



St. Luke's Episcopal Church

House Call Newsletter

January – February 2026

When in Doubt, Pray for Wisdom



My brothers and sisters, whenever you face various trials, consider it all joy, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance complete its work, so that you may be complete and whole, lacking in nothing. If any of you is lacking in wisdom, ask God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and it will be given you.

James 1:2-5

The weeks following Epiphany can feel a little grim. Christmas is over and the secular new year has arrived. In theory, the new year offers a fresh start. In practice, the trials of our lives may take a pause at Christmas, but they often come surging back on January 2nd, requiring that much more attention after having been put off for a week or two. The weather is chancy, cold and damp, and although we know the days are lengthening, Spring can seem very far away. And even if everything in our personal lives is just the way we want it, the world outside our doors is not, as five minutes spent with any responsible news outlet will confirm.

There are many good people within and outside the Episcopal Church working to meet the needs of the most vulnerable among us and speaking clear, courageous truth to the powers and principalities of our world. You may wonder what you can do to help them, or you may worry that nothing you can do would make a positive difference. You may not know what to pray for, or you may privately fear that, no matter what you ask of God, nothing will change for the better.

When the trials of my own life or of those around me threaten to overwhelm, I find solace in the Letter of James. Although Bible scholars debate the letter's authorship, tradition attributes it to Jesus's younger brother, St. James the Just. James was never a disciple and had nothing to do with his brother's ministry during his earthly lifetime. After Jesus' Resurrection and Ascension, however, James presided with Peter over the early Church in Jerusalem. We have only one letter attributed to James, who was nothing if not plainspoken. Some of what he wrote is blunt enough to make you wince, and his advice is still pure gold.

James is right that enduring the trials of this world builds our faith, but our trials sometimes leave us confused or disheartened. If you don't know what to do or what to pray for, ask God for wisdom. The Holy Spirit loves to lead us in good directions, and praying for wisdom tells God that we're ready to be led. Be patient and persistent in prayer, and your path will become clear.

January 1st is an arbitrary date that was set so that everyone starts a new year together. There are many

personal beginnings in each of our lives, when circumstances change and we're called to start anew. Whether you're embarking on a new venture right now or wishing that something would come to an end so you could make a fresh start, keep praying for wisdom. It's one of God's best gifts. May God grant you wisdom, and gently lead you to whatever path he has in store for you in the coming year, and may you be a blessing to everyone you love and pray for.

Blessings,
Pastor Lauren+

A Note from the Treasurer

Thank you for your 2026 pledges. It is much appreciated and helps us to pay our bills promptly. End of year giving statements will be sent to you via US Mail in January.

Remember that there are multiple ways that you can make your pledge payment:

- Sending a personal check in the mail to the church or placing it, or cash, in the offering plate on Sunday.
- Setting up a recurring payment using your bank's automated bill payment feature. There is generally no fee attached, and the bank sends a check to the church automatically with the frequency and amount you specify.
- Using Givelify online (<https://www.givelify.com/donate/st-lukes-church-annapolis-md-2j7wy5ODQ0MQ==/donation/amount>). You may set up a recurring gift to match your pledge amount and frequency. Please remember that Givelify charges us for each donation, so please consider adding an additional couple of dollars to your donation to help us defray this cost.
- Zelle through your bank account. The church email address for Zelle is finance@stlukeseastport.org.
- Sending your pledge directly to the church from your IRA thus reducing the taxable income from

your required minimum distribution. You may first want to discuss this method with your tax preparer or financial advisor.

Please contact Pete Stark, Treasurer, at 410-269-9760 or starkhe2@yahoo.com for any questions or assistance. Thank you.

Annual Meeting – Save the Date!

The Annual Meeting of St. Luke's' congregation will take place **on Sunday February 22, 2026 immediately** after services. We will review the past church year, elect new members to the vestry while thanking those who have completed their terms. We will also review our Finances from 2025 and highlight plans for 2026. Please join us as we celebrate our accomplishments in 2025 and look forward to the church year ahead.

Vestry Summary

Greetings from the St. Luke's Vestry!

