



St. Luke Presbyterian Church Epistle

NAN KEMP & MELISSA SHIELDS, CO-EDITORS

DECEMBER 2021 | VOLUME 57, ISSUE 12

Officers Elected

A congregational meeting was held on October 31 to hear and act upon the report of the Officer Nominating Committee. The ONC recommended the following slate for officers: **Jennifer Denham, Tim Lacey, Cruse Messer, and Kendra Jones** for three-year terms (Class of 2024) and **Marcie Robinson** to fill a vacated term in the Class of 2022 (one year remaining). The ONC also recommended the following to fill the at-large positions on the 2022 Officer Nominating Committee: **Sallie Amason, Kary Wingo, and Krista Berry**. All were elected by acclamation.

Advent Devotional

Now available! This book features daily devotionals (through January 6) which tell the story of God's love shown in our lives and through the community at St. Luke Presbyterian Church. *A Very St. Luke Christmas: Advent Calendar and Devotional* will warm your heart and remind you why St. Luke has been instrumental in your life and community.

Talking Turkey

The Fellowship Committee wishes to thank all those who helped host the Thanksgiving luncheon on November 21. The side dishes and desserts were delicious and much appreciated, as was the extra help. We also thank those who assisted with the Mexican potluck in October.



Hanging of the Greens

Sunday, November 28 is the first Sunday of Advent! When you arrive on Sunday, you may choose an ornament to hang on the tree in the sanctuary. Find out more about these ornaments in your Advent devotional.

Advent Workshop

It's that time of year again, so get crafty! The Outreach Committee will be hosting the Advent Workshop on Saturday, December 4, from 10 a.m. until noon. We will be in the fellowship hall with a variety of Christmas themed crafts and treats for all ages! If you would like to help us out, the committee asks the congregation to prepare soup and sandwiches for the workshop. For example, grilled cheese sandwiches and tomato soup. We hope to see you there!



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St. Luke Presbyterian Church



Find Pastor Kati's blog:
www.revkaticollins.com



Pastor Kati's podcast:
The Sycamore Tree



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Strokes of Grace

A note from PASTOR KATI

A Family of Faith

"So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David to the deportation to Babylon, fourteen generations; and from the deportation to Babylon to the Messiah, fourteen generations." MATTHEW 1:17

How far back do you know your family tree? Do you know forty-two generations back like Matthew found for Jesus? I've always found this list strange, because it ends with following succession through Joseph, even though he is then revealed to not be the birth father of Jesus. Either Matthew places a high authority on adoption, or the most important part of this family tree is the continuation of faith more than blood. The foreigners Rahab and Ruth were both counted righteous for their faith and that parental influence is listed. Before the Jewish law was given through Moses, Abraham was considered righteous through faith. Also appearing in this list are King David and Bathsheba, here named only by their sin as "Uriah's wife", and they also found forgiveness in the grace of God and were celebrated for their faith. After this list, Matthew tells about the birth of Jesus with a fuller account from Joseph. Named after their famous ancestor who spoke of his controversial dreams from God, Joseph the father of Jesus makes his choices in life based on his dreams as instructions from God. This list tells of an inheritance of faith. This list tells a story of kingdoms built, fallen, and redeemed. This list puts the birth of Jesus at the climax of their national history.

Faith and religion aside, Christmas marks the climax of our yearly rhythms. Concerts, parties, sales, celebrations, school exams, charitable giving, personal gift giving, budget reports, and more. This year will hold even more expectations of grand experiences, because so many of our plans and traditions were put on hold last year. I can already feel the pressure and desire to be in all the places and do all the things, as if our lives depended on it.

So, as you make your lists of events to attend, gifts to purchase, and cookies to bake, remember this list of the faithful ancestors of Jesus. They made the list because of their willingness to marvel at the powerful wonder of God.

Come and worship the King. Come and witness the glory of God. Come and make room in your heart, today. May you feel the peace to come home to St. Luke this Advent and rest in the tradition of our family of faith.

Mission Sends Thanks

The Mission Committee thanks all of you for helping to make this year such a rewarding experience for us and for those whom we have sought to serve. We wish everyone the merriest of Christmases, whatever that may be for you, and a meaningful 2022 as together we all move ahead.

ANN HEFNER AND CAMILLE HOY



Each year, Open and Affirming Churches of the Texas Panhandle hosts a service of remembrance and awareness on World AIDS Day. On Wednesday, December 1, this program will take place in our fellowship hall at 7:00 p.m.

Adult Sunday School Advent Study

Join us for an Advent Sunday School on the Sundays in December, 9:45-10:45 a.m.

