARY 2022



## **Wow**

Lent starts on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, but I'm going ahead and writing about it in the February newsletter because #1 it allows you some time to go ahead and start thinking about your Lenten observances and disciplines, and #2 I feel much better able to speak about what March holds than what February holds. February is a little up in the air right now.

If you've heard me talk about prayer, you probably have heard me talk about two methods: ACTS and the Anne Lamott way. ACTS is an acronym which stands for Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, and Supplication. And Anne Lamott offers us the Help, Thanks, Wow method. I'd like to invite you to spend the season of Lent focused on Adoration, on the Wow. Join me in spending the 40 days of Lent praising God. We are Jesus followers and seekers in a very outcome-oriented society, and that can affect the focus of our spiritual practices and disciplines. We can get focused on how God is transforming our lives, our ability to discern and pursue God's will, how comforted and inspired we feel by the Holy Spirit, and on doing God's good work in the world. Spending time on the simple spiritual practice of standing in awe of God often falls to the wayside and seems like a bit of a luxury at times. I wonder what would happen if we made praising God more of a priority in our lives.

I have noticed when I'm looking for a greeting card for someone—for a birthday or similar occasion—lots of times the text of the cards focuses on what the person does, how the person makes the world, my world, a better place. And for me, those cards fall short because I want the person receiving the card to realize that I'm not just blessed by the things they do for me or for others—I am blessed by the person that they are. That who they are is valued and noticed and appreciated far more than just being helpful. Similarly, I think we've all gotten too comfortable telling people in our lives "Thank you," but forgotten at times to say, "I love you," "I appreciate the way you see the world," or "You are beautiful." How often do we celebrate someone's talent and gifts apart from when we benefit from them?

I wish you could see via the text how long it is taking me to write this newsletter... the pauses in typing speak to how hard it is to articulate what adoration is and how it is different from thanksgiving. All the more reason to take it on as a Lenten focus. 40 days spent on honoring God for

*(Wow, continued on page 4)*

**PARISH**

**February Birthdays**

- Edward Len 1
- Samantha Lowe 1
- Fred Heiken 7
- Sandra Swab 7
- Brian Katulis 8
- Justine Miller 9
- Sarah Hutchins 17
- Phil Taylor 20
- Amy Elsbree 21
- Sebastian Leal 26
- Stuart Wilkinson 27

2022 FEBRUARY						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28					



**February Special Dates**

- 1 February MCPS schools closed
- 4 February Men's Shelter
- 11 February 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade Youth Group
- 21 February Presidents' Day
- Office closed
- MCPS schools closed

Contribution Statements have now been emailed.

If you have any questions about your statement, please email Veronica at [contributions@stlukesbethesda.org](mailto:contributions@stlukesbethesda.org).

**March Birthdays**

- Ann Blandamer 4
- Margie Orrick 4
- William Bryan 5
- Lucy D'Agostino 6
- Mandisa Griffin 6
- Alex Votaw 10
- Clay Miller 11
- Kevin Curtin 12
- Logan Zimmerman 23
- Julia Schneider 24
- Renata Gonzalez 24
- Alby Williams 27
- Bridget Legates 27
- Stephane Le Boudier 27

2022 MARCH						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		



**March Special Dates**

- 1 March Shrove Tuesday
- 2 March Ash Wednesday
- 4 March Men's Shelter Dinner
- 11 March 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade Youth Group
- 13 March Daylight Savings begins
- 22 March Book Lovers (Zoom)

The ACTS is now distributed electronically using the email address that we have for you on file in the office. If you did not receive it, please update your email address. [admin@stlukesbethesda.org](mailto:admin@stlukesbethesda.org).

If you do not see your birthday listed during the year, please contact the office.

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## SENIOR WARDEN

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### ***Warden's Word***



***Mike Bernier***

For a major part of 2022, following up on work that began in 2021, the vestry will continue to work with parishioners on seven areas of focus: annual giving; children & youth; evangelism; hybrid worship; leadership/ministry recruitment; planned giving; and security. This is a lot for the vestry to do, and we can't do it alone. We'll be reaching out parish-wide for members to serve on one of these subgroups. Please contact Jessica or any member of the vestry if there is an area of most interest to you, and we'll connect you to the vestry members leading the group.

For this article, I want to focus on a word that some object to and/or have a history when the word was used in ways that may have been or felt exclusionary, or aggressive in outreach: evangelism. I like the word to best describe our role as Christians. It is not a word that resonates with all of us, and as Episcopalians, we embrace differences.

