

St. Luke's Episcopal Church

Cypress Mill, TX

"Heaven in the Hills"

December 2010 Newsletter

CHRISTMAS EVE CELEBRATIONS OF HOLY COMMUNION

AT ST. LUKE'S

St. Luke's has a long history of very special services taking place on Christmas Eve. Descriptions of the services are provided below. Please join us at St. Luke's on Christmas Eve (December 24) in celebrating the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

5:00PM Christmas caroling by the congregation.

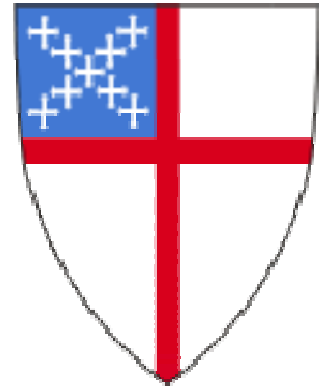
5:30 PM This is often referred to as the "Family Service," although all of our services are for families and individuals. However this service is oriented toward children with a homily for children. The beginning of the service is different this evening with a procession to the Christmas Creche. The altar party all pause here for a time of prayer and blessing with Holy Water of the scene of the place of the birth of the Christ Child. The service then continues with the full liturgy of the Eucharist and Hymns of the season. Adding to the glory of the evening is the adornment of the church in candles and Christmas greenery with all five of the Candles of the Advent wreath over the altar rail being lighted. This Christmas Eve celebration is what makes Christmas really feel like Christmas.

10:30PM Christmas caroling by the congregation and special musical offerings by our own members and guest musicians. A wonderful and unusual presentation of music developed last Christmas by what appeared to be a movement of the Holy Spirit. It is like a special Christmas gift to see what the Holy Spirit has in store for us this year.

11:00PM This is what is known as the traditional Christmas Eve "Midnight service." Don't forget that midnight is when the service ends and not when it begins. Someone gets confused every year. The liturgy in this and the earlier service is essentially the same with the exception of the sermons. However there is something magical about the church and the worship in the wee hours of the night, especially on such a magical night as Christmas Eve.

As we prepare in the final hours before the celebration of the Feast of Christmas, we would remember what has happened leading up to the events of Christmas night. Our own nature, our humanity, has been united to the Word made flesh, the Son of God. These preparations have been recognized in the Sunday lessons of Advent as preparations of the heart. Following these preparations of the heart we are ready to engage this great event, the Word of God making his entrance into the world in human form. The focus for us during this very special night of celebration is the great miracle that has been brought about for those who are able to receive his coming. We are made able to become children of God living in the reality of the divine life that is given to us in the presence of Jesus Christ in the world and most especially in us. Our celebration on this night is in the arrival of the "appointed time," the time of our salvation, the time of divine light coming into our lives. It is the changing of mundane lives into lives that are sacramental, filled with God's indwelling spirit. Let this reality be upon your hearts as you turn your worship on Christmas Eve to the babe in the manger and let it be a most blessed Christmas season.

-Fr. Bye +



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“Food Plans” for the Dedication & Celebration of the "New" Swope Hall

There will be a meal following the 10:15 Service on January 9, 2011 as we celebrate the Consecration of the "New" Swope Hall, Columbarium, and new pathways for the Stations of the Cross with our Bishop.

After conferring with a number of the folks and the hospitality committee it has been decided we will have a traditional St. Luke's Pot Luck. The Church will furnish the meat which will be ham and our Sr. Warden, Sandy Hodges, is having made, and donating a Large Celebration Cake for dessert. We are asking each of you to bring side dishes to fill out the meal. If we have some bread bakers perhaps you will make rolls. So that I will have an idea of the food, if you can email me or tell me what you plan to bring, it will be helpful. (mmcsh56309@aol.com)

We will have a large crowd as there will be many guests invited, including those who worked on the building itself, as well as some of the Diocesan representatives, and members of our Cypress Mill Community!