We are moving from Advent into Epiphany, when as a newborn Jesus Christ was revealed as the Savior and Prince of Peace to the Magi that visited him in his humble manger. As a new year dawns, we look for the peace and hope that the birth of Jesus Christ represents, even in times of trouble and uncertainty. Jesus's parents managed to escape the wrath of King Herod, keeping our Savior safe despite the suffering and great danger to him and to the people of Bethlehem and beyond. We are never alone as Jesus walks amongst us, carrying that seed of hope wherever he is present.

The vestry has approved a budget for 2026 that will be presented at the annual meeting on February 22nd. Many thanks for the hard work of the finance committee for steering St. Luke's' fiscal health! A major budgetary item that the vestry has discussed many times is ensuring our staff are supported fairly for their work and allow for pay increases as necessary. To that end, we are pleased to say that there was a generous donation which allowed us to do that, and to bring Pastor Lauren+ formally on full time. We are so grateful for your donations and pledges to champion St. Luke's and its staff, as we also cannot do the work of this church without Pastor Lauren+, Dalyn Huntley, Ildar Khannonov, and Valerie Holt.

The vestry will also see some changes this year, as both Dan Ramirez and Amanda Reynolds are stepping off the vestry. In addition, Amanda currently serves as registrar (note keeper) for the vestry and this position will need to be filled. If you would like to become part of the team that steers St. Luke's, please let Pastor Lauren+ know. It is a rewarding way to serve the church community and feel free to ask about the different roles vestry members play!

Finally, the vestry is considering what to do with the amphitheater space outdoors. Currently, the logs that serve as benches are starting to degrade as well as the larger cutting that serves as an altar and lectern. Architecture and design students from University of Maryland professor Ezban's class created a variety of designs for St. Luke's as starting points to reimagine the space and we hope to get your feedback on what you would like to see. Stay tuned for details on the process.

Later in his life Jesus said to his disciples: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27). We welcome you to St. Luke's, holding the seed of hope and peace in our hearts and invite you to walk with us in this moment.

With Blessings,
The St. Luke's Vestry

Richard Wilson-Smith, Senior Warden; Vrej Zarikian, Junior Warden; Pete Stark, Treasurer; Amanda Reynolds, Registrar; Dan Ramirez; Terry Otis; Gil Gardner; Andrew Schaner; Anne Arms; Lesley Margerrison; Claire Miller.

Giant Food Community Bag Program

St. Luke's Food Pantry has been selected to partner with the Giant Food Community Bag program for the month of **January**. For every \$2.75 reusable Community bag purchased at the 948 Bay Ridge location, \$1 will go towards the Food Pantry. Please share the news with family and friends. Thank you for your continued support.

Healing Services at St. Luke's

All are invited to the Monthly healing service at **5:30 p.m.** The next service will be **Tuesday, February 10.**

There will be prayers for those near and far and the laying on of hands for those so moved. At the darkest time of the year, let us gather together to love and support each other and offer invoke the light and healing of Jesus Christ in the sanctuary of St. Luke, the Physician.

St. Luke's Prayer Shawl Ministry



Have you noticed in the past that there was a basket by the front door with prayer squares in it? Well, the knitters are starting up again, beginning **Thursday, January 22, at 1:45 p.** at Helen's house.

If you are a knitter or crocheter and would like to join us, please let us know: Helen Leitch (410-570-1708), Kathy Dinin (914-645-1755) or Eve Waldman (757-387-2367).

Whether it is a small square to put in your pocket or a shawl to wear (give us some time to make these), we offer these as a reminder of the healing presence of God and community.

Environmental Committee Meeting

The Environmental Committee at St. Luke's seeks to spread environmental stewardship through education, advocacy, and volunteerism on a teaching campus that heals the human spirit while caring for Creation.

The next meeting will be held on **Thursday, February 12, 2026.** Meetings are held remotely via Zoom beginning at **7 pm.**

All are welcome to attend. For questions, contact Chuck Gallegos (gallegoscl@verizon.net) or Anne Arms (armspna@aol.com).

Church Office Hours & Holiday Closure

The Church Office is announcing late winter-spring office hours to help assist in the needs of the various ministries at St. Luke's. **Appointments are still highly recommended to ensure dedicated attention.**

Our Parish Administrator, Dalyn Huntley can be reached by email at office@stlukeeastport.org or by phone at 410-268-5419.

