



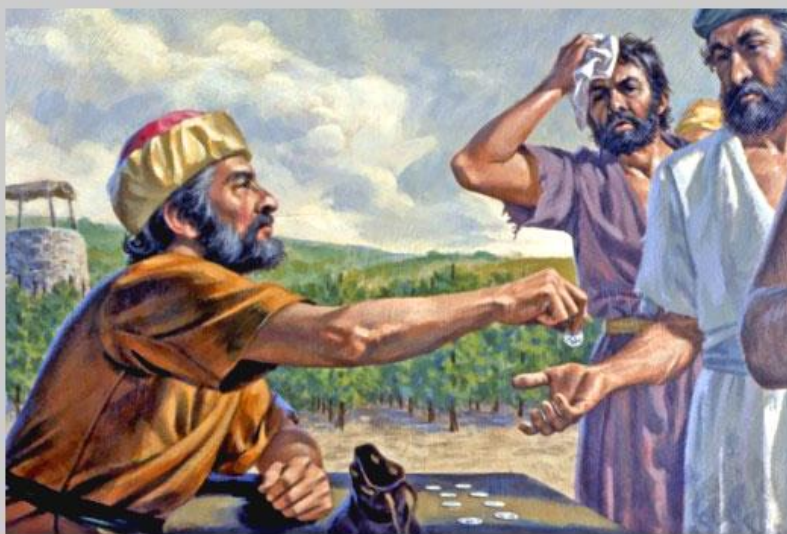
This Sunday at St. Luke's
February 1, 2026

8:15 a.m. – Holy Communion (said service)

10:15 a.m. – Holy Communion with hymns, choir and organ

Steven Cagle, organist

Septuagesima
(The Third Sunday before Lent)



God First

There now begins a new section of the Christian Year, centered on Holy Week and Easter. The name given to this Sunday – Septuagesima (seventieth, i.e. about seventy days from Easter) has a forward look. Our thoughts on Sundays from now on are turned from our Lord's *Coming* to its *Cause* – that human sin

from which He came to deliver us.

Both Epistle and Gospel remind us that, if we are living as who we have declared to be in our baptism – children of God and inheritors of the Kingdom of God – we have to come out of the center of the picture, and God must go there instead.

That this is no easy thing to do the Epistle and Gospel for this Sunday clearly demonstrate. The Epistle makes it clear that even a great saint like Paul had to use the strictest self-discipline. The call to self-indulgence was very strong in him as it is in us all. He writes, "I am my body's sternest master." He *just had* to be master of himself if

he was to carry out his set purpose of preaching the Gospel, and, by so doing, glorify God's holy name.

The Gospel parable (the Laborers in the Vineyard), no doubt, carries a number of meanings; here it may stand as a tale of envy. As the early starters "took their money, they grumbled at the farmer and said, "These last fellows have only put in one hour's work and you've treated them exactly the same as us who have gone through all the hard work and heat of the day!" They were jealous because the master was generous. There *they* were right in the center of the picture.

It is as if Jesus says to His hearers, "If you really care about the Kingdom of heaven and God is in His proper place—in the center of the picture where He ought to be, for the Kingdom of heaven is where God rules and reigns – you won't mind if some find their way in at the last minute. The only thing that should matter to you is that they have at last found Him and have come to glorify His name.

In the Kingdom of heaven the question of equal pay for equal work can never arise; there is none of us but has received far more than he can ever repay. (H.W. Dobson)

COLLECT FOR SEPTUAGESIMA

O LORD, we beseech thee favourably to hear the prayers of thy people; that we, who are justly punished for our offences, may be mercifully delivered by thy goodness, for the glory of thy Name; through Jesus Christ our Saviour, who liveth and, reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost ever, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

THE EPISTLE – 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 (J.B. Phillips)

PAUL: To preach the gospel faithfully is my set purpose

²⁴⁻²⁵ Do you remember how, on a racing-track, every competitor runs, but only one wins the prize? Well, you ought to run with your minds fixed on winning the prize! Every competitor in athletic events goes into serious training. Athletes will take tremendous pains—for a fading crown of leaves. But our contest is for an eternal crown that will never fade.

²⁶⁻²⁷ I run the race then with determination. I am no shadow-boxer, I really fight! I am my body's sternest master, for fear that when I have preached to others I should myself be disqualified.

NOTE: The apostle explains the importance of self-discipline. This advice is in the setting of the whole Epistle in which all things come from the Lord Christ (8:6) who freely gives us His power or grace (1:30). (William Sydnor)

THE GOSPEL – St. Matthew 20:1-16 (J.B. Phillips)

God's expansive generosity

20 ¹⁻⁷ “For the kingdom of Heaven is like a farmer going out early in the morning to hire labourers for his vineyard. He agreed with them on a wage of a silver coin a day and sent them to work. About nine o’clock he went and saw some others standing about in the market-place with nothing to do. ‘You go to the vineyard too,’ he said to them, ‘and I will pay you a fair wage.’ And off they went. At about mid-day and again at about three o’clock in the afternoon he went and did the same thing. Then about five o’clock he went out and found some others standing about. ‘Why are you standing about here all day doing nothing?’ he asked them. ‘Because no one has employed us,’ they replied. ‘You go off into the vineyard as well, then,’ he said.

⁸⁻¹² “When evening came the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, ‘Call the labourers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last and ending with the first.’ So those who were engaged at five o’clock came up and each man received a silver coin. But when the first to be employed came they reckoned they would get more, but they also received a silver coin a man. As they took their money they grumbled at the farmer and said, ‘These last fellows have only put in one hour’s work and you’ve treated them exactly the same as us who have gone through all the hard work and heat of the day!’

