



JANUARY 2021

Light in the Shadows

“Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.” Matt. 5: 16

Following Christ Where He Will Lead Us

*“Nathanael said to him, ‘Can anything good come out of Nazareth?’ Philip said to him, ‘Come and see.’”
[John 1:46]*



It has been almost a year since churches in Vermont and other States have had to close their doors to our customary way of coming together for worship and study; for prayer and outreach; and for fellowship, especially at coffee hour (Oh how I miss the coffee hours!) Now here we are at the beginning of the new year 2021 and wondering when the pandemic will no longer be a threat to us so that we can safely return inside our building here at St. Luke’s.

Knowing when (or if!) we can resume our traditional way of being together, is still an unknown.

“Whether Jesus comes to us or we go toward Jesus, let us follow Christ knowing that even when we may not know where or how God will lead St. Luke’s this year, all we have to do is trust that God knows our way forward.”

—Rev. Heidi L. Edson

In John’s passage quoted above, Jesus went to Galilee in search of His disciples. He first spoke to Philip, Nathanael’s brother, saying “Follow me.” Jesus didn’t tell Philip where they were going—simply “Follow me.” When faced with this same invitation to follow Jesus, Nathanael, at first, is skeptical. He is probably wondering if Jesus has the right credentials to be a leader. “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Nathanael replies. Philip tells him, “Come and see.”

The two reactions to the call of discipleship from these brothers, Philip and



St. Luke’s 2021 Annual Parish Meeting To Be Held on January 31

Our 2021 Annual Meeting of the Parish of St. Luke’s will take place on **Sunday, the 31st of January, 2021**, following the 10:00 a.m. Zoom Worship Service. Since this meeting takes place only once each year, we hope that many of you will participate in this Zoom Meeting

The 2020 Annual Report Booklet—that includes the meeting agenda plus the various reports from St. Luke’s activities and ministries (outreaches, community events, financial reports and more)—will be available to peruse before our meeting date. For those of you needing to submit a report, **Rick Hunter** is the person who will be organizing the booklet. Please submit your report to him by email. (Read Rick’s article on page 5 for more specifics.)

All reports are due by no later than the 17th of January. Rick would prefer an even earlier date for submission of your report if at all possible. For more information please contact Rick Hunter directly.

As more information and developments emerge, the Vestry or myself (Heidi+) will be in contact with you.

See you then!

Heidi+

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REFLECTIONS

Racism

We have a problem. And I am part of it. God desires fullness of life for every being, but some are denied and excluded. Whole races, genders, identities and natures are denied, and I am part of the problem.

I carry my white, male, straight Christian privilege through a world where few have that. My privilege comes at others' expense. It's not my fault. But I am part of the problem.

I don't always know exactly what to do. But I am always choosing either to disrupt it or to allow it to persist. There is no standing by. Racism is a fire in the house:

either you are actively trying to put it out or you are letting it burn.

Either the suffering of your siblings wounds you and you yourself are outraged and yearning, or you are not—which is the problem.

Those who don't look like you are just like you except for how they are treated.

Either you think of them as "them," or as "us." Either it is your problem, or you are part of the problem.

When we work together there is hope. Even though the work is never done, when we work together to solve the problem we solve the problem.

We can do this. There is hope. There is hope.

Steve Garnaas-Holmes,
Unfolding Light www.unfoldinglight.net
January 31, 2020

Truth & Unconditional Love

I refuse to accept the view that mankind is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism and war that the bright daybreak of peace and brotherhood can never become reality.

I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word. —*Martin Luther King Jr.*

**Following Christ
Where He Will Lead Us**

(continued from page 1)

Nathanael, bring to the light some of the challenges we face here at St. Luke's. Like these brothers, we, too, do not know exactly where we're headed with Christ. Our call is simply to follow where Christ will lead us. Will we be able to safely gather inside the Church soon? This is an "unknown" among the other "unknowns" we are living with at this time.

