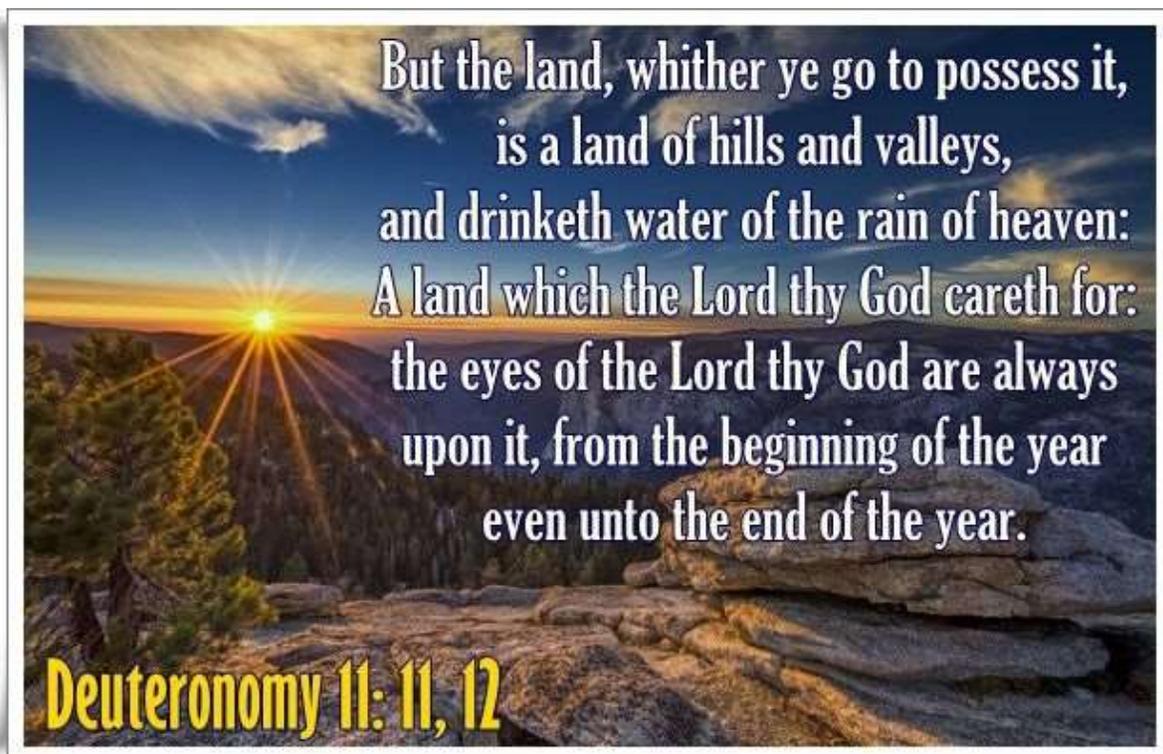




*This Sunday at St. Luke's
November 20, 2022*

**8:15 a.m. – Holy Communion (said service)
10 a.m. – Holy Communion with hymns and sermon**

The Sunday next before Advent



The source of our blessings

Today's Old Testament lesson reminds us to acknowledge God as the source of our blessings and to be thankful and obedient. In the words of an old Gospel song: "Count your blessings, name them one by one." On this Sunday we end our trek through the Pentateuch (the books of Moses) which began on Trinity Sunday.

THE COLLECT FOR THE SUNDAY NEXT BEFORE ADVENT

STIR up, we beseech thee, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people; that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may by thee be plenteously rewarded; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

FOR THE EPISTLE – Jeremiah 23:5-8 (J.B. Phillips)

The coming King

23⁵ See, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will cause a new shoot to spring out of David. He will reign as king, he will rule wisely, and he will establish justice and fair-dealing in the land. Under his rule Judah shall be safe, and Israel shall live securely. The name that will be given to him is this: THE LORD IS OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. So, therefore, the days are coming, says the Lord, when men shall no longer say,

“As surely as the Lord lives who brought the Israelites out of the land of Egypt”!
But, “As surely as the Lord lives who brought up and led forth the children of the house of Israel out of the north country and out of all the countries where he had driven them!” And they shall live in their own land.

