



AUGUST 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

GOOD NEWS!



The Reverend Bruce MacDuffie regularly attends Vestry meetings to facilitate smooth operation of St. Luke's and appropriate spiritual leadership for the parish. For some time, Bruce, who is technically a Supply Minister and not our formal interim priest, has had a working agreement with the Vestry for three-month segments whereby, by mutual consent, subsequent 3-month periods may be arranged.

Since the Vestry Retreat on July 9 replaced the July 12 normally scheduled Vestry Meeting and since the future of St. Luke's was a Retreat topic, the Vestry asked Father Bruce if he were willing to consent to another 3-month period that would ensure his continuance through November. Happily Bruce agreed. The world may be in a turmoil, but St. Luke's is not, and the congregation is looking forward to more positive, enriching experiences in the months ahead.



READY FOR SCHOOL!

Soon for some. But to make sure certain students are all ready, PINS (Partners in Service) is on the move. In fact, in another organizational marathon, the PINS project is about to cross the finish line.

Marcia Clinton, who – for many years – has secured school supplies for students entering grades K-12 in advance of the first day of school, this year consulted with a 13-year-old 9th-grade lad who was very helpful nailing down the truly essential school supplies. Between Covid, supply-line problems, and rising gas prices, Marcia found that ordering items by mail from Walmart was the best bargain. Beth Salisbury had traditionally been faithful at supplying necessities, and she ordered them to come at the end of July; but this year Marcia had to move the date up for stuffing the backpacks because of her involvement in the Windham Fire Company's fundraiser on August 13, the state holiday of Bennington Battle Day on August 18, and St. Luke's upcoming Pig Roast on August 20. Long story short, Marcia arranged with Cathy Paul, the Resource Coordinator at the Springfield office of the Department of Children and Families, Family Services Division, to deliver the backpacks to her on Thursday August 11.

Therefore, after church on Sunday July 24, Marcia, David Carey, Sally and John Hoover, and Lillian and David Willis filled the backpacks for the age groups (K-3, 4-6, 7-9, 10-12) with the appropriate items. Supplies included – depending on the age groups – hand sanitizers, pencils, pens, erasers, colored pencils, sticky pads, protractor sets, thumb drives, calculators, spiral notebooks, 3-ring binders, and looseleaf paper. Because of Marcia's advance organization, in about two hours

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VESTRY RETREAT

The annual Vestry Retreat on Saturday July 9 replaced the regular monthly Vestry meeting. Held from 9-3 in the Parish Hall of Gethsemane Church in Proctorsville, with a potluck dinner for Vestry members and spouses the night before at the Willis household in Chester, the consensus was that this year's retreat was a most positive one – perhaps the most positive in recent years. The retreat was attended by all Vestry members and present minister Bruce MacDuffie. John Morris, a past interim minister at St. Luke's from 2000 to 2002, led discussions that wove together investigations into questions and topics from the Diocese's *Manual for Discernment* with spiritual components. Lively discussions were interspersed with hymns, songs, and illustrations from books and movie classics to make a point. John's familiarity with St. Luke's Church and several Vestry members he knew from the time he was involved at the church clarified his continued interest in and fondness for the parish, as well as the positive memories of his experience here. As a result, discussions were open, honest, factual, eyes-wide-open realistic, optimistic, and even fun, in spite of the sobering assignment for hard analysis of the health and future of St. Luke's.

The self-imposed challenge for the retreat was to examine the state of St. Luke's in relation to the assessments posed by the Diocese's *Manual* regarding the state of St. Luke's growth, stability, decline, or imminent death. Like so many mainline churches, especially in secular Vermont, St. Luke's number of regular parishioners and their accompanying financial contributions have decreased from the thriving growth of many years ago. Covid, other illnesses, age, death, decisions to move away for health or caretaking reasons, competition from Sunday sports, and the need for second jobs took their toll; but we noted reasons to be optimistic both at the retreat and afterward. Many of those are listed below.