Another challenge for this year will be the realization that we may not be coming back to the way things were before—at least not fully. But there's the good news: Jesus told Philip to simply follow. What a great opportunity we have for a renewed experience here at St. Luke's when we finally come physically together again! Good news again: Nathanael, quite happy with his life already, wondered if it was worthwhile leaving it in order to follow a person [Jesus] he didn't yet know. ("Can anything good come from Nazareth?"). But Nathanael goes toward Jesus (John 1:47).

Whether Jesus comes to us or we go toward Jesus, let us follow Christ knowing that even when we may not know where or how God will lead St. Luke's this year, all we have to do is trust that God knows our way forward.

*Blessings,
Heidi+*

“A Thank-You Note”**Dear Friends of St. Luke's,**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your generous gift of money I received at Christmas this year. Your gift and thoughts mean so much to Doug and me, especially this Christmas Season where many of us had to forego some of our cherished traditions this holiday season.

Doug and I hope your Christmas was a meaningful and fulfilling occasion despite the restrictions in place for this past year due to COVID-19. Together, we look forward to better times to come.

*With gratitude for all of you,
Heidi & Doug
Happy New Year!*

FEBRUARY 2021 LITS Deadline:

JANUARY 29th

Send all articles, announcements, photos, etc. to:
Pat Fromberger, 180 Gates Rd., Andover, VT 05143
Email: panjoe@vermontel.net



Another Wreath Decorating Artist Shares Her Results

Lillian Willis shares this wonderful photo sent to her by one of this year's participants in the Wreath Decorating Workshops. (In case you missed the article read about this year's unusual workshops in the 2020 December LITS.)

Lillian writes: "I was just emailed a Covid wreath decorated at home by Brenda Ames, a long-time participant in the wreath workshops. Brenda came up from New Jersey to her second home here in order to participate again. She says she is looking 'forward hopefully to a group, in-person session next year.' But she did amazing things with the natural materials given to her in her personalized decoration bag. I thought her embellished wreath was quite different and personal." (I agreed with Lillian and thought we should share this photo with our LITS readers—*PSF*)

Thank You For Your Gift

Dear Church Family,

Thank you for your most generous gift this Christmastime. It's been a year of getting creative musically. I enjoyed the challenge, and I hope you were blessed by the results. I'm looking forward to a song-filled year in 2021, hopefully with all of us together again.

Anne Goodreau

Latest Update On Reopening Episcopal Churches in Vermont

Since November of 2020, there have not been any changes or updates reported by Bishop Shannon or the Restart Team regarding church worship in the Diocese of Vermont. Given the continuing rise and threat of the COVID-19 pandemic, all in-person gatherings for worship both indoors and outdoors is suspended until further notice.

For those who follow the news, doctors and health professionals are suggesting that this pandemic will continue its spread across the States due to the number of people who traveled to other parts of the country over the holidays. Many doctors and health professionals are predicting a rise in cases for the new year. The good news is that there is a vaccine for this virus that will hopefully be available for the most of us by June 2021 at the latest. Some of us will have access to this vaccine even sooner.

Here at St. Luke's, we will continue to hold weekly Sunday ZOOM worship at 10:00 a.m. Thanks to the work and planning of several of us: David, Rick & Janet, Belinda, Lillian, and others who have offered their help and suggestions, our Zoom "production value" has improved and continues to improve with each week and month.

Though I am the first to admit that I am not fond of Zoom, especially for worship, I am encouraged by your willingness to participate in this worship format. I know that we do what we can to stay together! So thank you for your faith and for your perseverance in these difficult times of physical separation.

May this New Year see better days ahead for all of us!

Heidi+

The Art of Living In The Light

Often we want to be able to see into the future. We say, "How will next year be for me? Where will I be five or 10 years from now?" There are no answers to these questions. Mostly we have just enough light to see the next step—what we have to do in the coming hour or the following day.

The art of living is to enjoy what we can see and not complain about what remains in the dark. When we are able to take the next step with the trust that we will have enough light for the step that follows, we can walk through life with joy and be surprised at how far we go. Let's rejoice in the little light we carry and not ask for the great beam that would take all our shadows away.

—Henri Nouwen, *Bread for the Journey*

Highlights From The December Vestry Meeting

The December 9th Vestry Meeting was held again by zoom and phone because of the Covid-19 lockdown and strict social distancing.