NOTE: The prophet foresaw, beyond the grim last days of the kingdom of Judah (587 B.C.), that God’s Deliverer would bring restoration and an ideal regime. This would also be a time of judgment. (William Sydnor)

THE GOSPEL – St. John 6:5-14 (J.B. Phillips)

The great coming Messianic banquet anticipated

6¹⁻⁶ After this Jesus crossed the Lake of Galilee (or Lake Tiberias), and a great crowd followed him because they had seen signs which he gave in his dealings with the sick. But Jesus went up the hillside and sat down there with his disciples. The Passover, the Jewish festival, was near. So Jesus, raising his eyes and seeing a great crowd on the way towards him, said to Philip, “Where can we buy food for these people to eat?” (He said this to test Philip, for he himself knew what he was going to do.)

7 “Ten pounds’ worth of bread would not be enough for them,” Philip replied, “even if they had only a little each.”

8-9 Then Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, another disciple, put in, “There is a boy here who has five small barley loaves and a couple of fish, but what’s the good of that for such a crowd?”

10^a Then Jesus said, “Get the people to sit down.”

^{10b-12} There was plenty of grass there, and the men, some five thousand of them, sat down. Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks for them and distributed them to the people sitting on the grass, and he distributed the fish in the same way, giving them as much as they wanted. When they had eaten enough, Jesus said to his disciples, “Collect the pieces that are left over so that nothing is wasted.”

¹³⁻¹⁴ So they did as he suggested and filled twelve baskets with the broken pieces of the five barley loaves, which were left over after the people had eaten! When the men saw this sign of Jesus’ power, they kept saying, “This certainly is the Prophet who was to come into the world!”

NOTE: The feeding of the five thousand anticipates the messianic banquet which will take place when God’s Deliverer comes. The Lord’s Supper also performs this function. It too anticipates the day when the Lord Jesus, David’s appointed successor, will be the host at a great feast for His people (Isaiah 25:6).

LECTIONARY READING

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON – Deuteronomy 11:8:21 (RSV)

Blessings in the new land

11 ⁸“You shall therefore keep all the commandment which I command you this day, that you may be strong, and go in and take possession of the land which you are going over to possess, ⁹ and that you may live long in the land which the Lord swore to your fathers to give to them and to their descendants, a land flowing with milk and honey. ¹⁰ For the land which you are entering to take possession of it is not like the land of Egypt, from which you have come, where you sowed your seed and watered it with your feet, like a garden of vegetables; ¹¹ but the land which you are going over to possess is a land of hills and valleys, which drinks water by the rain from heaven, ¹² a land which the Lord your God cares for; the eyes of the Lord your God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.

¹³“And if you will obey my commandments which I command you this day, to love the Lord your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul, ¹⁴ he will give the rain for your land in its season, the early rain and the later rain, that you may gather in your grain and your wine and your oil. ¹⁵ And he will give grass in your fields for your cattle, and you shall eat and be full. ¹⁶ Take heed lest your heart be deceived, and you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them, ¹⁷ and the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and he shut up the heavens, so that there be no rain, and the land yield no fruit, and you perish quickly off the good land which the Lord gives you.

¹⁸“You shall therefore lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul; and you shall bind them as a sign upon your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ¹⁹ And you shall teach them to your children, talking of them

when you are sitting in your house, and when you are walking by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. ²⁰ And you shall write them upon the doorposts of your house and upon your gates, ²¹ that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied in the land which the Lord swore to your fathers to give them, as long as the heavens are above the earth.