How might a house look for Christmas based on what each Gospel says about it? In *Christmas in the Four Gospel Homes*, illustrations from architect Kevin Burns reimagine each of the four Gospels as a "house" which the church visits at Christmas. Along with the drawings, Dr. Cynthia Campbell reflects on the distinctive perspective of the birth of Jesus or the incarnation offered by each Gospel.

Join us we travel to the four Gospel homes and reflect on Christmas in the four Gospels. BARBARA TAYLOR

Christmas Pageant December 8th

The St. Luke Christmas Pageant is making its triumphant return! The pageant will take place at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, December 8. Following the pageant will be a time for fellowship. Hot cider will be provided, just bring a holiday snack to share! All St. Luke members and friends are invited! The pageant will be rehearsed at LOGOS on December 1, and participating kids will meet at the church at 5:30 the night of the pageant. Young friends and family members of St. Luke (K-12) are also welcome to participate in the pageant, including readers!

We hope to see you December 8! WESLEY WINGO

Men's Breakfast Group Becomes Monthly Event

The men will meet December 14 at 6:30 a.m. in the St. Luke Fellowship Hall for breakfast and fellowship.

The men enjoyed their inaugural breakfast in November and want it to become a monthly event. This will be a happening on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 a.m.

In December, the **Wingo** men will provide breakfast, and **Milam Brantley** will give a devotional. All men of the church are enthusiastically invited.

Session Report

The Session had its regular stated meeting on November 21. Below are highlights:

Clerk's Report:

1. October 2021 average attendance for worship – 51
2. Active membership as of September 31, 2021 – 148
Active membership as of October 31, 2021 – 147
3. Communion was celebrated on November 21, 2021.
4. **Jonathon** , son of **David** and **Dannette** , was baptized on Sunday, November 14.
5. Rev. Dr. **James “Pat” Kennedy** entered the Church Triumphant on November 11, 2021. Rev. Kennedy served at St. Luke from October 1996 to September 2008.
6. Moderator's Report highlights (Rev. **Kati** Collins) Vacation dates of December 26-29 and continuing education dates of January 2-14 approved.
7. Long term goal of \$1 million in Endowment Fund approved. (Endowment Committee)
8. Operating budget for 2022 approved. (Finance Committee)
9. Loan request to cover expenses of previously acquired security grant approved. (Finance Committee)
10. COVID protocols to be maintained. (Session)
11. **Terry Boulware** membership approved. (Session)
12. Baptism of **Hudson** on December 12 approved. (Session)
13. Congregational meeting/luncheon set for January 30. (Session)
14. Session election for Clerk and Treasurer set for December meeting. (Session)
15. Approval for two grant applications on behalf of Laundry Love. (Mission Committee)

Commendations

- **Kyle Hadley, Ross Clopton, Ashley Denham, Stacy Clopton, and Krista Berry** for serving as liturgists.
- **Hayden** for being adorable and enthusiastic when

she was baptized. **Nicole** and **Daron** for being faithful, loving parents.

- **Ann Hefner** for the Minute for Mission about our Laundry Love outreach project.
- **Mila Abbasova** and **Mary Holmlund** for the organ/piano duet, *I Sing the Mighty Power of God*.
- **Jonathon** for being so well-behaved (and looking so handsome), and declaring his faith to the congregation during his baptism. **Danette** and **David** for being faithful, loving parents to Jonathon.
- **Travis Kemp** for overseeing worship technology.
- Pastor **Kati** for preparing the Door Dash cards for the hospital staff.
- **Darcy Hargis, Krista Berry, Stacy Clopton, Cheri Castleberry, Pastor Kati, Wesley Wingo, Kary Wingo, Donna Clopton, and Alexa Wingo** for helping with LOGOS in October and November.
- Pastor **Kati** and all who contributed for the Advent devotional booklet.
- Finance Committee for drafting the 2022 budget.
- Men's breakfast organizers and **Castleberrys** for providing the venue.

Women's Bible Study

St. Luke Women will continue its Horizons study of *What My Grandmothers Taught Me* on December 8. **Mary Holmlund** and **Donna Clopton** will provide a brunch to begin at 9:30 a.m. in the fellowship hall. Mary's reminiscences of her grandmothers will follow. The study of Lesson 4, "Ruth and Loyal Love" will be led by **Nan Kemp**. **Kendra Jones** will conduct the concluding business meeting. All women of the church are welcome to attend.

Ballard Service Scheduled

A memorial service for **Charles Dale Ballard** will be held at St. Luke at 2 p.m. on Saturday, December 11.



THANK YOU
for your faithful giving!

Detailed financial reports are always available for review by church members. Simply stop by the church office during regular hours and request to examine the previous month's financial documents.