- **FOCUS: 2021 Proposed Budget.** With more actual numbers showing pledges up, but plate reduced, Treasurer John DesLauriers reviewed the proposed 2021 budget. In preparing the draft budget, John tried to estimate likely continued challenges because of the coronavirus: a reduced plate, impossibility of certain fundraisers, and lack of certainty concerning in-person Easter and regular church services. To run the church as it presently frugally functions with minimal maintenance costs – yet budgeting Outreach donations to various causes at the same amount for the coming year—costs \$100,00+ annually. The largest expenses remain, in descending order of magnitude, the salary and benefits of the part-time rector, the parish assessment by the Diocese (St. Luke’s is in the second highest assessment tier at 15% of income), and the salary of the church musician. In 2020, federal PPP funds saved St. Luke’s from having to dip further into its endowment. The bottom line is that keeping the similar, relatively frugal, proposed budget for 2021 will produce a \$16,000 shortfall. John will check on a few small, potential savings in the furnace service contract (if we don’t heat the church), Grounds and Maintenance costs, and phone and Internet services. We will hope to have the LEGO Contest in 2021, since we already bought the prizes and the cost will be less, but we cannot know at this point. Some of the once-proposed fundraisers will not be able to take place if lockdown still exists. Others may be possible in one form or another, but it’s hard to predict now.
- **Restricted Funds.** If we use restricted funds to pay for appropriate operating expenses, those could lessen the shortfall, and we may or may not have to pay the parish assessment on them—depending upon whether they are normal operating expenses or not. To help fund the 2021 budget while maintaining the church’s sustainability, John proposes taking 6% of the average market value of the endowment assets as measured over the preceding 12 quarters. John will discuss this approach at the Annual Meeting.
- **Motion of Vestry approval for the proposed budget.** The Vestry approved the budget as presented—with the acceptance of a couple of minimal lower expenses if they can be worked out. If there are any changes to the draft, John will alert the Vestry prior to the printing of the Annual Report and the Annual Meeting.
- **FINANCES:** John DesLauriers reported on the status of the PPP loan/grant of \$11,128.15. All Federal funds loaned to St. Luke’s were used for payroll by October 15, 2020. The

application for the loan to be turned into a grant was submitted by November 15, and subsequent requested information was supplied, but no response has been received. It may be April 2021 before we know if the loan was turned into a grant. **Restricted Endowment Funds Report.** John will have information for the Annual Report and will work with Shining Light Bookkeeping in January 2021 to prepare the final report. Meanwhile there is Vestry agreement that certain expenses should come from the appropriate restricted funds as those funds were set up purposely to cover those kinds of expenses.

- **OLD BUSINESS: Outside Lampposts.** Junior Warden David Carey will work with former Junior Warden Andrew Pennell to solve the two outside lampposts that do not come on automatically. David will also speak with the owners of Meditrina about placement of a light to help illuminate the parking lot.
- **Wreath Workshops During Covid Restrictions.** Lillian Willis reported that 60 wreaths were decorated by over 50 people. Governor Scott’s elimination of non-essential gatherings made the in-person workshops impossible. Lillian ascertained by email the kinds of ribbons and decorations people wanted and whether they wanted her to make their bows. She met each of the participants in the back parking lot with their wreaths and supplies, so people could take the materials home and decorate their wreaths...much to the delight of an event-starved public. A donation from the profits was sent to the Chester Conservation Committee’s camp scholarship fund.
- **Christmas Outdoor Market During Covid Restrictions.** Lillian reported that the event, on a very cold and rainy December 5, was held on the front lawn under four pop-up tents. Mostly offering frozen soups and food, with some holiday live and craft decorations, the event yielded \$1800+ and did better than expected—given the Covid restrictions and miserable weather. Many from the public who had pre-ordered food or stopped by to purchase food thanked the workers for holding the event in spite of the nasty weather.
- **Chester Community Greenhouse.** Required lot-line adjustments and zoning variances, in addition to the fact that St. Luke’s land is owned by the Diocese, made consideration of any physical accommodation of the greenhouse at St. Luke’s moot.
- **Christmas Eve Carol Sing at the Gazebo on the Green.** Because of new, more severe coronavirus restrictions by the Governor, David Carey withdrew the request for approval that was to go before the Select Board.
- **NEW BUSINESS: Rector’s Hours at Church.** It was agreed that the days and times that Heidi would regularly be at the church will be stated on the answering machine, so

December Vestry Meeting con't.

