

Saint Luke Catholic Church

Office Hours

Monday-Friday 9:00AM-4:00PM

Baptism: Parents must attend a class prior to the Baptism of their child. The class is held on the third Sunday of each month following the 11AM Mass in the Conference Room.

Marriages: Arrangements should be made at least six months in advance.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday: 4:15-4:45PM or by appointment.

Sick/Hospital Visits

If someone in your family is sick or admitted to the hospital or nursing home, please let the church office know so that we can visit them.

Sponsor Certificate: In order to receive permission to be a sponsor for baptism or confirmation, you will need to be a registered and a contributing parishioner for at least three months.

Counseling: To inquire or make an appointment for counseling, please call Sr. Marie Frechette at 704-543-7677 x 1073.

Spiritual Direction: Bryna Bozart, a member of St. Luke, is a trained Spiritual Director. Anyone wishing to participate should contact Bryna Bozart at beecemps@aol.com.

Scriptural Rosary is prayed at St. Luke parish at 10:30AM on Mondays in the chapel. For more information contact Madeleine McGuinness at 704-845-4008.

Interested In Becoming A Catholic?

Please call Sr. Veronica Grover at 704-545-1224 ext. 17 for information about RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) program.

Parish Registration: Registration forms are available at the Welcome Table after all weekend Masses or weekdays at the parish office. You may also register online on our website.

Bulletin Deadline: Please submit your announcement in writing or email by 2:00PM Thursday of the previous week.

13700 Lawyers Road - Mint Hill, NC 28227

Phone: (704) 545-1224

Fax: (704) 545-7288

Faith Formation: (704) 545-0065

Rectory: (704) 246-7151

Email: info@stlukechurch.net ❖ Website: www.stlukechurch.net

Parish Mission Statement

*To Be A Christ Centered Church; Responsive To The Needs of All.
Preserving, Spreading and Celebrating The Teaching of Jesus.
Offering Hope, Comfort and Peace.*

Weekend Mass Schedule

Saturday Vigil: 5:00PM

Sunday: 9:00AM-11:00AM-
1:00PM (Bilingual) - 5:00PM

Daily/Holy Day Mass Schedule

Will be posted inside bulletin.

**Merry
Christmas**



The Nativity of the Lord ❖ Sunday, December 25, 2011

From the Pastor

Dear Friends,

Merry Christmas! What a blessing that Christmas Day falls on Sunday this year. I imagine that all of us look to our childhood and how our parents celebrated Christmas for the customs we have today. For most of us it means the outdoor Christmas lights, the beautiful Christmas tree surrounded by elegantly wrapped gifts and the manger in a prominent place in the family home. Our families are with us. We listen to Christmas music, go to Mass and sit down to enjoy a delicious Christmas Dinner.

Did you know that it wasn't always this way? Oliver Cromwell and the English Parliament banned the celebration of Christmas on December 22, 1657. Soldiers were instructed to patrol the city streets and take by force any food being prepared for Christmas. The phrase, "your goose is cooked" comes from those days. It implied that the soldiers were near enough to smell your Christmas dinner on the stove and seize not only your meal but your mincemeat pie as well.

The reason given was that the people appeared way too happy on Christmas Day. They drank and ate too much and it seemed to have nothing to do with anyone's faith. For the strict Puritans, they simply could not stomach Christmas because it was an excuse for people to take a day off from work.

Christmas did not become legal again until Charles II sat upon the throne in 1660. However, nothing changed on our side of the ocean. The Puritans, who landed on Plymouth Rock in 1620, governed the northern colonies and Christmas remained a forgotten holiday. There was actually a law on the books in Boston imposing a fine on anyone who dared to exhibit the Christmas spirit from 1659 to 1681. Even where the Puritans were weak in places like Virginia and Maryland, Christmas was not celebrated.

It wasn't until the 19th century that Americans began the process of reinventing the way Christmas was celebrated. In the past, people celebrated Christmas in a loud and raucous manner. Large crowds of people who had drunk too much would gather on street corners and pester passer-bys. Others would demand access to the homes of the rich to plunder their tables. Many assaults and disturbances were reported. The Christmas riots of 1828 led to the creation of the New York City Police Department.

All Americans began to embrace Christmas when it became a family holiday, with special emphasis upon the children. Washington Irving and Charles Dickens wrote beautiful books about Christmas. Christmas became a peaceful, warm hearted holiday centered on the family gathered at the hearth or the Christmas tree. Families looked forward to decorating the tree, sending cards and giving gifts. Old customs were unearthed and everyone discovered the true meaning of Christmas. It was a time to celebrate the birth of the baby Jesus as the shepherds did that first Christmas in Bethlehem. Even the hymns expressed the new spirit: "*O holy night! The stars are brightly shining. It is the night of our dear Savior's birth*" (1847). Merry Christmas everyone!

