



***This Sunday at St. Luke's***  
**February 8, 2026**

**8:15 a.m. – Holy Communion (said service)**  
**10:15 a.m. – Morning Prayer and Sermon together with**  
**Shortened Holy Communion**

*Charles Lutz, singer, song-writer, guitarist*

**Sexagesima**  
**(The Second Sunday before Lent)**



**Ourselves God's  
Servants**

Sexagesima is Latin for “sixtieth”; the Sunday is so called because it is roughly sixty days from Easter.

The Epistle and Gospel for this Sunday give pictures of the agent of God at work. The Epistle tells how Paul, stung by unkind words, is provoked into giving a list of some of his more thrilling adventures as he went about spreading the

good news of the Gospel. In the service books of Gregory's day the Epistle was longer; it included the first nine verses of chapter 12. No doubt the Reformers felt that an Epistle of twenty-four verses was too long, but in some ways it was a pity they cut it down, as the omitted part tells how Paul came to understand God's decisive role in his life. “My

grace is enough for you,” God said, “for where there is weakness, my power is shown the more completely.

Paul trod no primrose path; for him it was hard going all the time. If ever a man had reason for throwing up his hands, Paul had; but no such thing happened. Why? Because he trusted not in his own power but in the power of God. We pray that we shall have the power to do the same, rely on God’s strength alone (see today’s Collect).

In the Gospel God’s agent is pictured as a *sower of seed*. It shows how our Lord thought about His work and how all committed Christians should think about theirs. Like Paul, the sower may find his work disappointing and unrewarding, either because he has come across a shut mind (“You might as well talk to a brick wall”); or shallow faith (“I enjoyed the service: I’ll come along again some time”); or an overcrowded life (“My dear, I haven’t a minute”): but is wrong to become discouraged; the seed that is sown is not one’s own but the *Word of God*. (H.W. Dobson)

### COLLECT FOR SEXAGESIMA

O LORD God, who seest that we put not our trust in any thing that we do; Mercifully grant that by thy power we may be defended against all adversity; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen*.

### THE EPISTLE – 2 Corinthians 11:19-31 (J.B. Phillips)

*Paul’s critics pumped up with spiritual pride compel him to doing some ‘boasting’ of his own*

[<sup>16</sup> Once more, let me advise you not to look upon me as a fool. Yet if you do, then listen to what this “fool” has to boast about.

<sup>17-21</sup> I am not now speaking as the Lord commands me but as a fool who must be “in on” this business of boasting. Since all the others are so proud of themselves, let me do a little boasting as well.]

From your heights of superior wisdom I am sure you can smile tolerantly on a fool. Oh, you’re tolerant all right! You don’t mind, do you, if a man takes away your liberty, spends your money, makes a fool of you or even smacks your face? I am almost ashamed to say that I never did brave strong things like that to you. Yet in whatever particular they enjoy such confidence I (speaking as a fool, remember) have just as much confidence.

<sup>22</sup> Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I.

<sup>23</sup> Are they ministers of Christ? I have more claim to this title than they. This is a silly game but look at this list: I have worked harder than any of them. I have served more

prison sentences! I have been beaten times without number. I have faced death again and again.

<sup>24</sup> I have been beaten the regulation thirty-nine stripes by the Jews five times.

<sup>25</sup> I have been beaten with rods three times. I have been stoned once. I have been shipwrecked three times. I have been twenty-four hours in the open sea.

<sup>26-27</sup> In my travels I have been in constant danger from rivers and floods, from bandits, from my own countrymen, and from pagans. I have faced danger in city streets, danger in the desert, danger on the high seas, danger among false Christians. I have known exhaustion, pain, long vigils, hunger and thirst, going without meals, cold and lack of clothing.

<sup>28-29</sup> Apart from all external trials I have the daily burden of responsibility for all the churches. Do you think anyone is weak without my feeling his weakness? Does anyone have his faith upset without my longing to restore him?

<sup>30-31</sup> Oh, if I am going to boast, let me boast of the things which have shown up my weakness! The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, he who is blessed for ever, knows that I speak the simple truth.

NOTE: Here Paul reveals himself as one who trusts in the Lord and never wavers even in the face of numerous hardships. (William Sydnor)

## THE GOSPEL – St. Luke 8:4-15 (J.B. Phillips)

*Jesus' parable of the mixed reception given when the Gospel is announced*

<sup>4-8</sup> When a large crowd had collected and people were coming to him from one town after another, he spoke to them and gave them this parable: "A sower went out to sow his seed, and while he was sowing, some of the seed fell by the roadside and was trodden down and birds gobbled it up. Some fell on the rock, and when it sprouted it withered for lack of moisture. Some fell among thorn-bushes which grew up with the seeds and choked the life out of them. But some seed fell on good soil and grew and produced a crop—a hundred times what had been sown." And when he had said this, he called out, "Let the man who has ears to hear use them!"

<sup>9-10</sup> Then his disciples asked him the meaning of the parable. To which Jesus replied, "You have been given the chance to understand the secrets of the kingdom of God, but the others are given parables so that they may go through life with their eyes open and 'seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand'".

<sup>11-15</sup> "This is what the parable means. The seed is the message of God. The seed sown by the roadside represents those who hear the message, and then the devil comes and takes it away from their hearts so that they cannot believe it and be saved. That sown on the rock represents those who accept the message with great delight when they hear it, but have no real root. They believe for a little while but when the time of temptation comes, they lose faith. And the seed sown among the thorns represents the people who

hear the message and go on their way, and with the worries and riches and pleasures of living, the life is choked out of them, and in the end they produce nothing. But the seed sown on good soil means the men who hear the message and accept it with good and honest heart, and go on steadily producing a good crop.

