



This Sunday at St. Luke's
September 17, 2023

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

10 a.m. – Holy Communion, organ and hymns
Steven Cagle, organist; St. Luke's Singers

The Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity



Banishing fear, embracing faith

Humans, in particular followers of Jesus, face a daily struggle between fear and faith. Fear is inborn in us and has its place. If, for example, you look out your window and see a dark cloud in the shape of a funnel, fear should kick in propelling

you to get yourself and other members of your family to a cellar or inner-most hallway away from windows. This type of fear, implanted by God in man, might be called productive and protective fear. But there is another type of fear, a type that must be steadfastly avoided and resisted. This type might be called anxious and debilitating fear. Sadly, it's all around us. One of its chief characteristics is an over-focus on the what-ifs of life. Jesus in today's Gospel points us in a different direction. He directs us from fear to faith. This faith is not faith in faith. Positive thinking is important and has its place. Christian faith, nevertheless, is sturdier. It is trust in the God who tends the sparrows and knows the number of the hairs of our head. Whatever the world throws at us, He is greater. The sufferings of this present age are for a moment. The blessing promised those joined to His Son in faith and baptism are forever. What are you worried about? Put your hand in the hand of God. Banish fear; embrace faith.

REFLECTION ON THIS SUNDAY'S OLD TESTAMENT READING **Solomon dedicates the Temple in Jerusalem**

Buildings have their place in God's scheme of things. The Temple of Jerusalem – like the Tabernacle before it – was a place of Presence. There in the Holy of Holies dwelt the living God among His people. This Presence was represented by the cloud and smoke that filled the building the day the Temple was dedicated. With that said, Jesus does one better. He is now the place the living God is strangely present among His people. He is the place earth and heaven overlap. He is the Temple not made with hands that renders the Temple in Jerusalem redundant.

A sequel to the story is that with the coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost Jesus' believing people themselves become 'temples'. Paul picks up this thought as he addresses the Christians in Corinth:

“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are” (1 Corinthians 3:16-17).

Apparently, the Corinthians had forgotten and needed to be reminded that they were 'temples'. Their behaviour needed to catch up with who they were in Christ. What about you and me? Do we need Paul's reminder?

THE COLLECT FOR TRINITY 15

KEEP, we beseech thee, O Lord, thy Church with thy perpetual mercy; and, because the frailty of man without thee cannot but fall, keep us ever by thy help from all things hurtful, and lead us to all things profitable to our salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

THE EPISTLE – Galatians 6:11-18 (J.B. Phillips)

The power of Christ matters above all

6 ¹¹ Look at these huge letters I am making in writing these words to you with my own hand!

¹²⁻¹³ These men who are always urging you to be circumcised—what are they after? They want to present a pleasing front to the world and they want to avoid being persecuted for the cross of Christ. For even those who have been circumcised do not themselves keep the Law. But they want you circumcised so that they may be able to boast about your submission to their ruling.

¹⁴⁻¹⁶ Yet God forbid that I should boast about anything or anybody except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, which means that the world is a dead thing to me and I am a dead man to the world. But in Christ it is not circumcision or uncircumcision that counts but the power of new birth. To all who live by this principle, to the true Israel of God, may there be peace and mercy!

¹⁷ Let no one interfere with me after this. I carry on my scarred body the marks of my owner, the Lord Jesus.

¹⁸ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, my brothers, be with your spirit.

PAUL

NOTE: St. Paul closes this Epistle with a restatement of his great trust in God as he knows Him in the crucified and risen Lord. (William Sydor)

THE GOSPEL – St. Matthew 6:24-34 (J.B. Phillips)

Put your trust in God alone

6 ²⁴ “No one can be loyal to two masters. He is bound to hate one and love the other, or support one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and the power of money at the same time.”

²⁵⁻³⁰ “That is why I say to you, don’t worry about living—wondering what you are going to eat or drink, or what you are going to wear. Surely life is more important than food, and the body more important than the clothes you wear. Look at the birds in the sky. They never sow nor reap nor store away in barns, and yet your Heavenly Father feeds them. Aren’t you much more valuable to him than they are? Can any of you, however much he worries, make himself an inch taller? And why do you worry about clothes? Consider how the wild flowers grow. They neither work nor weave, but I tell you that even Solomon in all his glory was never arrayed like one of these! Now if God so clothes the flowers of the field, which are alive today and burnt in the stove tomorrow, is he not much more likely to clothe you, you ‘little-faiths’?”

³¹⁻³³ “So don’t worry and don’t keep saying, ‘What shall we eat, what shall we drink or what shall we wear?! That is what pagans are always looking for; your Heavenly Father knows that you need them all. Set your heart on the kingdom and his goodness, and all these things will come to you as a matter of course.

³⁴ “Don’t worry at all then about tomorrow. Tomorrow can take care of itself! One day’s trouble is enough for one day.”

NOTE: Be not anxious for material things. Trust God who provides for the birds of the air. You are of more value than they. (See also Luke 12:4-7, 22-31.) (VHM)

LECTIONARY READING

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON – 1 Kings 8:22-30, 54-63 (RSV)

A portion of Solomon’s prayer at the dedication of the Temple

8 ²²Then Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the assembly of Israel, and spread forth his hands toward heaven; ²³ and said, “O LORD, God of Israel, there is no God like thee, in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and showing steadfast love to thy servants who walk before thee with all their heart; ²⁴ who hast kept with thy servant David my father what thou didst declare to him; yea, thou didst speak with thy mouth, and with thy hand hast fulfilled it this day. ²⁵ Now therefore, O LORD, God of Israel, keep with thy servant David my father what thou hast promised him, saying, ‘There shall never fail you a man before me to sit upon the throne of Israel, if only your sons take heed to their way, to walk before me as you have walked before me.’ ²⁶ Now therefore, O God of Israel, let thy word be confirmed, which thou hast spoken to thy servant David my father.