Fr. Paul J. Gary



STEWARDSHIP AT ST. LUKE PARISH...

We reach out to new parishioners through hospitality, welcome calls, answering questions and being a contact to help them feel a part of the parish. Who are we? **The Welcome Ministry.** Join us: We always need new volunteers to greet new parishioners after your Mass. Visit the Welcome Ministry at St. Luke's new website or contact us at WelcomeCommittee@stlukechurch.net!

Registered Families: 1449 Envelope Users for month of November: 772 Average monthly Donation: \$43

Offertory December 18:

Total offertory budgeted this fiscal year: 788,147.00

Will be reported in next bulletin

Total offertory budgeted through week 24 of this FY: 344,451.00

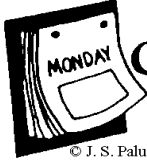
Remaining offertory needed to meet budget for FY: 439,620.00

Total offertory received to week 24 of this FY: 348,527.00

Current budget variance to week 24 of this FY: (+) 4,076.00

Thanks to your recent offertory donations, the WE CARE Committee was able to make a donation to **Mecklenburg Ministries.**

*Please note that our fiscal year runs from July 1 through June 30.
Financial reports are available on our website: www.stlukechurch.net.*

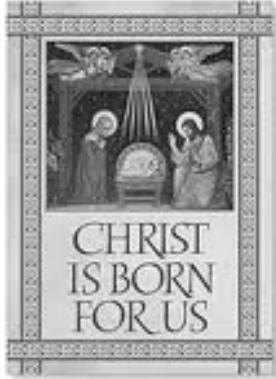


Coming Up this week...

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Sunday, December 25

9:00AM Mass
11:00AM Mass
1:00PM Mass



Merry Christmas

Monday, December 26

OFFICE CLOSED

Tuesday, December 27

7:00PM Genesis—Worship

Wednesday, December 28

NO ACTIVITY

Thursday, December 29

6:00PM Sojourn—Worship
7:30PM Spirit—Worship

Friday, December 30

NO ACTIVITY

Saturday, December 31

10:00AM Pax Christi—Conference Room

Sunday, January 1

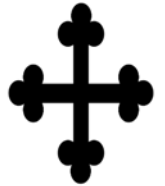


Monday, January 2

OFFICE CLOSED

10:30AM Rosary—Chapel
4:00PM Faith Formation Grades 1-5
5:00PM Choir—Worship
6:00PM Faith Formation Grades 1-9
7:00PM Ascension—Worship

God gave his only Son. What gifts do you give back to God for all he has given to you?



HORIZON COMING IN THE SPRING

The new Horizon Campaign will be here in the Spring to start raising funds for St Luke's property on Highway 218. These funds will be used to eliminate the costs for the land and to begin the process for creating the plans for our future Church Community home. You will be hearing from the pulpit, receiving letters and having the opportunity to attend Parish meetings to discuss the future developments of St Luke Parish. Anyone interested in assisting with the Horizon campaign is enthusiastically encouraged to contact Jim Strauss at 704 451-5481; 704 753-5345 or via email at scanin123@aol.com for more detailed information.



Our sponsor of the week...

We would like to thank **NEW BALANCE "THE STORE,"** St. Luke Parishioner for advertising in our bulletin.

STEWARDSHIP NEWS...

An invitation from the Stewardship Committee ...

All are welcome to attend our Stewardship committee meetings. Our meetings are generally held on the first Wednesday evening of every month. We welcome all to attend, participate, listen, and give us your ideas. Many hands (and minds) make light work. Please join us. Our next meeting is January 4 at 7 pm in the Conference room. For ideas, questions or more information, please contact Marilyn Palmer or Joann Barnard at Stewardship@stlukechurch.net.

Community Building

Contact Mark or Mona Heitbrink (704-545-1277) if you are interested in learning Square Dancing. Classes starting in mid-January. Great fun and exercise!



Outreach

CAREGIVERS SUPPORT GROUP—NO MEETING ON... TUESDAY, DECEMBER 27
Will resume on Wednesday, January 4 at 7:15PM. If you would like more information or would like to attend a meeting, please contact Theo Ennis at 704-568-5989.



Helping Other People Endure
HOPE members will meet Saturday, January 7, at 10:00AM in Modular Building behind the church. Our meeting is open to all parishioners interested in learning more about HOPE. New members are always welcome. We look forward to seeing you there! For more information contact Madeline Johnson at 704-846-9327.



Church "UN" - Decorating

Come join us on Tuesday, January 10 from 4-6PM to undecorate/clean the church. For more information, please contact Jim or Pat Brownd at 704-628-6177. Your help will be greatly appreciated!