This luncheon will be the perfect opportunity for us to Christen and show off our beautiful new kitchen !!

-Marie McShane

Correction to November's Newsletter

The newsletter stated that the Hayride was organized by Beth Preston, but it was actually organized by both

Photo Below:

A Special Treat at the December 19th 10:15 Service. Songs presented to us by the Children's Sunday School.

Important Contacts...

Vicar - Tommy Bye ; 817-308-5850 ; Email: byetommy@yahoo.com

Church Office - 830-825-8001

Bishop's Committee Contact Information

Sandy Hodges, Senior Warden Home: 512-663-9745, Cell: 830-644-2345; scrofts@windstream.net

Scott Dawson, Treasurer, 210-748-0238

Don Gray, Secretary, 512-496-3583

Tom Peterson, 512-264-0336

Jorn Budde, 512-695-6057

Jim Furber, 830-868-4437

Rita Reiner, 830-825-3335

John Stephenson, 830-825-3334

Christie Schroeter, 830-825-2102



Important Dates

- December 19: Caroling, gather at the Church at 3 PM
- December 24: Christmas Eve Services, 5 PM and 10:30 PM
- January 9: Dedication of new Swope Hall and the Consecration of the Columbarium at the 10:15 a.m. service,

St. Luke's Services & Events

Sundays

8:00 AM: Holy Eucharist (no music)
 9:15 AM: Adult Christian Education (in Parish Hall beginning mid-December)
 9:15 AM: Child care while parents attend Adult Education (white Sunday School building)
 10:00 AM: Children Sunday School (assemble in Parish Hall)
 10:15 AM: Holy Eucharist (with music)
 10:15 Children's education (white Sunday School building)
 11:15 AM: Coffee and snacks (in Parish Hall beginning mid-December)

Other Days

Monday 9:00 AM: Morning Prayer
 Tuesday 9:00 AM: Morning Prayer
 Tuesday 9:30 AM: Women's Bible Study (Hill House until the Parish Hall is opened for use)
 Tuesday 6:30 PM: English as a Second Language Class
 Wednesday 9:00 AM: Morning Prayer
 Wednesday 11:00 AM: Holy Eucharist
 Wednesday noon: Women's Small Group (Cursillo Reunion)
 Wednesday 12:30 PM: Men's Small Group at Casa Mesa restaurant, on Hwy 620 near Hwy 71, in front of Home Depot

Lay Reader, Acolyte, and Greeter Schedule

Date	Service Time	Greeter	Lay Reader	Acolyte
Dec 19	8:00 AM		Linda A.	
	10:15 AM	Pat B.	Scott D.	Scott D.
Dec 24 (5 PM)	8:00 AM		Amy K. (5 PM)	Quentin J. (5 PM)
	10:15 AM	Jorn B.		
Dec 24 (10:30 PM)	8:00 AM		John S. (10:30 PM)	Ian S. (10:30 PM)
	10:15 AM	Rick S.		
Dec 26	8:00 AM		Pat B.	
	10:15 AM	Don G.	Monique R.	Lonnie R.
Jan 2	8:00 AM		Pending	Pending
	10:15 AM	Joe M.	Pending	Pending
Jan 9	8:00 AM		Pending	Pending
	10:15 AM	David G.	Pending	Pending
Jan 16			Pending	Pending
		Ladd S.	Pending	Pending
Jan 23			Pending	Pending
		Pat B.	Pending	Pending

Advent Prayers: A Season of Hope and Anticipation

Gracious God, send us your grace this Advent Season so that we can prepare for your coming. Touch our hearts with longing so that we can better love and serve you and each other. Fill us with the hope that we can be transformed by your Spirit and so help transform the world. Give us the peace of knowing that you came to share our human life and redeem us for the sake of love. We ask these things in the name of Jesus whose kingdom we seek. Amen.

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St. Luke's Episcopal Church Annual Meeting Dec. 5, 2010

The meeting opened with prayer from our Vicar, Father Bye.