- Strengths of the church are the quality of its building and property, endurance of the Vestry, and enthusiasm and dedication of its parishioners.
- Parishioners are happy with supply minister Bruce MacDuffie, who is inspiring, proactively caring for the parish, and on a 3-month renewal basis with the Vestry.
- John Hoover has beautifully led several services of morning prayer.

- Karlaine Livingston is our present Sunday organist, for the foreseeable future, and we have a willing substitute when available.
- David Carey, Ann Sullivan, and Lillian Willis are being trained as Eucharistic Visitors to bring communion to the confined.
- Parishioners are returning – some after time away or even moving back to Vermont after a stint south. Retirees considering moving to Vermont have made inquiries about St. Luke's. We've seen some new faces.
- The website is receiving more regular updating as we try to increase public awareness and promote community involvement.
- The annual PINS school backpack project is basically completed.
- Upcoming events open to the public are the new Pig Roast on August 20 and Wreath Workshops in November.
- We are looking to offer new doable programs and events to build community interest, plus ways to contact newcomers to the Chester region and communicate with senior citizen.
- We'd like to encourage a more active Ministerium to build more cooperation and spiritual connectedness between churches to promote Christian values and good works.
- We are going to actively increase communication with area Episcopal parishes to build community and support.

While we feel we are still in a time of transition, recovery, and waiting to see how Covid and its many variations, other infectious diseases, inflation, and world upheaval will affect us at St. Luke's, there is a kind of prevailing calm. John Morris called it "staying steady in turbulent times." Steady at the moment, but we are also seeking to discover what God is calling us to do. We want to be a force for good in the community, of care for members of our church family, a beacon of hope and inspiration by living lives of personal responsibility and responsiveness. We want to provide relevant worship – adapting as necessary to be effective. We hope to remain centered on God and what He calls us to do. In all that, we welcome your input, suggestions, contacts, and involvement to increase St. Luke's relevancy and positive impact on individuals and the community.

NOTE FROM SEAN WHALEN

I felt a special attention in the sanctuary the Sunday when John Hoover began to read from Amos 8:1. Having received the program beforehand, I knew what was coming and so did the rest of the congregation, judging by the feel and the sound of St. Luke's in the charged moment when John began to read: "This is what the Lord God showed me – a basket of summer fruit. He said, 'Amos, what do you see?'"

It seemed to me that we all leaned in close to hear the words. There was the odd tick of a fan, but otherwise a deep summer stillness.

I remember this feeling from when I was a child in St. Luke's, visiting home from camp in the summer, to weed our garden and acolyte on a Sunday: the stillness of high summer in town, the height of the tomato plants, the feeling of a Ferris wheel slowing at its top. But surely no child knows the feeling that drew us in so close that Sunday to hear John read. No, I would have dozed, 40 years ago. Now, on this day, we were all awake to what the Spirit was saying. Different things to different people, no doubt. But I did feel us slow and pause a moment, as John began to read the next verse. I felt that we longed for the meaning of what's in store, and also rested in that moment together. I am so grateful now for this moment with you my friends in St. Luke's.



Saul Hansel-Whalen, age 10, with summer fruits in a Wedgwood bowl that belonged to his great-grandmother Virginia.



PINS backpacks loaded with basic school supplies. Twelve of the original 67 packs had missing items added by Marcia on July 29, with another 6 new backpacks filled with supplies – bringing the total for the students to an impressive 73!

READY FOR SCHOOL!

(Continued from first page)

volunteers had stuffed 67 backpacks, only 12 of which were temporarily lacking 1 or 2 items – such as hand sanitizers or 3-ring notebooks – which Marcia has now acquired to complete the remaining packs. In addition, she added 6 more complete packs on Friday July 29.

This project that Marcia spearheads is a pragmatic way for St. Luke's Church to help young people from families in crisis or foster care who have been identified by the Springfield Family Services to start the new school year prepared. Besides Marcia's personal generosity in securing backpacks, donations from parishioners cover the bulk of the school supplies. If you didn't contribute this year, it's never too late to donate to PINS, whose funds are tracked separately. Just indicate that check or cash is for PINS when you donate to the church to help rebuild this wonderful fund that helps young people enter school with confidence.