NOTE: The Word of God is like seed. It requires sowing, cultivating, and harvesting. Yet there is an element of mystery both in the growth of seeds and in the spread of God's Word. (William Sydnor)

## LECTIONARY READING

### OLD TESTAMENT LESSON – Isaiah 50:4-10 (RSV)

*The Servant's humiliation and vindication*

- <sup>4</sup> The Lord GOD has given me  
the tongue of those who are taught,  
that I may know how to sustain with a word  
him that is weary.  
Morning by morning he wakens,  
he wakens my ear  
to hear as those who are taught.
- <sup>5</sup> The Lord GOD has opened my ear,  
and I was not rebellious,  
I turned not backward.
- <sup>6</sup> I gave my back to the smiters,  
and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard;  
I hid not my face  
from shame and spitting.
- <sup>7</sup> For the Lord GOD helps me;  
therefore I have not been confounded;  
therefore I have set my face like a flint,  
and I know that I shall not be put to shame;
- <sup>8</sup> he who vindicates me is near.  
Who will contend with me?  
Let us stand up together.  
Who is my adversary?  
Let him come near to me.
- <sup>9</sup> Behold, the Lord GOD helps me;  
who will declare me guilty?  
Behold, all of them will wear out like a garment;  
the moth will eat them up.

<sup>10</sup> Who among you fears the LORD  
and obeys the voice of his servant,  
who walks in darkness  
and has no light,  
yet trusts in the name of the LORD  
and relies upon his God?  
<sup>11</sup> Behold, all you who kindle a fire,  
who set brands alight!  
Walk by the light of your fire,  
and by the brands which you have kindled!  
This shall you have from my hand:  
you shall lie down in torment.

NOTE: There are four “Servant Songs” of Isaiah that describe the service, suffering, and exaltation of the Servant of the Lord, the Messiah. All four songs show the Messiah to be God’s meek and gentle Servant. He is a royal figure representing Israel in its ideal form; He is the high priest, atoning for the sins of the world. The prophet predicts that this Servant of the Lord would deliver the world from the prison of sin. In the royal terminology of the ancient Near East, a servant was a “trusted envoy,” a “confidential representative,” or “one who is chosen.” The Servant Songs are found in Isaiah 42:1–9; Isaiah 49:1–13; **Isaiah 50:4–11**; and Isaiah 52:13—53:12.

Today’s passage contains the third of these Servant Songs. In it, the prophet contrasts Israel’s sin to the Servant’s obedience.

Some 700 years after this Servant’s Song was written, Jesus fulfilled this prophecy. Abuse and insults were heaped upon our Lord as He was thrown to the Roman soldiers. His back was beaten, His face was hit, and He was spit upon (see John 19:1–3; Matthew 27:30). The Lord Jesus was obedient unto death (Philippians 2:8), and the Father vindicated His Suffering Servant by resurrecting Him. “Because the Sovereign Lord helps me, / I will not be disgraced” (Isaiah 50:7). **(copied)**

## **THIS SUNDAY**

**Preacher: The Rector**

Lector, Joe Hartley

Acolyte – Ruth Johnson

Verger – Dr. Alvin Cash

Ushers: Roger, Teresa Wankel and Steven Wankel



## 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.
- **Vestry Meeting** – Today, Feb. 8, after the 10:15 service.
- **Eastern Orthodox Vespers** – Sunday, Feb. 8, and Feb. 22, at 2:00 p.m.
- **AARP TAX PREPARATION** – Fridays, Feb. 6 – Apr. 10 from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.
- **SLMG Monthly Meeting** – Tuesday, Feb. 10 at 11 a.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 / Chrismation** – Saturday, Feb. 21, at 10 a.m.
- **St. Matthias the Apostle** – Tuesday, Feb. 24, HC Jennus Chapel at noon.
- **AARP Smart Driver Class** – Saturday, Feb. 28, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

## 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 Jim Noblett and Jordan Van Horn for facilitating the technical aspect of the broadcast of last Sunday’s service when a snowstorm had closed virtually every other church in the county and rendered their voice mute.



## JOIN THE CHOIR!



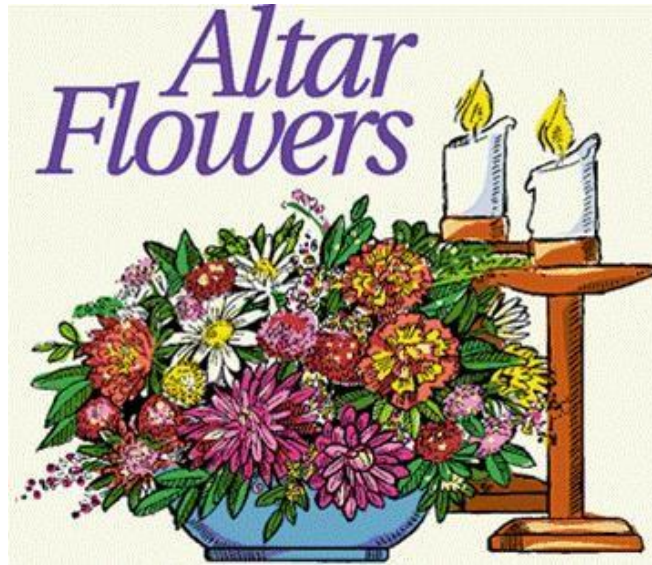
For information, contact, Diana Burden at 678-852-6907 or email [dburden6907@gmail.com](mailto:dburden6907@gmail.com).



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](http://www.stlukesblueridge.org); [stlukes@tds.net](mailto:stlukes@tds.net).