Scott Dawson gave the Treasurer's Report with a profit and loss overview (see attached) and a balance sheet discussion. The highlights of the report were that the Assistance Fund has \$12, 605.26, and the Operating Account has \$163, 749.35. A question was raised as to whether we were giving Father Bye a cost of living increase, and Scott said that that would be voted on in the next Bishop's Committee meeting. Liz Manning gave a report on the Capital Campaign and reported that we have received \$174, 000, which is more than the goal of \$150,000.

Next, the new Bishop's Committee members, Scott Dawson, Tom Peterson, and Rita Reiner were nominated and elected to replace Marie McShane, Fielding Reiner, and David Greene, who have all done outstanding jobs in their terms. The outgoing members received gifts.

Thomas Sumners reported on the columbarium, which is on track to be completed along with the new Swope Hall on December 15 or thereabouts. The niches will be ready in about 10 days.

Jorn Budde gave a report on the parish hall financials. We are under budget and on time, even with the extra requirements that were given us by the diocese of electrical and plumbing specifications, including a \$6,000 upgrade in electricity. The church will also be rewired with new electricity and lights. This work is due to be completed by Friday, December 10. Tables and chairs are due to be delivered the week of December 13. The pathway to the Stations of the Cross has been poured with concrete so that it will be accessible to all. It remains to be stained, which will be finished by December 15. Jorn also said that we would obtain plans for suggested landscaping of the areas around the new parish hall and columbarium, but the landscaping itself has not been budgeted. Lucy Alexander said that she knew an excellent xeriscape landscaper who might be willing to donate some time and expertise. Jorn concluded by reporting that the new parish hall will be professionally cleaned when all work is completed.

Sandy Hodges, Senior Warden, next gave some remarks. She gave a summary of and commended the ongoing ministries, which have not been hindered or derailed by the work on the new building, but rather have continued with great zeal. The Evangelism team put on the Relay for Life, the Smoking for Jesus event, and the Hayride and Progressive Dinner. The Missions group continued with ongoing work in Piedras Negras and sent a young missionary to Haiti. Our youth attended Camp Capers and were involved in mission and service activities both at home and abroad. The Communications group sent out mailings inviting members, friends, and neighbors to our special and weekly events. Education has prospered through the wonderful Spiritual Gifts class taught by Jim Furber in the adult class, as well as rotating leadership in the ongoing study of the weekly readings and Father Bye's in-depth classes during Lent and Advent. Women's Bible Study has continued even through the summer with a strong and faithful group. Men's and women's reunion groups have met throughout the year. Children's teachers are ready each week to teach our children through lessons, puppet ministry by Christie Schroeter, songs, and sign language.

(Continued on Page 11)

From the Senior Warden...

The Lord was certainly present for the annual meeting that was held last Sunday, December 5 with about 50 of us present at the Cypress Mill Store. The feeling of enthusiasm and hope for the future of St. Luke's was ever present. We took care of our church business while at the same time had good food and wonderful fellowship with one another. Once again I wish to thank Marie McShane, Fielding Reiner and David Greene for their service on the Bishop's Committee. They all served with dedication and love to St. Luke's. I welcome our new board members Rita Reiner, Tom Peterson and Scott Dawson. They all bring special talents and skills to the committee and I know will contribute significantly to the mission of St. Luke's. I would also like to thank Father Bye for asking me to serve as Sr. Warden one more term. Though there has been much work done there is so much more to do and I am blessed to have the opportunity to serve one more year.

Moving back into Swope Hall

We will start moving back in to Swope Hall on December 17. Don't be surprised if you get a call asking you to help with the move. As chairperson of the Fellowship/hospitality group, Marie will oversee the move into the new kitchen. (**a special note:** Please do not use cast Ironware on the new stove top it will ruin the top of the stove.) Scott and Beth will move the church office, Doreen will head up the Children's Education room and Father Bye will move his office. Thomas is overseeing the return of the Baby Grand piano so all should come together nicely. Ralph and Pat have already moved some things from storage back to Hill House so it's just a matter of finding a place for everything and moving it into the building.