Thank you, Marcia, for your continuing dedication to this community project that allows St. Luke's to make a tangible demonstration of caring and respect and, thereby, a real difference to the success and sense of self-worth of students who need a leg up. Each backpack is tied with a card saying, "Filled with love for you from St. Luke's Church, Chester, Vermont."

CHESTER PIG ROAST ON SATURDAY AUGUST 20, 4-7 PM

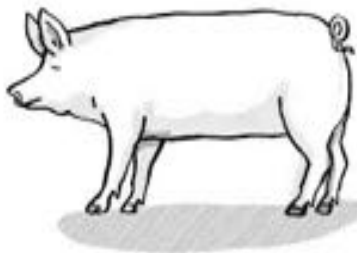
Celebrate summer with an outdoor southern-style Pig Roast and accompanying favorite picnic foods on the lawn of St. Luke's Church, 313 Main Street, Chester, VT, on Saturday August 20, 4-7 PM.

Barbecue-pit master Jessie Pixley will smoke the beast on location, and picnic specialties will be prepared by seasoned cooks. Favorite homemade side dishes include potato salad, coleslaw, baked beans, and cookies for dessert. Plus rolls, hot and cold drinks, and several different sauces created by grill master Jessie. Enjoy delicious food at tables on the back lawn of the church while playing lawn games or do take-out for the gang to enjoy at home. With summer heat and picnic pests in mind, as well as health precautions, side dishes will be packaged so distribution will be fast, clean, and perfect for transporting to a table or back to your house.

Reserve early to guarantee a spot. Ages 5 and under are free. Early Bird reservations made and paid by Monday August 15 receive a discount: adults @ \$13; youths 6-12 years @ \$7; and family of 5 @ \$40.

After August 15, the prices are adults @ \$15; youths 6-12 @ \$8; and family of 5 @ \$45.

Enjoy good food, fun, and friendship at St. Luke's first Pig Roast and spread the word to family, friends, and lovers of fun and food. For information, to help with preparations, or to make a reservation: contact Janet Hunter at 802-886-2304. Make checks out to St. Luke's Church, write PIG in the memo line, and mail check in advance to Janet Hunter, 10 Pine Brook Lane E9, North Springfield, VT 05150.



PASSING THOUGHTS

Have you ever driven past St. Luke's and seen something going on there that you perhaps wondered about? Well, that has happened to me several times during the past few weeks.

It all began when I drove past the church late one afternoon and saw a bright red Chester fire engine outside the church with the lights flashing and parked at an odd angle. Oh, oh; what was the problem? Well, fortunately the problem was not with St. Luke's, but next door at Inn Victoria, according to one of the men as he exited the machine. I don't think it was anything too serious next door, as I didn't see any tell-tale signs of trouble, so I continued on my way.

Then we had quite a storm pass through Chester the other Tuesday. Several houses on Orcutt Drive lost large trees, root ball and all, and on Meadow Road I lost two trees myself. What about St. Luke's and all the trees around the back lawn? Had any slates on our large slate roof taken flight? A quick once-over the next day, and all seemed to be shipshape. There were no trees down, and neither were there any wet patches inside the church where rainwater might have soaked through because of a missing slate or two.

However, the storm did disrupt two other items. First, the Internet was down on Sunday morning when I arrived to open up the church for the morning service, though the land-line service was still working. VTel answered my phone call (on a Sunday morning no less), but technicians were unable to get the Internet working until later in the afternoon. Hence no Zoom service that Sunday.

Second, we all noticed that the fans, way up near the top of the interior of the church, had not come on as usual. However, a few minutes into the service, they suddenly started working very nicely. Why? Because the fans work on a timer, and there had been about a two-hour electricity shutdown because of the storm. It was the same with the two outside lights at the front of the church – their timer also had to be reset.