October 2021

Year-to-Date

Epistles

Dear St. Luke church family,

I have been sad since my brother, **Bill Roy McAlister**, was killed in a car accident last week. But, the loving responses of all of you have been a great comfort to me. Thank you for the cards, prayers and kind, sympathetic words. They mean the world to me. I am so blessed to belong to such a loving church.

Mary Holmlund

Dear St. Luke,

From the **Heydes** and **Denhams**, thank you! Thank you for the continued support of my parents, **Tom** and **Margaret Heyde**, for offering to help when needed, and for bringing meals during the past year. The diagnosis of Parkinson's of Margaret and my dad being her caregiver have not been easy. The love you share means the world to us. Also, we appreciate the calls, texts, and cards in the loss of Bob's dad, **Robert L. Denham** on November 12. He was diagnosed with lung cancer in July and went home from the hospital as a home hospice patient. Thank you to Pastor **Kati** for checking in with our parents in this time of loss as well. Despite a rough 2021 for us our faith is strong and we couldn't do it without our faith community here at St. Luke.

Blessings, *Bob, Jennifer, Ashley, Nicole Payne, Tom & Margaret Heyde.*

Dear St. Luke,

The Thanksgiving Luncheon was delicious! Many thanks to all who worked hard so others could enjoy. It was especially nice to renew this tradition.

Lucille Dunn



December BIRTHDAYS

If your birthday is not listed or if there is an error, please call the church office.

- | | |
|-------------|----------------------|
| 2 • Susan | 20 • Keith |
| 2 • Mary | 21 • Milam* |
| 2 • Aubrey | 24 • Lynn |
| 4 • Alexa | 26 • Bob |
| 5 • Phillip | 27 • Samantha |
| 9 • Barbara | 27 • Kyle |
| 9 • Medora | 27 • Judy* |
| 9 • Sumner | 28 • Maddy* |
| 12 • Nona | * friend of St. Luke |

A Gift Opens Doors

A man's gift makes room for him...."

PROVERBS 18:16

In the story of God, as we tell it, there is a barrier that exists between the Created world and its Creator. A wall. Sin, we say, separates us from God, and separation from God is unbearable. And our story goes on to say that God, seeing that we had no hope in ourselves of getting over it, or through or around what separates us, offered us a gift in Jesus Christ who opens a door—a door we could not open ourselves. *What a gift!*

Proverbs, a book of wisdom sayings, states that it's a person's gift that opens doors. As we give generously to the Christmas Joy Offering, we seek to not only meet needs, but to meet people, to come through the door that generosity opens. We open the door to celebrate "God with us!"

The story of God, as we tell it, is not about a barrier, but about a gift. It's not about the separation, but about the gift of "being with." Please give generously to the Christmas Joy Offering, in celebration of God's perfect gift to us. Give because it brings us together, to open doors of relief and opportunity and to relationship that are part of God's story, a part of God's perfect gift to us.

The **Christmas Joy Special Offering** will be received at St. Luke on or before Sunday, December 19. There are three ways that you can give:

- 1) Use the Presbyterian Mission website. (This is the preferred method.) www.pcusa.org/give/christmas_joy. (If giving online, please provide the name of our congregation.)
- 2) Text CHRISTMASJOY to 91999.
- 3) If you are unable to give by either of the electronic methods above, you may write a check payable to St. Luke with "Christmas Joy" noted on the memo line.

Through your Son, you open to us a door. As we cross the threshold into relationship with God and with one another, we rejoice and give thanks for opportunities to live as your people. Amen.

Birthday Celebrations



Stacy Clopton and **Helen Thorsheim** are blessed to share a birthdate in November. This year, since we also are both celebrating a memorable number, we have decided to start a tradition of donating a dollar per year of our respective ages to the Endowment Fund. Helen is also taking advantage of Sharefaith's gift of matching the first \$50 of the first 'recurring' donation given through them that occurs before December 31. So if you haven't been giving through Sharefaith, you could add an impressive percentage more by giving through the app. Recurring donations can be cancelled any time after the first gift. We both encourage you to join us each year when you celebrate your birthday (it doesn't have to be your own birthday either). Make it an annual tradition! You can find the link on the weekly email from St. Luke, or go to the website: www.stlukeamarillo.com/tithe/.