Columbarium

The Columbarium will be finished December 28-29. If you have not yet seen it I encourage you to make the walk to it. It is a beautiful spot and will touch your heart even as it waits for completion.

Dedication of our "New" Swope Hall

Dedication of the Parish Hall and the consecration of the new Columbarium will take place **January 9, 2011 at 10:15 a.m. in new Swope Hall.** Bishop Gary Lillibridge will preside over the service for this very special event. (There will NOT be an 8:00 a.m. service on this day.) The schedule for the day is as follows:

10:15.am.Service/Dedication of building to be held in Swope Hall followed by the Consecration of the Columbarium (at the site)

Noon or so.....Pot Luck Lunch (Ham and dessert furnished. Please bring sides/breads/etc.)

1:30-4:00.....Open House (to include cake, coffee). Everyone is encouraged to stay and visit throughout the afternoon and truly enjoy this glorious celebration. There will be a short program following lunch. All details of the program are not in place but the children's Sunday School class will be singing. Always a treat.

Lights in the Church

The re-wiring of the church sanctuary is complete. The new lighting system though different is very effective and I believe will serve the church well during the various services. The Lord certainly took care of St. Luke's by sending the "safety specialist" for an inspection, as it was through his visit that we learned of the electrical needs.. During the re-wiring process exposed wires were located in 4 different locations. We are now in compliance with all electrical safety codes.

As this year quickly comes to a close I reflect on all of the blessings we have received at St. Luke's. It has been a busy, joyous and fruitful year thanks to this extraordinary church family. We have reached out to others, we have helped one another, our church has grown as has our commitment to our Lord and Savior. I look forward to next year with hopes and much faith that we will expand our ministries and Swope Hall will serve all God's children near and far as it is intended to do. May you have a beautiful Christmas season filled with love, joy and peace.

Yours in faithful service, Sandy Hodges

Planning for the Dedication of Swope Hall and the Consecration of the Columbarium on January 9

In an effort to organize the various functions for our “big day” several parishioners have agreed to take on certain areas of responsibility. These include:

Food: Marie, with assistance from Rita	Ministry/Liturgy: Bishop Lillibridge and Father Bye	Communication (invitations, nametags, handouts, registration, signage, etc.): Sandi and Beth	Set-up and clean- up: John S. and Jorn
Greeters and Ushers: Jim F.	Program: Sandy H. and Christie	Photography and Historical Perspective Booklet: Don	

Each Chairperson will be seeking assistance from volunteers. Numerous members of the congregation are hoped to volunteer. Please contact a Chair person to volunteer your talents and energy for the special event in the life of St. Luke’s. Your help is needed.

More Prayers for Advent

Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

During this Advent, let your light of peace and love shine in our world. Give us eyes to see the signs of your presence in the world. Help us to prepare our lives and our homes to receive the One who said, “I am the light of the world.” Amen.



Home for Christmas

Photo Above: College students Ian Stephenson and Matthew Gray

Is Your Email Address on file at the Church?

If it is not, you are missing out on a lot of great communication from St. Luke’s. St. Luker’s who have email addresses on file with the Church receive news updates by email, such as event reminders and updates, prayer needs, schedule changes, news about our ill parishioners, etc. You can also request to receive the newsletter by email in full color (and continue to receive a paper copy by mail if requested). To file your email address, kindly send it to office@stlukes-cm.org and to donaldkgray@gmail.com

Hope was born at Christmas

Hope was born at Christmas,
A hope as real as life,
For Jesus came
And took our name
And all our human strife.



Hope was born at Christmas,
A hope that we could be
More righteous by far
Than we think we are
Or could ever hope to be.

Hope was born at Christmas,
A hope that we'll be whole
And healed of sin
Without, within,
In body, mind, and soul.