NOTE: The children of Israel were at last ready to enter the Promised Land. They would find that the hardships they had endured on their long journey from Egypt were worth it. This new land was far superior to Egypt, as it did not need to be artificially irrigated, but was watered by rains which God would send upon the obedient nation. Their response once they entered it was to be one of remembrance and obedience. By the same token, God has sent us many blessings – both temporal and spiritual. Our response should be the same: remembering who is the Giver and obeying His commands found in scripture.

The Sunday next before Advent

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 Deacon Tony McConnell and the Rev. Ron Wikander for organizing and executing last Sunday's Remembrance Sunday programme.

COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING AT ST. LUKE'S



After a two-year hiatus because of Covid, St. Luke's annual Community Thanksgiving Dinner will resume this year. A sign-up sheet for those interested is in the narthex. Family, friends and total strangers are welcomed.

Dinner will be at noon, preceded at 11 a.m. by a celebration of Holy Communion.

Stir-Up Sunday

by Ellen Castelow

The last Sunday before Advent is 'Stir-up Sunday', the day when traditionally families gather together to prepare the Christmas pudding.

The day does not actually get its name from 'stirring the pudding': it gets its name from the Book of Common Prayer. The Collect of the Day for the last Sunday before Advent starts, "Stir up, we beseech thee, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people". However since Victorian times it has become associated with the rather lovely family custom of preparing for Christmas together by making the Christmas pudding.

Usually the pudding is prepared well in advance (5 weeks before Christmas) and then reheated (and lit!) on Christmas Day itself.

Most puddings will contain some of the following ingredients: dried fruit, prunes and dates (often soaked in brandy), candied peel, mixed spice, treacle, suet, eggs, breadcrumbs and dark brown sugar. Traditionally there would be 13 ingredients in all, to represent Jesus and his disciples. Sometimes a silver coin (a sixpence) is included in the pudding. The one who finds it is said to receive health, wealth and happiness in the coming year.

On Stir-Up Sunday, families gather together to mix the pudding. Each member of the family takes a turn in stirring the mixture whilst making a wish. The pudding should be stirred from east to west, in honour of the Magi (Wise Men) who came from the east to visit the baby Jesus. It's also a good excuse to enjoy a wee dram or a cup of festive mulled wine!



On Christmas Day the pudding has its own ritual. It is topped with a sprig of holly to represent Jesus' crown of thorns. A little warm brandy is then poured over it and lit – with care, as many an eyebrow has fallen victim to an over-enthusiastic dousing of the pudding in alcohol! It is then carried proudly, alight and flaming, to the table to be served with brandy butter and cream or lashings of hot custard.



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.

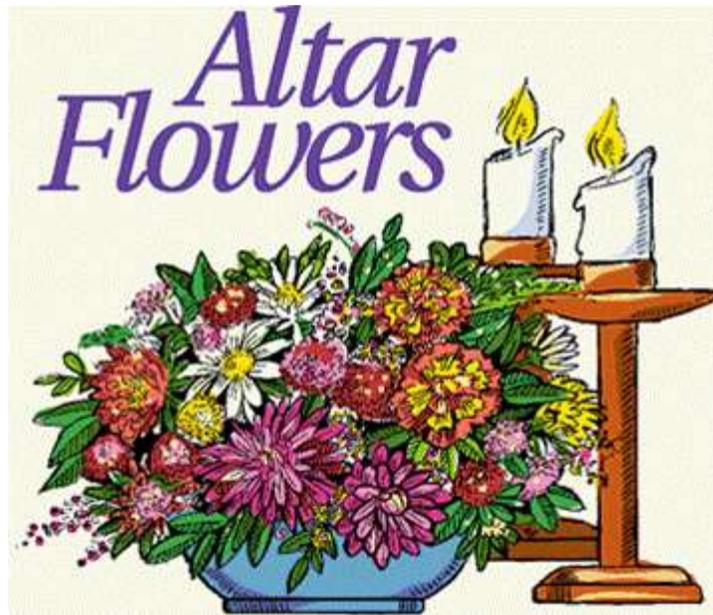
Name

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 2022.

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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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.