December

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Sunday Schedule 9:30 am Coffee & Fellowship 9:45 am Advent Study 10:30 am Choir Rehearsal (until further notice) 11:00 am In-Person Worship 11:00 am Service will stream Live on Facebook Children's Church during worship 2:00 pm Service will be posted to YouTube			1 World AIDS Day 5:30 - 7:30 pm LOGOS (in the sanctuary) 7:00 pm OAC's World AIDS Day Service (in Fellowship Hall)	2 10:00 am Exercise Class 2:00 pm Threads of Love 5:30 pm Personnel Com. Mtg. 6:30 pm - ACA 8:00 pm - AA 8:00 pm - Al-non	3 12:00 noon Finance Com. Mtg.	4 10:00 am - noon Advent Workshop 10:30 am - ACA
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Second Sunday of Advent Advent Study begins (during Sunday school) 12:00 noon "Get to Know St. Luke" Brown Bag Lunch	10:30 am Adult Piano Class 8:00 pm - AA 8:00 pm - Al-non	<i>Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day</i> 10:00 am Exercise Class	9:30 am St. Luke Women 6:30 pm Christmas pageant with snacks to follow Annual reports due from all moderators.	10:00 am Exercise Class 2:00 pm Threads of Love 6:30 pm - ACA 8:00 pm - AA 8:00 pm - Al-non	Human Rights Day Melissa is on vacation.	2:00 pm Ballard Memorial Svc. at St. Luke 10:30 am - ACA
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Third Sunday of Advent Baptism of Hudson 4:00 pm Stated Session Mtg. & Elder Apprec. Party	10:30 am Adult Piano Class 8:00 pm - AA 8:00 pm - Al-non	6:30 am Men's Breakfast 10:00 am Exercise Class 5:45 pm Worship Com. Mtg. (Zoom)	12:00 noon Young at Heart Melissa is on vacation.	10:00 am Exercise Class 2:00 pm Threads of Love 6:30 pm - ACA 8:00 pm - AA 8:00 pm - Al-non		8:00 - 10:00 am Laundry Love Event 10:30 am - ACA
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Fourth Sunday of Advent 10:00 am Brunch in FH Christmas Cantata Christmas Joy Special Offering <i>Epistle deadline</i>	10:30 am NO Piano Class 8:00 pm - AA 8:00 pm - Al-non Melissa is on vacation.	10:00 am Exercise Class 5:30 pm Property Com. Mtg. 8:00 pm Blue Christmas Service		10:00 am Exercise Class 2:00 pm Threads of Love 6:30 pm - ACA 8:00 pm - AA 8:00 pm - Al-non	CHRISTMAS EVE Church offices will be closed. 5:00 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight & Communion Service	NATIVITY OF THE LORD
26	27	28	29	30	31	
First Sunday of Christmas No adult Sunday school or Children's Church Service of Lessons & Carols	Church offices will be closed. 10:30 am NO Piano Class 8:00 pm - AA 8:00 pm - Al-non	7:00 pm Farkle Group Pastor Kati is on vacation.			<i>New Year's Eve</i> All contributions to be applied to FY 2021 are due by 3:30 p.m.	January 2022 January 16: Elder Installation & Ordination January 30: Annual Congregational Meeting

Blueprints Are Hiding Can you help us find them?

We are trying to locate the sets of blueprints from the Faith Can Build remodel. They are probably in large cardboard tubes. They used to be in the closet off of Fellowship Hall where the chairs and tables are kept. They aren't there now, and we have searched everywhere we can imagine. Please help us!! If you know where they are hiding, please let anyone on the Property Committee or Melissa know. If you took them home for safe keeping, please bring them back and take them to the church office. Included are drawings for the additional improvements that were not done. We'd hate to have to pay for them again--they were rather expensive. You're welcome to search around for them as well; maybe they are hiding in plain sight, but I have searched several times and consulted with members of the FCB task force.

HELEN THORSHEIM

Increase the Power of Your Tithe!

Sharefaith Giving will match up to \$50 of each new recurring gift that is set up from November 1 to December 31 (with a maximum of \$1,000 for St. Luke.) If you've been meaning to set this up, now is the time! Go to our giving page to set up your monthly offering:

www.stlukeamarillo.com/tithe/. Under the section of the giving form that says "Direct your gift:" in bold orange, switch from the "One-time" tab to the "Recurring" tab. If you have questions about the process, contact the church office. Because it requires your banking information, Melissa can't set it up for you, but she will be happy to guide you through the process.

Joys & Concerns

Continue to remember those with COVID-19. Also pray for

the people of Johnson Chapel A.M.E. Church; **Glenda Moore** (Kind House Ukraine Bakery); and the students, teachers, and staff at Mesa Verde Elementary School.

Quilt Raffle Results

Thanks to all who bought tickets or donated to the quilt raffle. A total of \$2,040 was raised for outdoor play equipment – wow!! Congratulations to **Robbie and Kati Collins** for having the winning ticket. And of course, special thanks to **Dorothy Baggerly** for donating the beautiful quilt to make this fundraiser possible.