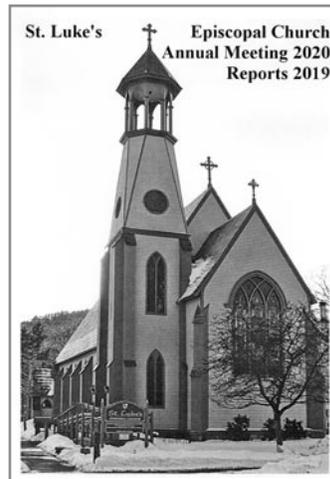
parishioners and the public could know a convenient time when they might speak with her. **Diocesan Christmas Eve Virtual Pageant at 4:00p.m.** That event will be recorded and may be watched any time. **Christmas Eve Zoom Service at 5:00 p.m. in Willard Hall.** The service will be a traditional full Evening Prayer with music and carols. Beth Salisbury will be designated Heidi's co-host so Beth can mute listeners and, thereby, allow Heidi to concentrate on the service. Beth and Heidi will do a trial run of that procedure at the 10:00 a.m. Zoom service on Sunday, December 13, 2020. David Carey will help with technical matters, and Janet Hunter will decorate the altar area in Willard Hall.

•**Annual Meeting.** It will take place on Sunday January 31, 2021. Look for more information closer to the date. **Vestry Elections.** John DesLauriers is the only Vestry member whose term is up in 2021. John is willing to serve another 3-year term. **Agenda.** Heidi will check last year's agenda and prepare one for the 2021 Annual Meeting.

• **NEXT VESTRY MEETING:** Wednesday, January 13, 2021. **Annual Parish Meeting:** January 31, 2021.

—*Lillian Willis, Clerk*

Reminder that Annual Reports Are Due by January 17th



If you need to write an annual report of your group's activities for St. Luke's **2020 Annual Report Booklet**, Rick Hunter needs your report as soon as possible, and please, **no later than January 17**, to give time to edit and arrange the whole Annual Report document before the Annual Meeting on January 31.

You may send it to Rick (rhunter@vermontel.net) as a simple email, or attach a Word (.doc or .docx) file, or an Open Office file (.odf). I would prefer that other than the financial reports, which may be placed without pagination at the end. Please **DO NOT** send me a PDF file, as I cannot edit them, even to divide them across pages.

If you have any relevant photos, or interesting St Luke's pictures of any kind, please feel free to send one or two along as JPEG files.

*Many thanks,
Rick Hunter*



Come Pick Up Your Pledge Envelopes for 2021

If you would like a box of pledge envelopes, they are available in Willard Hall. The best time to go if you do not have a key is on a Tuesday or Thursday morning when Rev. Heidi is there. Just let me know what number you have taken. Please remember to wear a mask when going into the church building.

*Blessings,
Marti Assenza,
Pledge Treasurer*

The Work of Christmas

—by *Howard Thurman*

When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:
To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among others,
To make music in the heart.

An Epiphany epiphany

"If we approach with faith, we too will see Jesus ... for the Eucharistic table takes the place of the crib. Here, the Body of the Lord is present, wrapped not in swaddling clothes but in the rays of the Holy Spirit." —*St. John Chrysostom (347-407)*



JANUARY CELEBRATIONS



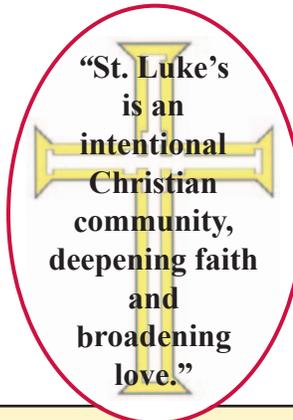
Birthdays:

- | | | | |
|----|-------------------|----|-----------------------|
| 4 | David Carey | 24 | Sandra Rich |
| 4 | George Cheney | 26 | Walter Sharon |
| 10 | Alexandra Scarlet | 26 | Belinda Whipple Worth |
| 11 | Marjorie Carey | | |
| 11 | Heidi Edson | | |

Anniversaries: None

We are meant to be the light of God's love in the world. We are meant to live with the light of Christ shining through us. Just as the world of Isaiah waited for the light of the Messiah to arrive, so does the world wait today for each of us to shine that light into its darkest corners—to show a lost world the way home.

—Forward Day By Day; 1/6/19



JANUARY WORSHIP

St. Luke's continues to hold Sunday **Morning Prayer Services** via Zoom, alternating between **Morning Prayer Rite I & Rite II** each week at **10:00 a.m.** We are very thankful to David Carey for his technical assistance each week, which now allows us to include some music (played on the keyboard by our church musician, Anne Goodreau) and an onscreen script enabling participants to follow along with the liturgy. There are still a few "wrinkles" to iron out, but on the whole we are all enjoying the opportunity to be together (albeit virtually) and to see each others faces every week. We even have some friends from Massachusetts Rhode Island (and even Chile this past week) joining us in worship.

How does this work? A couple of days before Sunday, Rev. Heidi sends an email message (with attachments of the scripture readings, the worship service format and her homily)—inviting all members to join us—either by the Zoom link or to participate by phone. If you have not been received these invitations and wish to be on the list, please let Heidi know at: edson.heidi@gmail.com.

Rev. Heidi also welcomes you to feel free to contact her anytime, either by phone or email, with any need or simply to chat. She is in the **Church Office** on **Tuesdays & Thursdays** from **9:00 a.m. til Noon**. During these days of physical separation, a phone call or message can help to bring us closer together in spirit and heart.

The Living Present

There are two ways of remembering. One is to make an excursion from the living present back into the dead past. The other way is to summon the dead past back into the living present. ... When Jesus said, "Do this in remembrance of me," (1 Cor.11:24), he was not prescribing a periodic slug of nostalgia. —Frederick Buechner, *Wishful Thinking*

St. Luke's Financial Information

	DEC. 2020	YTD 2020	Annual Budget	YTD % of Budget
Pledge/Plate Income	\$ 4,471.00	\$ 56,605.64	\$ 56,724.00	99.8%
Other Oper. Income	\$11,548.81	\$ 35,563.23	\$ 33,150.00	107.3%
Restricted Income	\$ <u>1,290.00</u>	\$ <u>2,716.70</u>	\$ <u>2,095.00</u>	129.7%
TOTAL INCOME	\$17,309.81	\$ 94,885.57	\$ 91,969.00	103.2%
Regular Expense	\$ 9,275.08	\$ 96,192.01	\$ 107,374.00	89.6%
Restricted Expense	\$ <u>1,290.00</u>	\$ <u>2,335.22</u>	\$ <u>2,340.00</u>	<u>99.8%</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 10,547.08	\$ 98,527.23	\$ 109,714.00	89.8%
Net Ordinary Income/(loss)	\$ (6,762.73)	\$ (3,641.66)	\$ (17,745.00)	20.5%

Note: Budget deficit figure does not include principal payments on the Butterfield loan.

December income exceeded budget by a wide margin. Pledges for the year are right on target. Other Operating Income included Rectory Investment income of \$2,866.33, Dividends on Investments of \$3,772.48, Fundraising of \$1,980.00, Christmas Offerings of \$320, and Unrestricted Operating Donations of \$2,500. Our Net Ordinary Income (loss) was cut in half from November. When the PPP loan / grant of \$11,128.15 is figured in we will end the year with a positive Net Income, excluding the \$5,000 draw from the endowment investment funds which can be reinvested. Thank you to all who contributed to this year's positive result. —*John DesLauriers, Treasurer*



St. Luke's Episcopal Church

The Rev. Heidi L. Edson, Rector

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