Speaking of those outside lights at the front of the church, how many of you have had a chance to see the two lights illuminating both the St. Luke's sign and the window above the altar recently? They are due to come on about 8 PM and turn off around midnight. Many, many thanks to Steve Copping and his efforts the other week to figure out why they were not working. He came across two nasty-looking burnt wires outside the church, replaced both, and then installed two new LED lightbulbs which are much brighter and considerably cheaper to run than the two previous spotlights we had there.

Well, that's where we are right now regarding maintenance. There is always a lot to keep on top of at St. Luke's, so if you see something that needs some attention, please let me know.

David Carey, Junior Warden
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Georgiana Cheney 1933-2022

St. Luke's is sad to announce the death of Georgiana Cheney, a resident of Walpole, NH, and former parishioner at St. Luke's, along with her husband, George. She is survived by her husband, several children, and many grandchildren. Her burial service is at 1 PM on Saturday July 30 at the Immanuel Episcopal Church in Bellows Falls, where she and George were married many years ago. Burial follows at the Immanuel Churchyard Cemetery.

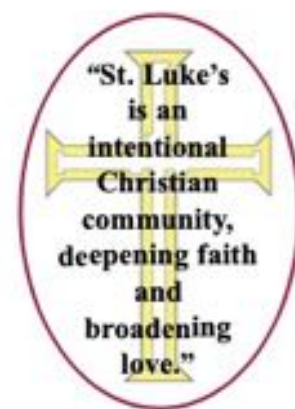
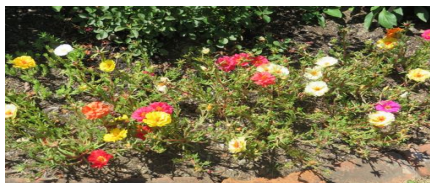
August Celebrations

Birthdays:

3 Kara Watters Lake
6 Lillian Willis
8 Aurora Hansel-Whalen
12 Bill Hoyt
13 Morgan Willis
18 Tom DesLauriers
18 Susannah Pennell
25 Beverly Dunbar
26 Kathleen Willis
26 John Hoover
27 Amos Worth
28 David F. Willis, Jr.
29 Kelly Watters

Anniversaries:

8 David & Marjorie Carey
21 Peter & Chris Burchstead
22 Gene & Colleen Garvey



Church Services

Services each Sunday will be at 10 AM, both in person and by Zoom, when possible, and will be followed by coffee hour.

On Wednesdays Bruce MacDuffie is leading a mid-week Eucharistic service at 5 PM without music.

Please join us.



St. Luke's Financial Update

	June 2022	YTD 2022	Annual Budget	YTD % of Budget
Pledge & Plate Income	\$ 1,421.00	\$ 23,044.00	\$ 42,325.00	54%
Other Operating Income	\$ 5,424.32	\$ 17,859.89	\$ 33,950.00	53%
Restricted Income	\$ 20.92	\$ 271.92	\$ 2,790.00	10%
Total Income	\$ 6,866.24	\$ 41,175.81	\$ 79,065.00	52%
Regular Expense	\$ 5,047.69	\$ 31,444.82	\$ 79,101.70	40%
Restricted Expense	\$ 22.00	\$ 122.00	\$ 2,590.00	5%
Total Expense	\$ 5,069.69	\$ 31,566.82	\$ 81,691.70	39%
Net Ordinary Income (loss)	\$ 1,796.55	\$ 9,608.99	\$ (2,626.70)	-366%
Draw on Investments	\$ - .00	\$ - .00	\$ 14,750.00	0%
Net Ordinary Income	\$ 1,796.55	\$ 9,608.99	\$ 12,123.30	

After six months our income is slightly over budget at 52%, while expenses are running 11% below. Other operating income consisted of \$737 from investment dividends, \$3,312 from Raymond James (rectory investments), and \$1,325 of Unrestricted Memorial Funds. Cash on hand is at a healthy level, and we have not taken any drawdowns on our investment accounts.

St. Luke's Episcopal Church



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September LITS Deadline August 22th

Send all articles, photos, etc., to
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