There are many ways we can evangelize within the communities where we live. Some are as simple as telling a friend or co-worker what you like about your church. We have all heard talks, at the proverbial water cooler on Monday mornings or now on Zoom, about what people did over the weekend. I hear about kids' soccer games, sporting events, and movies seen. I seldom hear, "I went to church, and had a nice service." I sometimes think Episcopalians feel someone may feel excluded if we tell a church story. I feel excluded when everyone talks about football, but I would never think to be offended by the discussion. You would be surprised how many people will ask about your church. But here's the very simple but hard part: invite them to come the next time you'll be at church in person or via Zoom. Follow up with a gentle reminder on Friday that they are welcome Sunday. If someone new moves into your neighborhood, condo, or apartment building, welcome them and ask them if they are looking for a church in their new community. God will work through you and connect you with someone in need of a faith community, but you must put some effort into it!

Other items that I'd like the Evangelism Team at St. Luke's to consider include inviting the neighborhood to an open house outdoors where we talk about our church, hosting tables at community events such as Capital Pride, and mailing a welcome letter to new residents in a defined area close to the church. We may want to look at our pew card for newcomers and consider following up on the same day with a delivery of freshly baked bread and a flyer about the church. I used to deliver bread to newcomers at a previous church, and you could see the delight on people's faces. And we often saw the same people the following week. Since many of our neighbors may not have attended church as youth, a basic course in Christianity, well-marketed, may meet a need in lower Montgomery County. In addition, the Diocese has resources we can explore. And many long-term parishioners will know what we've done in the past.

We have good news to share. And we are called to share it. Unlike for the apostles, sea-faring skills are not required.

*Mike Bernier, Senior Warden*

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## PARISH

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(*Wow*, continued from page 1)

who God is, in addition to thanking God for all that God has done. Oftentimes during Lent, we set about making ourselves better people by repenting of sins that are holding us back from who God made us to be. This Lent, let's make it about God and not about us. Let's make the season of Lent a time of reaffirming God's rightful place in the center of our lives, worthy of our praise via passionate words, heartfelt song, or awestruck silence.

**Blessed be the one, holy, and living God.**

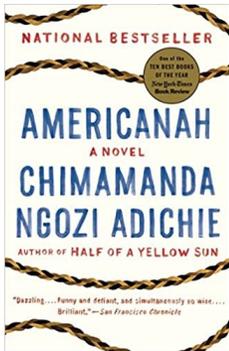
**Glory to God for ever and ever.**

Jessica



### 2022 Booklovers Schedule

Our next meeting will be on **Tuesday, March 22, 7:30 pm via Zoom**. We'll be reading ***Americanah*** by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.



**NATIONAL BESTSELLER.** From the award-winning author of *We Should All Be Feminists* and *Half of a Yellow Sun*—the story of two Nigerians making their way in the U.S. and the UK, raising universal questions of race, belonging, the overseas experience for the African diaspora, and the search for identity and a home.

Ifemelu and Obinze are young and in love when they depart military-ruled Nigeria for the West. Beautiful, self-assured Ifemelu heads for America, where despite her academic success, she is forced to grapple with what it means to be black for the first time.

Quiet, thoughtful Obinze had hoped to join her, but with post-9/11 America closed to him, he instead plunges into a dangerous, undocumented life in London. Fifteen years later, they reunite in a newly democratic Nigeria, and reignite their passion—for each other and for their homeland.

*from Bookshop.org*

#### Other meetings:

Friday, May 27, 1:00 pm IN PERSON, ***A Spool of Blue Thread***, novel by Anne Tyler.

Tuesday, July 5, 7:30 pm Zoom, ***Carville's Cure: Leprosy, Stigma, and the Fight for Justice*** by Pam Fessler.

Friday, Sept 16, 1:00 pm IN PERSON, ***How the Word is Passed: A Reckoning with the History of Slavery Across America*** by Clint Smith.

Tuesday, November 1, 7:30 pm Zoom, ***The Book of Longings: A Novel*** by Sue Monk Kidd.

Please join us for any or all of these meetings. If you'd like more information or to get on the email mailing list, please reach out to Nancy Reding.

*Nancy Reding*

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## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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### ***Samaritan Ministry Update***



Thanks to St. Luke's parish for contributing almost \$2,000 to the Samaritan Ministry participants over the holidays. Your generosity is, as usual, amazing.

Samaritan Ministry recently sent out a call for volunteers. Understand that volunteers will not be in contact with participants, and Samaritan Ministry is following strict CDC Covid guidelines.

**Samaritan Ministry is seeking temporary, volunteer Front Office Coordinators (FOCs)** as they temporarily expand participant hours at the NW DC, SE DC-Anacostia, and NOVA-Arlington locations. They have returned to outdoor "porch service" given the impact of the omicron variant. "Porch service" is where caseworkers convey basic in-kind items and have brief conversations with participants on our outdoor porches. These encounters help participants facilitate further engagement by phone or email, and generally help participants stay connected. This is difficult but currently critical—which is why they still need a few more of YOU to make this happen!

