



January 2022

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

THE VIEW FROM THE SEASONAL BORDERS – A LITTLE REFLECTION FROM BRUCE MACDUFFIE

A blessed belated church new year to all in the wider St. Luke's community. As of this writing on December 31 of 2021, we are 34 days into that Christian church new year which began on November 28, the First Sunday of Advent. On this, the 34th day of that church year, we observe what used to be called the Eve of the Feast of the Circumcision and, since the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer*, is the Eve of the Feast of the Holy Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. And in the non-church world, we celebrate turn of the calendar into 2022 on New Year's Eve. We cluster together several meanings around this end of the first week of Christmas.



Advent marked the beginning of that new church year with roughly four weeks of learning of the conceptions of two figures: John the Baptist, born to elderly parents who had despaired of conceiving and giving birth, and Jesus, whose name was given to him when he was taken to the temple on the eighth day of his young life to be circumcised, as befits a faithful Israelite. This second conception, the conceiving of Jesus, was something new to our experience because, according to our traditions and scriptures, this one occurred without human sexual activity. We lived into those stories during those four weeks of Advent readying us for this new thing, God choosing to be really and truly human on Christmas.

On the eighth day, January 1, we celebrate this naming of Jesus as Jesus, that is, as savior, saving us from our experiencing our humanity as a lost cause in which worth was gained only by one's grabbing all the power and wealth one could. Jesus upended that whole apple cart, thanks be, Jesus. To learn again, even though our experience historically as Hebrews should have taught

us otherwise, to learn again that God was about self-giving and love. Empowerment into self-giving, not into political and institutional power. So we celebrate Christmas for a few more days until the Feast of the Epiphany on January 6, the twelfth day of Christmas, around which time we usually celebrate the ungreening of the church and begin our scriptural acquaintance with this fully human Jesus throughout the weeks of the Epiphany season. Epiphany season is often called "ordinary time." We put away celebratory white and move back to ordinary green until Lenten purple overwhelms us in early March.

This is also the 61st day since Bruce MacDuffie began serving as St. Luke's supply priest. Supply priests are temp workers, giving what they can and learning what they can for a limited period of time. I write about Bruce in the third person if only to observe that he is slowly learning the wonders and revelations of community life with St. Luke's. It's quite a spiritual journey for this supply priest. A rewarding journey in learning to know a bit the members of this Lukan community. So now, shifting to first person, I look forward to learning with you as we share our spiritual and life journeys. The teacher nature in me may emerge in the weeks to come, and in teaching I learned that teachers who learn with their companions benefit each other the most. For me that's a joyful prospect!!

Perhaps the focus of the currently planned two more months together ought not to be on the temporary nature of the engagement, but rather that we are living life together NOW as fully as possible each day. Praying for each other, for St. Luke's, and learning together as though we will always do so. Thus each day becomes growthful. It's sort of like our relationships as households and parents: each moment is to be fully lived into appreciating our growing knowledge of and support of us as we are and as we hope to be.

Thank you for the blessing of sharing your community life, St. Luke's.

Bruce+



SMALL KINDNESSES

By Dinusha Lameris

I've been thinking about the way, when you walk down a crowded aisle, people pull in their legs to let you by. Or how strangers still say "bless you" when someone sneezes, a leftover from the Bubonic plague. "Don't die," we are saying. And sometimes, when you spill lemons from your grocery bag, someone else will help you pick them up. Mostly, we don't want to harm each other. We want to be handed our cup of coffee hot, and say thank you to the person handing it. To smile at them and for them to smile back. For the waitress to call us Honey when she sets down the bowl of clam chowder, and for the driver in the red pick-up truck to let us pass. We have so little of each other, now. So far from tribe and fire. Only these brief moments of exchange. What if they are the true dwelling of the holy, these fleeting temples we make together when we say, "Here, have my seat." "Go ahead – you first." "I like your hat."



A Thank-You Notes from the Chester Conservation Committee

On behalf of the Chester Conservation Committee, thank you very much for St. Luke's generous \$300 contribution to help fund our Green Mountain Conservation Camp scholarship program again in 2022. St. Luke's annual contributions have been crucial in enabling us to offer this tuition-offset scholarship to local youth every year.

Once again this winter, we are looking forward to promoting this opportunity in the schools and community, before sending a few more young people "off to camp" next summer.

Gary King

Thank you, St. Luke's, for your ongoing support of local kids going to camp. It's an amazing gift that you contribute.

Frank Kelley



CHRISTMAS MARKET 2021

We had to "punt," as they say, with Lillian down with an injured back, Adelaide down in the warm South, and Pat gone up to God. But it turns out that the Christmas Market is the Christmas Tea without the tea.