(Effective Wednesday, January 21, 2026):

Monday	9:00 a.m. - 12:00 Noon
Tuesday	9:00 a.m. - 12:00 Noon
Wednesday	12:00 Noon - 4:00 pm
Thursday	9:00 a.m. - 12:00 Noon & 3:00 - 5:00 pm.

Mondays will continue to be Pastor Lauren's+ Sabbath days. She is also available by phone at 703-585-0651 or by email at lbloom@stlukeeastport.org for appointments or any urgent pastoral needs.

Please note that the church office will be CLOSED on **Monday, January 19** in Observance of Martin Luther King Jr.'s Day.

Morning Prayer with St. Luke's

The Daily Offices (structured times of prayer) are part of the liturgical practice of the Episcopal Church. The offices comprise of five services with Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer and Compline being the most widely practiced. The structure of these services, along with each days readings and prayers are detailed in the Book of Common Prayer and can be led by both clergy and lay people. At St Luke's we have been holding a lay led morning prayer service on Wednesdays since Lent 2025 and it is a lovely opportunity for midweek connection and fellowship.



The service can be accessed via the Zoom link on the front page of the church website and typically lasts between 20-30 minutes. A bulletin is provided and the readings and prayers are shared among participants, creating a joyful, meaningful, and prayerful experience for everyone involved.

All are welcome. Please contact Lesley (Lmargerrison@gmail.com) with any questions.

Scout Sunday 2026



Each year, St. Luke's invites the members of Cub Scout Pack 153 as well as former scouts to join in celebrating scouting during our worship service.

This year, Scout Sunday will be **Sunday, February 8 at 10:00 am.**

St. Luke's is the chartered organization for Pack 153, meaning that we hold the charter agreement with BSA and provide administrative and financial oversight for the Pack. Joseph Bicchieri is the current Chartered Organization Representative for St. Luke's.

Ash Wednesday & Lenten Study

Watch for details in the upcoming weekly Enews for the upcoming Lenten Season.

Hospitality

St. Luke's offers hospitality immediately following our Sunday services. Volunteer hosts are asked to set up the beverage station and bring light fare for persons attending the Sunday Service to enjoy. The sign-up sheet for hosting hospitality on Sunday mornings is located downstairs in the Undercroft. The winter sign-up sheet is posted. Anyone is welcome to sign up to host. If you haven't hosted before, contact our Hospitality Coordinator, Kathy Dinin, to learn more: 914-241-3966 or dinin.kathryn@gmail.com. Kathy can also help pair you with someone else if you don't want to host on your own.

Light House Lunches Helping Our Community

This longstanding outreach initiative, supporting those in our community experiencing homelessness, happens twice each month. During coffee hour we prepare and then deliver 24 sandwiches and snacks to the Light House shelter. All supplies are provided and the process is simple, friendly, and a great way to connect with others while making a positive impact.



If you'd like to get involved, add your name to the sign-up list on the bulletin board or just join in! and please contact Lesley Margerrison Lmargerrison@gmail.com with any questions.

St. Luke's Contemplative Prayer In Person Retreat

There will be a silent, half-day, in-person retreat at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, on **Saturday, January 24 from 9:00 to noon**. The theme will be awe.

There will be three short readings followed by 20 minute periods of silent meditation, including one short walking meditation. This will be followed by a period of quiet activity, such as reading, walking outside, or working on your own quiet craft.

After the retreat is over, let us come together again to enjoy a bring-your-own lunch and camaraderie.

Contemplative Prayer at St. Luke's



Photo by Chuck Gallegos

*Be Still and Know that I
am God.
(Psalm 46:10)*

St. Luke's centering
prayer ministry meets
once a week to take a

break from the chaotic world around us. We take time to be still.

Gradually, with practice and patience, the mind calms and our hearts open to transformation and to deeper knowing of God's presence in our lives. The weekly sessions begin with a reading from a variety of contemplative authors. The reading is followed by 20 minutes of silent centering, followed by reflection. You need no experience to join us; simply begin where you are.

Using [St. Luke's Zoom link](#), we meet on **Fridays**, from **10 to 11 a.m.** If you would like to receive the weekly reminder and update on events that are sent out every Thursday, contact Eve Waldman and she will put you on the mailing list. eleanorevewaldman@gmail.com. Eve's co-facilitators Chuck Gallegos can be reached at gallegoscl@verizon.net, and Jenna Lane, Jenna.S.Lane1944@gmail.com. They will be happy to answer questions.