Hope was born at Christmas,
A hope for lasting peace
In family and nation,
That all tribulation
Will end, and war will cease.

Hope was born at Christmas,
A hope that holds us tight
In arms so strong
That we know we belong
And can make it through the night.

Hope was born at Christmas,
A hope that face to face
With sight undim
We'll dance with Him
In eternity's embrace.

Yes, Hope was born at Christmas,
A precious baby boy,
"Immanuel,"
Let's go and tell
The whole wide world our joy!

In hope, Beth Preston

Will You "Adopt a Station"?

We are blessed that our new Stations of the Cross pathway and the Columbarium along it are almost complete. These wonderful improvements are certain to result in many more people enjoying the prayer experiences that this serene path offers.

The beauty of the native plant life along the path is one of the path's features that are enjoyed. This past spring and summer the path provided us with a mass of wonderful colors provided by the wild flowers. Seeds for other types of wildflowers were planted along the path this fall in hopes of producing even more varieties of flowers next year.

St. Luke's is seeking 14 of us to each "adopt" a station. The adopted "parents" will each be responsible for maintaining the appearance of their adopted stations. Duties will include trimming plants, occasional watering, possibly adding other native plants, etc.

Father Bye, our Junior Warden and Don Gray will serve as a committee to coordinate the efforts of those kindly volunteer to further serve St. Luke's by adopting a station.



To adopt a station, contact Don Gray and request which station is desired. Don can be contacted at 512-496-3583 or by email at donaldkgray@gmail.com.

Caring for an adopted station is a good way to enjoy time with a spouse or friends or as a family event.

St. Luke's 2011 Budget

Our Bishop's Committee recently approved the following budget for 2011. The budgeted expenses total \$159,188 and the budget calls for plate offerings and pledge offerings totaling \$160,000 in revenue to meet our budgeted expenses. Therefore, turning in our pledge cards at this time is very important at this time as we begin the new budget year on January 1. If you've not done so yet, please place your pledge card in an envelope and place it in the offering plate this Sunday. Pledge cards and envelopes are found on the organ as you enter the sanctuary.

Budgeted Expenses

Advertising:	\$500
Conferences:	\$4,500
Diocesan Apportionment:	\$9,888
Bishop/Vicar Discretionary:	\$2,800
Gifts:	\$400
Insurance:	\$4,850
Maintenance:	\$1,000
Office Expenses:	\$6,000
Outreach:	\$12,600
Parish Hall Supplies:	\$1,000
Pest Control:	\$500
Program Expenses:	\$7,300
Service Providers/Staff:	\$94,850
Utilities:	\$9,000
Other Expenses:	\$4,000
Total Expenses:	\$159,188

Balance Sheet – November 30, 2010

Assets

Cash in Banks: \$179,575

Church Property & Buildings: \$372,573

Cash in Money Markets: \$191,210

TOTAL ASSETS: \$743,458

Liabilities: \$0

Total Equity: \$743,458

The Story of “The First Christmas”

The Gospel of Luke, Chapter 2, Verses 1-20

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

⁸ In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah,* the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.’ ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host,* praising God and saying,

¹⁴ ‘Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom
he favours!’*



¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, ‘Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.’ ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Children's Sunday School

A Sunday School Teachers luncheon was held at Christie Schroeter's house recently to start the ball rolling for the coming year.

We discussed many ways to make Sundays more inviting for the children to attend our classes. We will be dividing the groups accordingly as there will always be two teachers every week.

Babies (hopefully some will come eventually) & toddlers will be in the nursery. Children ages 2 thru 10 will be in the primary room. Youths (in the planning stage at the present) will meet with Connie during Adult Education in the conference room.

Monthly Schedule:

1st.Sunday.....Sally & Linda

2nd.....Christie & Rita

3rd.....Carol & Doreen

4th.....Beth & Sue

On the occasional 5th.....Connie & Elizabeth.

Obviously we will switch when one or the other person is unavailable.