We had quarts of delicious soups that have been a hit ever since they were introduced a few years ago. We had baked goods, caramel popcorn, gourmet chocolates, crafts, and Grandma's Attic. For the first time this year we had gingerbread-house kits. Everything needed to decorate a delicious homemade gingerbread house was packaged up and tied with red string.

So, with a pared-down crew and Christmas carols playing in the background, we were able to pull it off and bring in over \$2000 dollars. Well done, All!

Belinda Whipple Worth



A WATTERS FAMILY CHRISTMAS THANK YOU, DECEMBER 30, 2021

The love of Bonnie's life, Lew, has unselfishly taken on six months of taking care of all her needs after she left the hospital – securing her walker, plus shopping, cooking, paying bills, and doing dishes and laundry.

What would we do without Kara, our Vermont mom, who comes one day a week doing shopping, cooking good grain-healthy meals, and filling the needs of the dollmaker. Then there was the blessed visit of our two Arizona daughters, Kate and Kelly, for nearly two weeks. They cooked, threw out stuff, assisted by three grandchildren with a thorough house cleaning, meditated, gardened, and loved Bonnie – cuddling and holding her in ways they did as a child. Kate decorated the house with flower arrangements. Kelly completed a grant to build a handicap ramp and a safe walk-in shower and bathroom downstairs. Kate was able to be present at Bonnie's followup at Bay State Hospital in MA in July. Two months later we consulted with Dartmouth's spine clinic and kissed Bay State goodbye. Bonnie's compressed fracture required no surgery and is repairing well; she no longer wears the brace except in the car. She is being ever more independent and now doing physical therapy daily and with the team at Mt. Ascutney Hospital. We are still trying to solve shaking hands so Bonnie can sew and write again. Kelly returned for Christmas, sparing Lew lots of duties, and Kate plans to come in January to support a final cataract surgery.

Additionally, we have been blessed and are thankful for all the cooked meals delivered to our door by so many members of St. Luke's. A most recent one was a basketful of casseroles and soups from the Christmas Market event. Lew was especially thankful to not have to cook. And then two beautiful wreaths were delivered. Finally, we thank our wonderful neighbors who have helped with access, mobility, and solid advice. Blessing to all for a better new year. For more on Bonnie's miracle recovery, see the blog she continues to write and publish on her doll website.

Bonnie & Lew Watters



Above, clockwise from top left: Kara, Lew, Kate, Bonnie, Kelly.
Below, Marcia's cut Christmas Tree ornament.



Highlights of December Vestry Meeting

The December 14 Vestry Meeting was held in person at Willard Hall and also by Zoom.

Treasurer's Report. John DesLauriers reported a lack of pledge/plate income in November. There was, however, a generous stock transfer from Gloria Deming, as well as income from the Wreath Workshops and the Christmas Market.

FOCUS: Finances. Snowblower. The Vestry gave email permission for John DesLauriers to purchase a snowblower to keep walkways clear for Advent and Christmas services. **Pledge Update and Stewardship Drive.** Marti Assenza reported 18 pledges were received for a present pledge total of \$36,725. She will send members of the Vestry a list of pledgers so thank-you notes can be sent to our supporters. Belinda will check the returned letters to update the membership and appeal lists of addresses. **Budget for 2022.** John reviewed the draft budget that listed categories from last year, to date, and proposed. While we used to spend \$500-\$600 for Christmas Flowers, we will spend less this year.

Transition Ministry with Bruce MacDuffie. Advent and Christmas Services. Bruce is working on bulletins and with Anne Goodreau on music. Marti told Bruce where to find bulletins for Lessons & Carols. Alternating Rites I and II are fine. For Christmas Eve, David Carey will prepare a list of hymns that parishioners can choose to sing at the carol session. David will line walks with luminaries. Christmas Eve has carols at 6:30, with service at 7. Christmas Day service is at 10 AM with no music. **Beyond Christmas Services.** Bruce will work with the Vestry to set up a schedule for the next month or two that will give him some Sundays off and allow planning ahead for Morning Prayer. **Switching to Willard Hall for Sunday Services.** This change has to be finalized. David will look into air-exchange facts and possibilities. The purification system is not noisy, but the dehumidification system is. David will clarify systems with John.

Junior Warden Report. Outside Lights. Lillian Willis will send an email to Kirk Kehoe to seek his electrical help, but timing will not allow that before Christmas. **Sand/Salt Barrels.** David has filled them.