As an FOC, YOU would remain indoors and have virtually no contact with participants—just with Caseworkers and other SMGW staff who are all fully vaccinated and observing pandemic protocols. They have also installed special, high efficiency air cleaners, as recommended by the CDC. If you are fully vaccinated—and otherwise feel comfortable—WE NEED YOU!

To explore volunteering, either as a "veteran" or a "newbie," please contact Ms. Sy Jones, our Volunteer Manager, [sjones@samaritanministry.org](mailto:sjones@samaritanministry.org) or 202-722-2280, x314. Please get in touch with Sy, whether or not you have previously volunteered.

Where and when a few more FOCs are needed:

SE DC-Anacostia: Tuesdays, 10 am-1 pm OR 1-4 pm  
NW DC-Hamilton Street: Wednesdays, 10 am-1 pm  
Fridays, 10 am-1 pm OR 1-4 pm

Your temporary help now is invaluable!

*DeAtley Barish*

### ***Holy Cow 2021 – Another Major Success!***

Thank you, St. Luke's, for being so generous once more during our annual Advent fundraising effort for Episcopal Relief and Development (ERD) – the disaster relief and sustainable development organization of The Episcopal Church. The fourteenth year might yet be the most successful on record, totaling more than **\$31,000!** And our cumulative total now exceeds **\$234,000!** All the undesignated donations went to ERD's Haiti Fund, while Gifts for Life purchased clean water, disaster relief kits, pigs, cows, goats, fruit trees, mosquito nets, and several literacy group memberships. All the coins added up to **\$235!**



Episcopal  
Relief & Development  
*Working Together for Lasting Change*



To paraphrase the words of Matthew 25, *whatever you did for one of the least of these, you did for me*. Thank you for sharing your treasure and living out your faith in such meaningful ways.

*Marta Montoro*

**FINANCE**

**FINANCE REPORT DECEMBER 2021**

	<b>2021 Budget</b>	<b>'21 Actual Thru Dec</b>	<b>% of '21 Budget *</b>
<b><u>RECEIPTS</u></b>			
Offering Plate	\$ 20,000	\$ 11,902	60%
Pledge Payments	470,000	461,618	98%
Donations for Facilities	30,000	25,354	85%
Altar Flower Donations	1,000	720	72%
Miscellaneous		15,849	
<b>Operating Receipts</b>	<b>521,000</b>	<b>515,444</b>	<b>99%</b>
<b><u>EXPENSES</u></b>			
Compensations	\$ 327,093	\$ 314,532	96%
Church Activities	14,750	11,980	81%
Parish Operations	113,500	95,182	84%
Community Engagement (Outreach)	22,000	22,000	100%
Diocesan Giving	52,000	52,020	100%
<b>Operating Expenses</b>	<b>529,344</b>	<b>495,714</b>	<b>94%</b>
<b>Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>(8,344)</b>	<b>19,730</b>	
<b>Additional Funding – reserves</b>	<b>8,344</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>Net Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 0</b>	<b>\$ 19,730</b>	

**ENDOWMENT FUND BALANCE**

\$118,191

\* YTD December = 100% of the year

Budget Analysis: Due to COVID restrictions and the closure of the building, donations for Plate, Pledge, Altar Flowers and Use by Outside Organizations were all under budget but were slightly offset by the receipt of two PEW Matching Grants. Expenses for Staff Compensation, Church Activities, and Parish Operations were all under budget. Community Engagement and Diocesan Asking was equal to budget, resulting in Net Revenue of \$19,730 for December 2021.

Thank you! Your continued support is very impressive during these challenging times.

All financial obligations for the year to date have been met and bills paid.

*If you need to be reimbursed for a purchase or need the Treasurer to pay an invoice, please send an email to the office at [admin@stlukesbethesda.org](mailto:admin@stlukesbethesda.org). All requests for extra money or donations by committees, individuals or church members, should have prior approval of the Vestry before solicitation.*