Church offices will be closed December 24th & 27th

Young at Heart December 15

Young at Heart will meet on December 15 at noon in the fellowship hall. **Louise George** will join us for the program and share about her newly published book, *The Remarkable Plans for Captain Travis O. Evans*. She will tell us how she came to know him and read a few selections from the book. If you would like to purchase the book, she will have copies available. They are beautiful hardback books for \$32.

Schlotsky's sandwiches will be served at a fee of \$8. Reservations by 11 a.m. on the previous day (contact the office) are appreciated. See you there! **BOB MCCracken**

Blue Christmas Candlelight Service

A recent Advent tradition, the Blue Christmas Candlelight Service makes space for a somber celebration of God's gift. On the longest night of the year, December 21, we come together in our sadness of the season, and pray for peace in our hearts and in the world. We will offer our losses in prayer as swaddling cloths for the Savior to take comfort during our waiting for Jesus to come. Poetry and music will carry our prayers to God, the Creator of the Universe, maker of all that is seen and unseen. The Blue Christmas service will begin at 8:00 p.m.



Pastor's Drop-In Hours

Tuesdays, 1 p.m. - 4 p.m. Wednesdays, 9 a.m. - noon, or by appointment
(Mondays are typically Pastor Kati's Day of Rest unless they are marked as workdays on the calendar.)
In case of a pastoral emergency, you may call Pastor Kati's cell phone on any day.



Tis the Season

✳️ Sunday, November 28 ✳️

First Sunday of Advent & Hanging of the Greens

★ Saturday, December 4 ★

Advent Workshop

10:00 a.m. to noon | Fellowship Hall

✳️ Sunday, December 5 ✳️

Advent Study begins during Sunday school time

★ Wednesday, December 8 ★

Christmas Pageant (followed by snacks)

6:30 p.m. | Fellowship Hall

✳️ Sunday, December 19 ✳️

10:00 a.m. | Brunch in Fellowship Hall

Christmas Cantata during worship

Christmas Joy Special Offering will be received

★ Tuesday, December 21 ★

Blue Christmas Service

8:00 p.m. | Sanctuary

✳️ Friday, December 24 ✳️

Christmas Eve Candlelight & Communion Service

5:00 p.m. | Sanctuary

★ Wednesday, December 25 ★

NATIVITY OF THE LORD

✳️ Sunday, December 26 ✳️

First Sunday of Christmas

Service of Lessons & Carols

No adult Sunday school or children's church

Important Deadline

As the end of 2021 approaches, please remember that St. Luke closes its fiscal year on December 31. *All contributions to be applied to the current year must be received by 3:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 31.* If you made in-kind donations, send your receipts to the church office so that those may be acknowledged as well. Please know that donations made through the church's online platform take several days to be deposited in St. Luke's bank account; therefore, if you need to be certain that your gift is recorded for 2021, it is best to bring a check by the church office.

In the first week of December, you will receive a Giving Statement (by email) that covers the period of January 1 to November 30. The purpose of this statement is to allow you to review that we have properly recorded all of your 2021-to-date gifts as you directed. It also gives you an opportunity to correct any errors or to catch up before the final 12-month statement is released in January 2022.

Early Newsletter Deadline

Due to the holidays, the deadline for the abbreviated January edition of the *Epistle* will be Sunday, December 19. The newsletter will be emailed shortly after the first of the year. Send your news to editor **Nan Kemp**. If you are not on St. Luke's emailing list and would like to receive the newsletter, please contact the church office to be added.



Postscripts

Alice Cooke invites us to attend the upcoming Town and Gown Concert at WTAMU's Northen Hall at 7:30 p.m. on December 6. Mark the date of April 4 for the next concert. [Church Mouse: These concerts are always enjoyable.]

There will be no piano classes on December 20 or 27; they'll resume meeting in January.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: If you have been using the tower entrance to the church, please use a different entrance until further notice; this includes those who have keys. Because of issues with the locks and the doors themselves, these doors will remain locked all week—including Sunday mornings. Ushers have been instructed not to unlock this set of doors. During office hours, you may still buzz to be let in the door with remote lock release.

Each Thursday morning, a weekly email goes out to everyone who is subscribed to our list. This email contains information about the coming service, the church schedule for the week, current Mission projects, and more. If you have not been receiving this email, you can subscribe from St. Luke's website. Visit www.stlukeamarillo.com/connect-with-us/. You can unsubscribe at any time. These weekly updates come via AWeber and not St. Luke's generic email account; the lists are independent of each other.