Lunch Bunch



The Lunch Bunch is a weekly gathering for fellowship through sharing a meal.

This Dutch treat meal takes place **Wednesdays at Noon**

at [Adam's Ribs](#) in the Eastport Shopping Center, right next to the church. Who is invited? Everyone! Lunch Bunch is an open event organized by members of St. Luke's. Contact Dianne Crews 410-268-9741 for more information. Friends and visitors are always welcome. No RSVP necessary.

Flower Ministry



The beautiful altar floral arrangements are sponsored by members of the community who honor or remember loved ones with a dedication. The arrangements can also be dedicated to celebrate a marriage, baby or other happy occasion. **The sign-up sheet for 2026 is located in the Undercroft.** The requested

donation amount is \$50 and may be made either by check or online with the memo "Flowers." Please email our Parish Administrator Dalyn Huntley with your dedication details at 410-268-5419 or office@stlukeseastport.org.

Do you have a love for flowers and artistic eye? Consider becoming a Flower Ministry volunteer. If you have questions or wish to learn more, contact Anne Arms at 707-479-4303 or armspna@aol.com.

Daughters of the King



A [Daughters of the King](#) Discernment Class will be starting in February.

The Daughters of the King is a lay Order for women in the Episcopal Church. Our

local Anne Arundel chapter is preparing to offer a discernment class for those who are interested in joining the Order. The class is held weekly for ten weeks, after which new members take their vow. Members undertake a Rule of Life, incorporating the Rule of Prayer and the Rule of Service.

By reaffirmation of the promises made at Confirmation, a Daughter pledges herself to a life-life-lifelong program of prayer, service, and evangelism.

We find the Order to be a quiet place in a busy world, where we can support each other in our walk with Christ. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Pam Roth at 410-353-6774, or at rothsbythebay@verizon.net.

St. Anne's Seeking Minister for Youth & Children

[St. Anne's](#), Annapolis has a paid part-time position available beginning in **June of 2026**.

The position is [Minister for Youth and Children](#). Visit <https://www.stannes-annapolis.org/job-listings> to apply.

Burdens Men Carry Panel Discussion



Join Eastport United Methodist Church for a Male Mental Health Panel Discussion on **February 15, 2026 at 2:00 p.m.** Eastport United Methodist Church is located at 926 Bay Ridge Avenue, Annapolis, Maryland 21403.

The discussion is to encourage an honest and lively dialogue concerning the difficult topic of male mental health, to offer support for men as they navigate the unique pressures of being a man in today's world, and to fight the continued stigma against men opening up about emotional/psychological problems.

Three panel speakers, an experienced therapist and two award-winning mental health advocates, will explore the burdens of being a man in the 21st century, the stigma against male openness and vulnerability, the social/cultural problems affecting male mental health, and the positive possibilities of a path forward. Attendees will have the opportunity to ask the panel speakers their own questions during the Q & A segment. Free pizza and refreshments will be offered afterwards.

Claggett Retreat Center

Dedicated in 1952, the Claggett Diocesan Center was named after Thomas John Claggett, the first Bishop of the Diocese of Maryland and the first Episcopal bishop ordained on American soil. The Diocesan usage of the land emphasizes reconciliation. Center continues in the spirit of reconciliation and bringing people together. Many of the programs and policies promote racial justice, equity, and inclusion.

The Center also hosts a multitude of secular and religious non-profit groups, including educational institutions and social justice organizations.

Men's Retreat January 30 – February 1, 2026

Women's Retreat February 20-22, 2026

Visit www.claggettcenter.org for more information and registration for the adult programs.

Phishing & Scams

If you receive an email or text that appears to be from Pastor Lauren+, a vestry member or anyone in our community, asking you to take some kind of unusual action – *click a link or download an attachment you didn't request, wire money to a specified account, purchase gift cards and reply with the serial numbers, or simply to reply quickly*, watch out – it could be a form of “phishing”.

Verify the “from” email. The malicious actors behind “phishing” attacks are counting on people springing into action as soon as they see an important name on an email. You can outsmart them by looking beyond the name and checking the “from” email address to see if it matches what you know the alleged sender's email to be. If you only see a name, you can cause the “from” email address to be displayed by hovering the cursor over the name.

