

The Holy Spirit

Whitsuntide was formerly one of the special times of the year for Baptism. The name, shortened from White-Sunday, was probably derived from the procession of the newly-baptized who wore white robes to show that they were cleansed from sin and set apart to a new life through the power of the Holy Spirit.

The story of the first Whitsunday (Pentecost) is told in the Epistle appointed for this Sunday – a passage from the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles, almost certainly edited by Luke from his own travel diary and other reputable sources. The author sets out to give an account of the Church's earliest days, and he begins with its beginning in the Feast of Pentecost, having obtained the story, no doubt, from some of those present.

The fulfilment of Christ's promise, the sudden access of power, could only be described by external impressions. The disciples were moved irresistibly as by the "rushing of a violent wind". They were set on fire by something not of themselves; they were filled with boldness and burned with a new enthusiasm as the Holy Spirit came upon them.

We should not think that the Holy Spirit came into being on the Day of Pentecost (a Jewish festival held each year 50 days after Passover) any more than the Son of God came into being at the Incarnation and the birth of Jesus. But the Spirit, which in times past had fallen on varying ones at great moments, came now on all and to stay.

THE COLLECT FOR WHITSUNDAY (PENTECOST)

O GOD, who as at this time didst teach the hearts of thy faithful people, by sending to them the light of thy Holy Spirit; Grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort; through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the same Spirit, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

THE EPISTLE – Acts 2:1-11 (J.B. Phillips)

The power of the Holy Spirit

2 ¹⁻⁴ Then when the actual day of Pentecost came they were all assembled together. Suddenly there was a sound from heaven like the rushing of a violent wind, and it filled the whole house where they were seated. Before their eyes appeared tongues like flames which separated off and settled above the head of each one of them. They

were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different languages as the Spirit gave them power to proclaim his message.

⁵⁻¹¹ Now there were staying in Jerusalem Jews of deep faith from every nation of the world. When they heard this sound a crowd quickly collected and were completely bewildered because each one of them heard these men speaking in his own language. They were absolutely amazed and said in their astonishment, “Listen, surely all these speakers are Galileans? Then how does it happen that every single one of us can hear the particular language he has known from a child? There are Parthians, Medes and Elamites; there are men whose homes are in Mesopotamia, in Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, and the parts of Africa near Cyrene, as well as visitors from Rome! There are Jews and proselytes, men from Crete and men from Arabia, yet we can all hear these men speaking of the magnificence of God in our native language.”

NOTE: The first Whitsunday occurred on the ancient Jewish Feast of Pentecost. This was when the believers in the risen Lord first became aware of the presence of God’s Spirit in their midst. The occasion marks the beginning of the dynamic, missionary life of the Christian Church. (William Sydnor)

THE GOSPEL (H.C.) – St. John 14:15-31 (J.B. Phillips)

Jesus promises the Spirit

Jesus said to his disciples:

¹⁵⁻²⁰ “If you really love me, you will keep the commandments I have given you and I shall ask the Father to give you someone else to stand by you, to be with you always. I mean the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot accept, for it can neither see nor recognise that Spirit. But you recognise him, for he is with you now and will be in your hearts. I am not going to leave you alone in the world—I am coming to you. In a very little while, the world will see me no more but you will see me, because I am really alive and you will be alive too. When that day come, you will realise that I am in my Father, that you are in me, and I am in you.

²¹ “Every man who knows my commandments and obeys them is the man who really loves me, and every man who really loves me will himself be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and make myself known to him.”

²² Then Judas (not Iscariot), said, “Lord, how is it that you are going to make yourself known to us but not to the world?”

²³⁻²⁴ And to this Jesus replied, “When a man loves me, he follows my teaching. Then my Father will love him, and we will come to that man and make our home within

him. The man who does not really love me will not follow my teaching. Indeed, what you are hearing from me now is not really my saying, but comes from the Father who sent me.

²⁵⁻²⁶ “I have said all this while I am still with you. But the one who is coming to stand by you, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name, will be your teacher and will bring to your minds all that I have said to you.

²⁷⁻³¹ “I leave behind with you—peace; I give you my own peace and my gift is nothing like the peace of this world. You must not be distressed and you must not be daunted. You have heard me say, ‘I am going away and I am coming back to you.’ If you really loved me, you would be glad because I am going to my Father, for my Father is greater than I. And I have told you of it now, before it happens, so that when it does happen, your faith in me will not be shaken. I shall not be able to talk much longer to you for the spirit that rules this world is coming very close. He has no hold over me, but I go on my way to show the world that I love the Father and do what he sent me to do ... Get up now! Let us leave this place.

NOTE: This section is from the Upper Room discourses of our Lord on the night of the Last Supper and of His arrest. He promises the disciples that the Father will send the Holy Spirit to remind and teach (and so to guide) those who are true to Him. (William Sydnor)

LECTIONARY READING

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON – Joel 2:28-32 (RSV)

God's Spirit poured out

²⁸ “And it shall come to pass afterward,
that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh;
your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
your old men shall dream dreams,
and your young men shall see visions.

²⁹ Even upon the menservants and maidservants
in those days, I will pour out my spirit.

³⁰ “And I will give portents in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke. ³¹ The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and terrible day of the LORD comes. ³² And it shall come to pass that all who call upon the name of the LORD shall be delivered; for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape, as the LORD has said, and among the survivors shall be those whom the LORD calls.