For Sunday, December 19th we are planning for the children to sing a couple of Christmas carols during the 10:15 service. They will also sing at the Dedication of Swope Hall.

-Doreen Budde

Our Missioner's Trip to Piedras Negras, Mexico

Elizabeth Clark and Linda Appleton departed from St. Luke's on Wednesday, December 15 to deliver needed blankets and cold-weather clothing in Piedras Negras. Through the generous donations of our parishioners, they were able to purchase \$280 worth of blankets to deliver, many of those from Goodwill. The photo to the right shows how "stuffed" Linda's car was with the blankets! Barely room for Linda to drive!! Elizabeth returned home the following day after the sewing class and Linda returned on Saturday.

Their trip was blessed and heart-touching. The January newsletter will contain their story. Stay tuned!



Annual Meeting (continued from page 5)

The Browns hosted a fun-filled parish-wide washer toss party and cook-out that brought out hidden talent and a spirit of friendly competition among us. Music continues through Corrie Furber's uplifting organ playing each Sunday of hymns chosen by Betsy and through the lovely voices of Betsy, Sally, Elizabeth, and others. Sally and Connie are always ready with special music. Corrie has also volunteered to help teach songs to the children. The Altar Guild continues behind the scenes to prepare for the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. Sandy concluded with a description of a year filled with struggles and challenges, but also with joy, peace, excitement, enthusiasm, and fulfillment. Sandy received a standing ovation for her tireless and faithful service to the Lord and to us.

Delegates and alternates to the Diocesan Council to be held in February were nominated and elected as follows: Linda Appleton and Beth Preston, delegates, and Marie McShane and Charlie Brown, alternates.

A few announcements were made: the Petersons will hold their Sticky Bun gathering Saturday, December 11. Christmas Caroling, organized by Mike Kelley, will take place Sunday, December 19, starting at the church at 3 p.m. We will go to Ann Bond, Mae, and the nursing homes.

Father Bye wrapped up the meeting with his remarks. He announced that he had requested that Sandy Hodges continue in her position of Senior Warden for one more year, and she agreed. He then distributed a clergy work schedule, informing the congregation of the hours he puts in both in and outside the church. His office hours are in the church office Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. He can be reached on the church phone during those times. He listed hours for hospital and home visits, counseling, meetings, and sermon and class preparation.

Finally, Father Bye talked about how many people through the years had been involved in the prayers and planning of the new building, and how it had begun through the leadership of Liz Manning and others. The columbarium had been decided upon five to six years ago. Betsy Stephenson has been instrumental in that effort. Father Bye then looked toward the future and the excitement and expectation of being able to expand the ministry of Jesus Christ through this new parish hall. He encouraged us all with the reminder that in order for churches to thrive, it is critical that we maintain our sense of mission and outreach, and that our focus now needs to be outward, not inward.

The meeting closed in prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Beth Preston

BIRTHDAYS

Dunham	Susan	12/2
Harvey	Alyssa	12/2
Craig	Cynthia	12/7
Lechow	Max	12/7
Flora	Stanley	12/10
Jameson	John	12/11
Budde	Jorn	12/13
Stevenson	Holly	12/16
Patterson	Joe	12/19
Craig	Anna	12/23
Christ	Jesus	12/25
Bishop	Ralph	1/4
Stephenson	Betsy	1/6
Keith	Kallie	1/7
Bye	Connie	1/9
Sumners	Paula	1/11
Gray	Megan	1/25
Furber	Jim	1/26
Preston	Grace	1/26
Craig	Caitlyn	1/29
Gray	Matthew	1/30

ANNIVERSARIES

Fielding & Rita Reiner—12/4
Rick & Christie Schroeter—12/19
Corby & Leigh Craig—12/29
Joe & Louise Patterson—1/27
Bill & Peggy Polluck—1/30

Contact Don Gray to make additions or corrections to the Birthday and Anniversary information. 512-496-3583, donaldkgray@gmail.com.

St. Luke's Episcopal Church
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