Old Business. Checking on VTEL Messages and Church Email. John will give David the code so David

can set up a voice-mail greeting and help Marti access the church telephone and email from her home. **Covid.** Anne Goodreau reported on her regular Covid testing procedures. **Organ Tuning.** Rick Hunter generously did the tuning on 10/12/21 with help from David Willis. **Church Historian.** Janice Fielder will volunteer as of 1/1/2022. **Sexton Position.** The job takes about 3 hours a week to clean the Church and Willard Hall before Sunday or weekend events; \$25 per hour is budgeted. Janet Hunter will follow through on someone suggested by Janice Fielder. David Carey will contact the High School to seek help.

New Business. Altar Guild. A special tray to hold communion cups was recently donated to facilitate a new Covid-conscious dispersal of wine on Christmas Eve. **Annual Meeting.** The date needs to be set; John will research the preferred date and suggested details, perhaps by Zoom? Rick Hunter cannot do the compiled report this year, so a volunteer needs to be recruited.

Next Vestry Meeting: Tuesday January 11, 2022, 6:30 PM.

Lillian Willis, Clerk



ALL ARE INVITED TO UPCOMING EVENTS AND CHURCH SERVICES

As of this moment, regular Sunday services will continue to take place at 10 AM both in person and by Zoom in the Sanctuary. The Vestry is researching the air-exchange figures for Willard Hall and comparing the benefits of worship downstairs to those with worship inside the church. We hope to have facts in hand for an informed decision by the January 11 Vestry Meeting and will let you know by email, as well as on the church website, if the service location changes.

We will also provide future information about the time and place of the Annual Parish Meeting, usually held in January.

Requests: Donation of a battery-operated wall clock for the kitchen; Volunteer to compile the Annual Report for the 2022 Annual Parish Meeting likely held toward the end of January.

Happy New Year!

St. Luke's Financial Update				
	Nov. 2021	YTD 2021	Annual Budget	YTD % of Budget
Pledge & Plate Income	\$ 3,045.00	\$ 56,342.00	\$ 54,200.00	103.94%
Other Operating Income	\$ 108.89	\$ 22,112.10	\$ 35,200.00	62.82%
Restricted Income	\$ 20.00	\$ 2,335.00	\$ 2,540.00	91.93%
Total Income	\$ 3,173.89	\$ 80,789.10	\$ 91,940.00	87.87%
Regular Expense	\$ 6,283.42	\$ 86,237.75	\$ 102,238.81	84.35%
Restricted Expense	\$ - .00	\$ 1,925.16	\$ 2,340.00	82.27%
Total Expense	\$ 6,283.42	\$ 88,162.91	\$ 104,578.81	84.30%
Net Ordinary Income (loss)	\$ (3,109.53)	\$ (7,373.81)	\$ (12,632.81)	58.37%
Draw on Investments	\$ - .00	\$ - .00	\$ 14,750.00	0.00%
Net Income	\$ (3,109.53)	\$ (7,373.81)	\$ - 2,117.19	

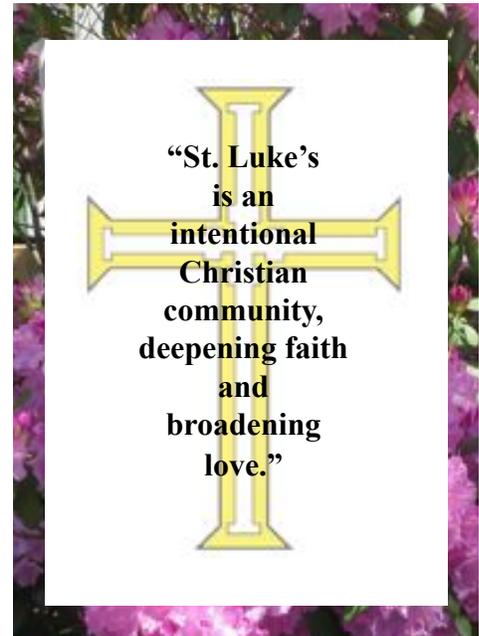
November looks bleak. However, the income from the Wreath Workshop was posted in December. Also in December will be the income from the Christmas Market, as well as 4th quarter Rectory Investment Income. We will end the year in a strong position without having taken any draw-downs on our investment funds. Everyone has done a remarkable job of keeping up with pledges, and our fundraisers have been very successful.

Reminder: please mail in your pledge contributions. Thank you!



St. Luke's Episcopal Church

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JANUARY CELEBRATIONS

Birthdays:

- 4 David Carey
- 4 George Cheney
- 8 Lesley Koenig
- 10 Alexandra Scarlett
- 11 Marjorie Carey
- 16 Ashley Paine
- 24 Sandra Rich
- 26 Belinda Whipple Worth
- 30 Brian Paine



February LITS



January 20th

Send articles and photos to
lbwilllistc@comcast.net