NOTE: The prophet foretells the coming day of the Lord when God's Spirit will be known in the midst of his people. This great day will usher in the Day of Judgment. (William Sydnor)

Pentecost, commonly called Whitsunday

The Preacher – Fr. Louis Guerin

The Rev. Louis Guerin is the retired assistant professor of Homiletics at St. Vincent de Paul Seminary, Boynton Beach, Fla., and the owner of a farm in Fannin County. He has spoken many times at St. Luke's and his return is always eagerly awaited.

Sunday Worship Options

In-church.

Drive-in. Those choosing this option are asked to remain in their automobile and listen to the service via their car radio (FM 98.1). Holy Communion will be provided.

Online. Services are livestreamed on Facebook and available for viewing following the service on You Tube.

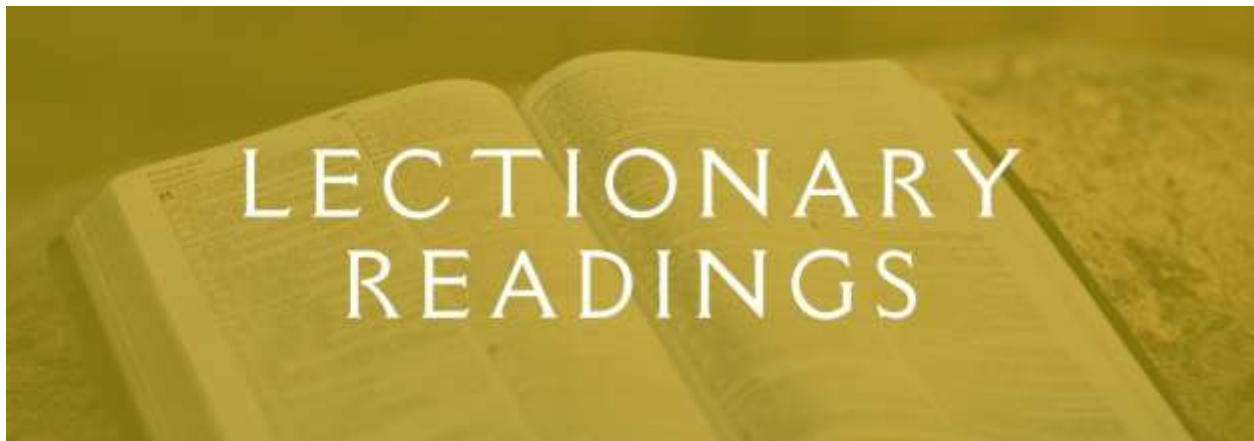
To access both put “Parish Church of St. Luke, Blue Ridge, Ga.” In the search bar.



**Tip of the Canterbury Cap to Diana Burden
for restarting St. Luke's choir.**

MEMORIAL GARDEN FEES TO INCREASE

The Vestry at its April meeting approved an increase in fees to purchase plots in St. Luke's Memorial Garden. Effective July 1, plots will be \$450. They may be purchased at the old rate of \$350 in the interim. Cost of brass plaques and granite stones (both included in the cost of a plot) has necessitated the increase. Please speak to Pat McConnell, chairman of the Cemetery Committee, for a complete table of fees or to purchase one or more plots.



Sharing Tuesdays

A Preview of Sunday's Readings

10 a.m. until we're done

Sharing Tuesdays is your turn !!! There are no teachers; no leaders; no presentations; no videos; no homework; no assignments. Just COME and read the Bible together with your brothers and sisters inChrist and share from your heart. All thoughts, questions, uncertainties, feelings are welcome. All that matters is how the Bible readings impact you. Is there a special phrase? A word? An idea? A perplexity? A thought? Whatever it is, it belongs in Sharing Tuesdays. Bring your Bible and we will read the lectionary readings for the forthcoming Sunday.



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.

Financial Pledge for the Year of our Lord 2023

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 2023.

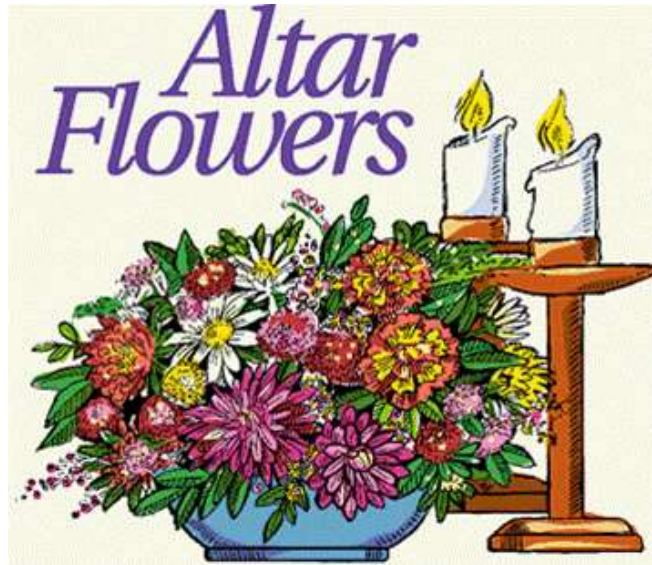
Name

Address

—
Amount

Weekly Monthly Yearly

(Please tick the appropriate blank)



SIGN-UP FOR FLOWERS

A sign-up sheet for Altar flowers is available in Thomason Hall for 2023.

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.

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_____ 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.