Confirm requests with a conversation. Even if the email or text seems legitimate, if a request seems even remotely “off,” don't act on it until you confirm it with a phone call or face-to-face conversation. Contact the church office at 410-268-5419. **If there is a need, Pastor Lauren+ includes any announcements on Sundays during service, our weekly publications, and bi-monthly newsletters.**

DO NOT reply or forward the suspicious email or text. REPORT emails as SPAM to your email carrier and BLOCK texts.



St. Luke's has a long-standing tradition of remembering the birthdays and anniversaries of our members with a card and in the newsletter, as well as praying for those who are present on the preceding Sunday. If you are new to the St. Luke's community or unsure if we have your birthday/anniversary, please let us know when it is! Send the information to the office by phone or email (410-268-5419 or office@stlukeseastport.org).

January Birthdays

1	Arthur Cotsalas
4	Jackie Allen
8	Alastair McGregor
16	Ildar Khannanov
19	Tom Adams
21	Sharon Williams
23	Pete Stark
29	Heather Ackroyd
31	David McGuinness

February Birthdays

1	Bob Balcom
2	Joshua Reynolds
4	Monroe & Willa Govoro
7	Penelope Reynolds
10	Jennifer Brown
17	David Dent
27	Del Thompson
28	Bayinnah Shabazz
28	Christina Cotsalas

Prayer List

Ongoing Needs: Sunniah Ngonzi Magogo; Hilda Uribe (friend of Avedis & Olgui Zarikian); Deacon Bob McCoy; Karen Sears-Wright (mother of Lexi Wright); Sarah Lamming; Jennifer Miles (friend of Kathleen Rewa); Nelida Godfrey (family friend of Avedis & Olgui Zarikian); Rev. John Keydel; Vincent Veich (friend of Dianne Crews); Christine Kingerski (friend of Dan Ramirez); Deacon Frank Bailey (friend of Rev. Lauren Bloom); Helen Wheeler; Sammy Bernardi (grandson of Jon Diefenthaler); Karyl Johnston (friend of Max McGregor) Spencer Johnson (husband of Rev. Andrea Johnson); Zigi Zacs; Joyce Sutherland (mother of Michelle Sutherland); Tod Wildason (friend of Dianne Crews); Patrick Smiley (friend of Dianne Crews); Larry Bloom (father of Rev. Lauren Bloom+); Becca Miller and family (extended family of Claire Miller); and for all those affected by gun violence, war, and natural disasters.

Immediate Needs: **Elizabeth & Kate** (friends of Lesley Margerrison); **Nancy Otis**; **Susan & Phil** Murphree (friends of David & Ann McGuinness); **Marcus Dent** (son-in-law of Alastair McGregor); **John & Sue** Smith; **Ted** Fulton (cousin of Ethel Bilderback); **Hans** Bachmann (friend of Lance Landseadel); **Ann** McGuinness; **John** McGuinness (brother of David McGuinness); **Nancy** (sister-in-law of Lesley Margerrison); **Gil** Gardner; **David** Bicchieri (father of Joseph Bicchieri); **Kristin** Pagent (friend of Adrith Bicchieri); Mary Mineo (sister of Ann McGuinness); **Charlie & Family**; **Patty** (friend of Suzie, Valerie and Norma); **Tom** Adams; **Gabe** Karpouzian (friend of the Zarikian family); **Olgui** Zarikian; **Max** McGregor; **Lillian** Rachael (daughter of Dawn Huenink); **John** Gregg; **Kaitlyn** LaVoy (niece of Dianne Crews); **Boyd** F. (brother of Dawn Huenink); **Denise**; **Nancy** Etter (friend of Alex Devino); **Diane** (friend of Claire Miller); **Tom** Bouve; **Mike** Waldman; **Alex** Devino (friend of Dianne Crews); **Peter** McGregor (brother of Alastair McGregor); **Thomas & Miller** Families; **Fay** Farrell (friend of Helen Leitch).

St. Luke's Episcopal Church

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Episcopal Diocese of Maryland

The Rt. Rev. Carrie Schofield-Broadbent,
XV Bishop

Parish Staff

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Tom Adams, Sexton
Valerie Holt, Children's Ministry

Vestry Members

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Pete Stark, Treasurer
Amanda Reynolds, Registrar
Dan Ramirez
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Ministry Contacts

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