Faith Formation



NO MEETING IN DECEMBER. The January book selection is "Mao's Last Dancer" by Li Cunxin. We will meet on Tuesday, January 31 at 10:30AM in the FLC. We invite you to join us.

For more information, please contact Marilyn Armstrong at 704-753-1112.



Hark the Herald Angels are in flight!

Thanks to Jim Tant and William of Aaron Signs for their excellent work putting up the angels and nativity star. Thanks also to Richard White for the electrical wiring idea ... They look great!!!

Saturday, January 14 at 10:00AM
in the Family Life Center

Education

Featured Speakers: Janie Uzzell (Women's Prison Ministry) and Deacon Jeff Evers (Men's Prison Ministry). Come hear what called them to this ministry and how it has changed their lives and the lives of the people they minister to. RSVP AdultEd@stlukechurch.net

Worship & Spiritual Life



Saturday, December 24

4:00PM Special Intention
 4:30PM ✕ Wassim Aintrazi By: Aintrazi Family
 7:00PM ✕ Bob Goodrich By: Nearhood Family
 Midnight ✕ John Charles Szyka By: May Family

Sunday, December 25

9:00AM Special Intention
 11:00AM Special Intention
 1:00PM St. Luke Parishioners

NO 5PM MASS

Monday, December 26

11:00AM The Buday Family By: Lucille Mahel

Tuesday, December 27

6:30PM ✕ Elena & Olivia Parry By: The Parry Family

Wednesday, December 28

6:30PM ✕ John Anheier By: Nancy Anheier

Thursday, December 29

11:00AM ✕ Jean Herr By: Sanacore Family

Friday, December 30

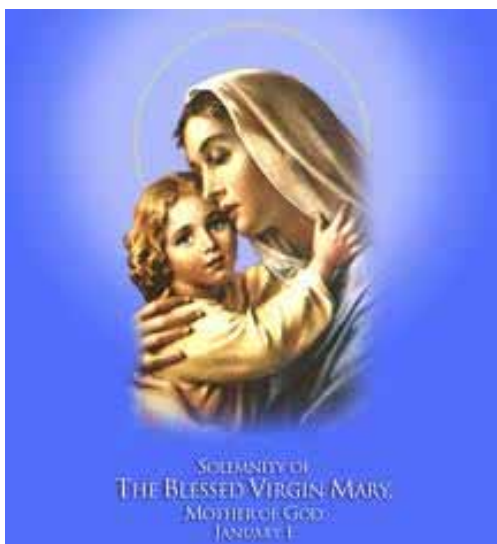
8:30AM ✕ Tom Koehler By: Tom & Catherine Ferguson

Saturday, December 31

5:00PM ✕ Charlie Daly By: Jim & Sharon Glose

Sunday, January 1—Solemnity of Mary

9:00AM ✕ Don Johnson By: Jim & Carol Hannah
 11:00AM ✕ Dorothy Swain By: Sr. Veronica Grover
 1:00PM St. Luke Parishioners
 5:00PM Gina Short By: Roz Piccolo & Patti Flohr



NEEDED: Three Kings

The Worship and Spiritual Life commission is seeking male volunteers to be the Three Kings for the celebration of the Epiphany on January 8. The Kings will be introduced during the liturgy and will be available to distribute candy to the children after Mass. If you can help out, please contact the church office and let Mary know which Mass time(s) you are available. Ideally, we would like to have 15 volunteers so that everyone only covers one Mass.



PRAY **FOR THEM**

In your kindness please remember the following
in our parish...

Tiffany Partozoti, Gomiz Family, Gina Short, Shannon Smith, Cathy Sluja, Kimberly Smith, Virginia Wieloszyński, Rita Foulk, Elaine Medina, Frances Doyle, Edra Alonso, Warren Roggeman, Brittney Breyare, Sharon Glose, Carl Lamkin, Sr. Veronica Grover, Pete Woitkowski, Vinnie Mantione, Susan Shaul, Deloris Szachara, Carl Partozoti, Tom McLarney, Christine Collins, Maureen Deese, Gimmie Family, Susan Trombello, Ray Mennitt, Beverly Neal, Larry Dolan, Arin Nesbit, Marlene Doane, Laura Icenhour, Donna Ruggiero, David Barrett, John and Sharon Sowinski, Olive Werhand, Ginny Kandrack, Florence Herbert, Joel Shaul, Tom McNamara, Phil and Barbara Angelo, Madeleine McGuinness, Eric Skeen, Mary Lou Hildreth, Elise Frye, Jackie Hassman, Sharon Mayfield, Carol Grigg and Billy Bushman

and among our friends and family...