²⁷ “But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain thee; how much less this house which I have built! ²⁸ Yet have regard to the prayer of thy servant and to his supplication, O LORD my God, hearkening to the cry and to the prayer which thy servant prays before thee this day; ²⁹ that thy eyes may be open night and day toward this house, the place of which thou hast said, ‘My name shall be there,’ that thou mayest hearken to the prayer which thy servant offers toward this place. ³⁰ And hearken thou to the supplication of thy servant and of thy people Israel, when they pray toward this place; yea, hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place; and when thou hearest, forgive.

Solomon blesses the assembly

⁵⁴ Now as Solomon finished offering all this prayer and supplication to the LORD, he arose from before the altar of the LORD, where he had knelt with hands outstretched

toward heaven; ⁵⁵ and he stood, and blessed all the assembly of Israel with a loud voice, saying, ⁵⁶ “Blessed be the LORD who has given rest to his people Israel, according to all that he promised; not one word has failed of all his good promise, which he uttered by Moses his servant. ⁵⁷ The LORD our God be with us, as he was with our fathers; may he not leave us or forsake us; ⁵⁸ that he may incline our hearts to him, to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, his statutes, and his ordinances, which he commanded our fathers. ⁵⁹ Let these words of mine, wherewith I have made supplication before the LORD, be near to the LORD our God day and night, and may he maintain the cause of his servant, and the cause of his people Israel, as each day requires; ⁶⁰ that all the peoples of the earth may know that the LORD is God; there is no other. ⁶¹ Let your heart therefore be wholly true to the LORD our God, walking in his statutes and keeping his commandments, as at this day.”

Solomon offers sacrifices

⁶² Then the king, and all Israel with him, offered sacrifice before the LORD. ⁶³ Solomon offered as peace offerings to the LORD twenty-two thousand oxen and a hundred and twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the people of Israel dedicated the house of the LORD. ⁶⁴ The same day the king consecrated the middle of the court that was before the house of the LORD; for there he offered the burnt offering and the cereal offering and the fat pieces of the peace offerings, because the bronze altar that was before the LORD was too small to receive the burnt offering and the cereal offering and the fat pieces of the peace offerings.

⁶⁵ So Solomon held the feast at that time, and all Israel with him, a great assembly, from the entrance of Hamath to the Brook of Egypt, before the LORD our God, seven days. ⁶⁶ On the eighth day he sent the people away; and they blessed the king, and went to their homes joyful and glad of heart for all the goodness that the LORD had shown to David his servant and to Israel his people.

NOTE: Here are portions of King Solomon’s prayer at the dedication of the Temple in Jerusalem. He concludes with an exhortation to trust God and obey His laws (v. 61). (William Sydnor)

Trinity 15

The Preacher – The Rector

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 Teresa Wankel for all her good works, way too many to enumerate.



Sharing Tuesdays

A Preview of Sunday's Readings

10 a.m.

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 in Christ and share from your heart. All thoughts, questions, uncertainties, feelings are welcome. This coming Tuesday, we shall be looking 1 Kings 12:1-20, Ephesians 3, Luke 7:11-17. Please join us.

CHOIR PRACTICE



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

CONCERT SCHEDULE 2023

Georgia Festival Ensemble Chorus, Sunday, December 3, 7 p.m.

The Georgia Festival Chorus was begun in the fall of 1987 as the Cobb Festival Chorus, under the direction of Frank Boggs. After 23 years at Westminster School, he directed the choral groups and started the orchestra program. Randall F. Roming is the accompanist.

North Georgia Symphony Concert, Sunday, December 10, 3 p.m.

The Symphony Orchestra of North Georgia (SONG) was created in 2021 with the goal of expanding music opportunities for the community locally and specifically in Forsyth County.

CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT, under the direction of Randy Wilbur, Sunday, December 17, 5 p.m.

This year's holiday music extravaganza builds on last year's. Electric and exciting, feature some of the best musicians in the area and sure to put you in the right spirit for Christmas.



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.

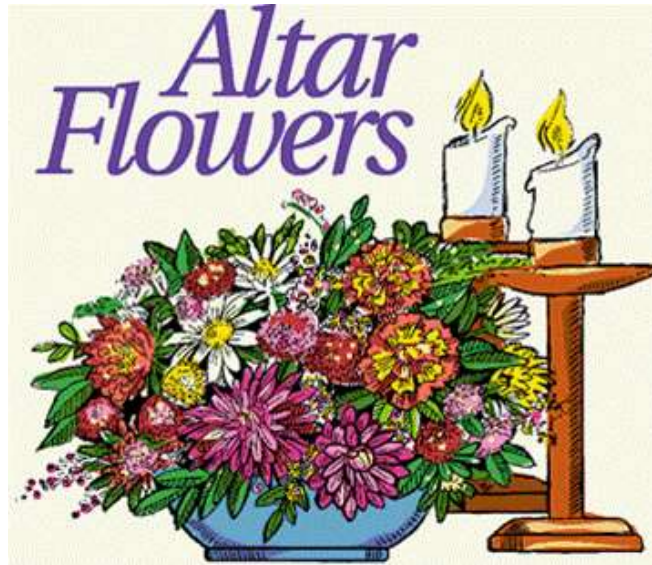
Name

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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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.