*Susan Casson, Acting Treasurer*

## CALENDAR

### February 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>30</b> <b>9:00 AM</b> <b>Worship service</b> <b>(Zoom only)</b> <b>5:00 PM</b> <i>Cristo La Roca</i> <b>8:30 PM</b> <i>Bethesda Youth AA</i>	<b>31</b> <b>8:00 PM</b> <i>Men's AA Meeting</i>	<b>1</b> <b>2:00 PM</b> Staff Meeting	<b>2</b> <b>12:00 PM</b> <b>Noonday Prayer</b> <b>(Zoom)</b>	<b>3</b> <b>4:00 PM—</b> <b>4:30 PM</b> Donations Drop Off	<b>4</b> Men's Shelter Dinner	<b>5</b> <b>5:00 PM</b> <b>Talk &amp; Pray service</b> <b>(Zoom)</b> <b>6:30 PM</b> <i>Cristo La Roca</i>
<b>6</b> <b>8:00 AM</b> <b>In-person service</b> <b>10:00 AM</b> <b>Zoom &amp; In-person service</b> <b>5:00 PM</b> <i>Cristo La Roca</i> <b>8:30 PM</b> <i>Bethesda Youth AA</i>	<b>7</b> <b>8:00 PM</b> <i>Men's AA Meeting</i>	<b>8</b> <b>2:00 PM</b> Staff Meeting <b>7:00 PM</b> Finance Meeting	<b>9</b> <b>12:00 PM</b> <b>Noonday Prayer</b> <b>(Zoom)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> <b>7:00 PM</b> 5th-8th grade Youth Group	<b>12</b> <b>5:00 PM</b> <b>Talk &amp; Pray service</b> <b>(In-person)</b> <b>6:30 PM</b> <i>Cristo La Roca</i>
<b>13</b> <b>8:00 AM</b> <b>In-person service</b> <b>10:00 AM</b> <b>Zoom &amp; In-person service</b> <b>5:00 PM</b> <i>Cristo La Roca</i> <b>8:30 PM</b> <i>Bethesda Youth AA</i>	<b>14</b> <b>6:30 PM</b> Prison Ministry (Zoom) <b>8:00 PM</b> <i>Men's AA Meeting</i>	<b>15</b> <b>2:00 PM</b> Staff Meeting <b>7:00 PM</b> Vestry Meeting	<b>16</b> <b>12:00 PM</b> <b>Noonday Prayer</b> <b>(Zoom)</b>	<b>17</b> <b>4:00 PM—</b> <b>4:30 PM</b> Donations Drop Off	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> <b>5:00 PM</b> <b>Talk &amp; Pray service</b> <b>(Zoom)</b> <b>6:30 PM</b> <i>Cristo La Roca</i>
<b>20</b> <b>8:00 AM</b> <b>In-person service</b> <b>10:00 AM</b> <b>Zoom &amp; In-person service</b> <b>5:00 PM</b> <i>Cristo La Roca</i> <b>8:30 PM</b> <i>Bethesda Youth AA</i>	<b>21</b> <b>Presidents' Day</b> <b>Office closed</b> <b>8:00 PM</b> <i>Men's AA Meeting</i>	<b>22</b> <b>2:00 PM</b> Staff Meeting	<b>23</b> <b>12:00 PM</b> <b>Noonday Prayer</b> <b>(Zoom)</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> <b>5:00 PM</b> <b>Talk &amp; Pray service</b> <b>(Zoom)</b> <b>6:30 PM</b> <i>Cristo La Roca</i>
<b>27</b> <b>8:00 AM</b> <b>In-person service</b> <b>10:00 AM</b> <b>Zoom &amp; In-person service</b> <b>5:00 PM</b> <i>Cristo La Roca</i> <b>8:30 PM</b> <i>Bethesda Youth AA</i>	<b>28</b> <b>8:00 PM</b> <i>Men's AA Meeting</i>	<b>1</b> <b>Shrove Tuesday</b> <b>2:00 PM</b> Staff Meeting	<b>2</b> <b>Ash Wednesday</b> <b>12:00 PM</b> <b>Noonday Prayer</b> <b>(Zoom)</b>	<b>3</b> <b>4:00 PM—</b> <b>4:30 PM</b> Donations Drop Off	<b>4</b> Men's Shelter Dinner	<b>5</b> <b>5:00 PM</b> <b>Talk &amp; Pray service</b> <b>(Zoom)</b> <b>6:30 PM</b> <i>Cristo La Roca</i>

**St. Luke's Episcopal Church**  
**Trinity Parish**  
6030 Grosvenor Lane  
Bethesda, Maryland 20814-1852

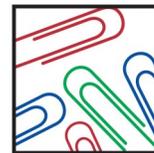
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THE REV. JESSICA K. HITCHCOCK  
Rector  
email: [jessica@stlukesbethesda.org](mailto:jessica@stlukesbethesda.org)

**ACTS of St. Luke's**  
Newsletter for members and friends of St. Luke's;  
published monthly, except January & August.  
**ACTS Deadline:** 15<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month



## St. Luke's Office Hours



**Our new office hours are Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, 9 am - 4 pm.**

It's always a good idea to contact James before coming into the office to make sure he'll be there and not elsewhere in the building, or at the bank, etc.

You can reach James at [admin@stlukesbethesda.org](mailto:admin@stlukesbethesda.org) or 301-530-1800.

**On Monday and Wednesday, James is working at home and is checking his email and voicemail.**

James also will be at St. Luke's worship services  
on the first Sunday of every month.