¹³⁻¹⁵ “But he replied to one of them, ‘My friend, I’m not being unjust to you. Wasn’t our agreement for a silver coin a day? Take your money and go home. It is my wish to give the latecomers as much as I give you. May I not do what I like with what belongs to me? Must you be jealous because I am generous?’

¹⁶ “So, many who are the last now will be the first then and the first last.”

NOTE: Among Jesus’ hearers were Pharisees, who knew and kept the Law, and common people, who did not. The point of the parable is that both needed God’s forgiveness and strengthening power just as laborers, no matter how long they had worked still needed money to buy daily bread. (William Sydnor)

LECTIONARY READING

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON – Joshua 1:1-9 (RSV)

Joshua, successor to Moses, is to find his strength in God

1 After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, the Lord said to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses’ minister, ² “Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, into the land which I am giving to them, to the people of Israel. ³ Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given to you, as I promised to Moses. ⁴ From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites to the Great Sea toward the going down

of the sun shall be your territory. ⁵ No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life; as I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you. ⁶ Be strong and of good courage; for you shall cause this people to inherit the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. ⁷ Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law which Moses my servant commanded you; turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go. ⁸ This book of the law shall not depart out of your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall have good success. ⁹ Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; be not frightened, neither be dismayed; for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”

NOTE: Joshua and his predecessor Moses stand as models for people of faith of all generations. There is only one way to please God, that is to trust and obey. (William Sydnor)

THIS SUNDAY

Preacher: The Rector

Lector OT, Tim Kirby

Lector Epistle, Kathryn Noblett

Acolyte – Reed Ferrell

Verger – Dr. Alvin Cash

Ushers: Tim Kirby and Bob Bradley

CURRENT AND UPCOMING EVENTS

February

- **WSL Bible Study** – Starting Wednesday, Jan. 21, at 9:30 a.m. for 6 weeks. For more info contact Judy Brooten, 706-851-6296.
- **The Presentation of Christ in the Temple** – Monday, Feb. 2, HC Jennus Chapel at noon.
- **Eastern Orthodox Vespers** – Sunday, Feb. 1, Feb. 8, and Feb. 22, at 2 p.m.
- **Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper** – Feb. 17, begins at 5:00 p.m.
- **Ash Wednesday** – Feb. 18, at noon and 5:30 p.m.
- **Eastern Orthodox Church Baptism / Christmation** – Saturday, Feb. 21, at 10 a.m.
- **St. Matthias the Apostle** – Tuesday, Feb. 24, HC Jennus Chapel at noon.

Options

In-church.

Online. Services are livestreamed on Facebook and available for viewing following the service on YouTube. To access both put “Parish Church of St. Luke, Blue Ridge, Ga.” In the search bar.



Tip of the Canterbury Cap to Tim Kirby for assuming the position of usher / greeter coordinator and Neil McDonald for re-assuming the role of St. Luke's Men's Group president and Jim Noblett agreeing to serve as SLMG secretary.



JOIN THE CHOIR!



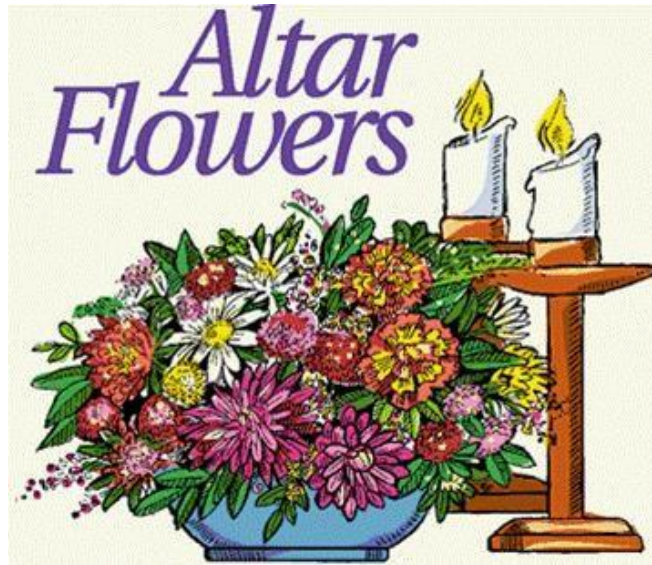
For information, contact, Diana Burden at 678-852-6907 or email dburden6907@gmail.com.



The Anglican Relief
and Development Fund

OUR MISSION

St. Luke's mission is to grow spiritually in the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ and in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit and to share our faith, our hands and hearts for the sake of the Gospel, our community and the world.



SIGN-UP FOR FLOWERS

A sign-up sheet for Altar flowers is available in Thomason Hall for 2025.

Please sign up for days you wish to commemorate.

Flowers are needed throughout the end of the year. Please email
or call Kathryn Noblett at the church office to sign up.

Financial Pledge for the Year of our Lord 2025

*As stewards of God's gifts and in gratitude for all blessings, I pledge the following amount to
the work of Christ through St. Luke's Church for 2025*

Name

Address

Amount

_____ Weekly _____ Monthly _____ Yearly

(Please tick the appropriate blank)



St. Luke's Church, "The Parish Church of the Mountains," 7 Ewing St., (POB 1821), Blue Ridge, Georgia 30513; (706) 632-8245;
www.stlukesblueridge.org; stlukes@tds.net.