Jane & Andrew Foard, Jakob Clark, Pat Rodite, Carol vanDoorne, Patti McGoey, Margie Johnson, Ted Lafiteau, Chris Kirk, Allen Weaver, Ed Duffy, Glenda Woodson, Joshua Loftis, Claire Ratliff, Lorena Aguiler, Rosa Morais, Joseph Kinney, Renee Rossi, Joe Spears, Isabella Santos and Family, Bill Daly, Martha Tatum, Howard Vasvary, Wayne Rebar, Cecilia Levanduski, Walter Drozd, Megan Joyce, Russell Lamkin, Patti Kroculick, Corson Hicks, Joe Walko and Stephanie Bulla

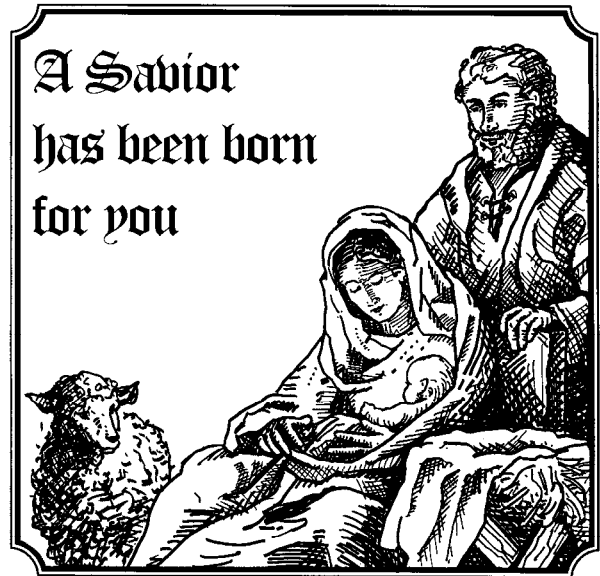
(Previously named persons are now placed in our Book of Intentions)



Spiritual Direction Program offered at the Charlotte Spirituality Center

The Charlotte Spirituality Center is offering a certificate program for those who desire to learn and practice the art of spiritual direction. Courses are designed for those who are interested in the work of spiritual direction as well as those who would like to enhance their faith life by developing and broadening

their skills of holy listening and discernment. Applications are being accepted now for Level One to begin in January 2012. For a complete description, go to www.charlottespiritualitycenter.org. Interested candidates should submit a completed application available online. Student enrollment is limited.



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TREASURES FROM OUR TRADITION

An old joke asks, "What time is Midnight Mass?" The answer is not really obvious, since Christmas is unique in having several distinct celebrations. The readings and prayers vary greatly from hour to hour. The Vigil Mass hinges on the family heritage of Jesus and his origins. The concept of "midnight" predates clock time, and really has to do with a celebration in the hours of darkness. Years ago, it was not possible to receive Communion without fasting for a full day, so the late hour of this Mass made it possible for the people to receive. The first Mass after sunrise, the Mass at Dawn, was once known as "The Shepherds' Mass," and later Masses set aside stories of Jesus' birth to focus on the key to the day's celebration: John the Evangelist's majestic theology of Christ's identity as the Word made flesh, dwelling among us. One feast, four separate Masses. Only monasteries manage the whole round. Parishioners typically take just one entry point into the mystery. Yet there is much to savor and celebrate in the coming of Christ into the world. Christmas is not a day, but a season. You still have two weeks to send those Christmas cards before you're officially late!

—James Field, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

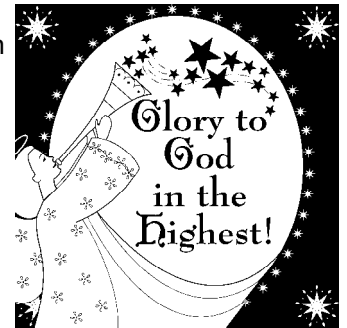


**The Nativity of the Lord
December 25, 2011**

The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness has not overcome it.
— John 1:5

THE GIFT OF GOD'S WORD

On this day of gifts and gift-giving, it seems appropriate that we take a moment to reflect on the great gift of God's Word. Because it is creative, God's Word always points to its author, always calls us to respond. Because it is powerful, God's Word can link the sublime with the ridiculous, the transcendent with the immanent, the divine with the human. Because it is graceful, God's Word establishes a relationship of deep intimacy between us and God.



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At the heart of God's Word lies a tantalizing tension between the mysterious and the mundane. In our liturgical celebration, this unresolved tension both reveals the meaning of life for us and calls us to respond, to act upon that meaning.

Once accepted and opened, the gift of God's Word is a gift that keeps on giving and keeps on calling us to give in return. It dares us to be like the gift-giver and to become gifts for others, not only at Christmas, but at every moment of life.

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