

*This Sunday at St. Luke's Blue Ridge
May 9, 2020*

8:15 a.m. – Holy Communion (said – no music)

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SPECIAL SERVICE THIS SUNDAY

**10 a.m. – Instructed Morning Prayer and Sermon together
with abridged Holy Communion (organ and hymns)
(Commentary will be interspersed explaining the service)
*In-church, in-pavilion, drive-in and online***

The Fifth Sunday after Easter



Give us our daily bread

The Fifth Sunday after Easter comes directly before the three Rogation Days. The word 'rogation' is from the Latin *rogare*, 'ask'. Since the fifth century these days have been used to ask God's blessings on the crops.

THE COLLECT FOR THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

O LORD, from whom all good things do come; Grant to us thy humble servants, that by thy holy inspiration we may think those things that are good, and by thy merciful guiding may perform the same; through our Lord Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

THE EPISTLE – St. James 1:22-27 (J.B. Phillips)

Religion must be practical

²²⁻²⁵ Don't I beg you, only hear the message, but put it into practice; otherwise you are merely deluding yourselves. The man who simply hears and does nothing about it is like a man catching the reflection of his own face in a mirror. He sees himself, it is true, but he goes on with whatever he was doing without the slightest recollection of what sort of person he saw in the mirror. But the man who looks into the perfect mirror of God's law, the law of liberty (or freedom), and makes a habit of so doing, is not the man who sees and forgets. He puts that law into practice and he wins true happiness.

²⁶ If anyone appears to be "religious" but cannot control his tongue, he deceives himself and we may be sure that his religion is useless.

²⁷ Religion that is pure and genuine in the sight of God the Father will show itself by such things as visiting orphans and widows in their distress and keeping oneself uncontaminated by the world.

NOTE: This Epistle is a continuation of last Sunday's. It is on hearing and doing, on controlling the tongue, and closes with a definition of true religion. (William Sydnor)

THE GOSPEL (H.C.) – St. John 16:23-33 (J.B. Phillips)

Ask now!

16 ^{23b-24} "I assure you that whatever you ask the Father he will give you in my name. Up to now you have asked nothing in my name; ask now, and you will receive, that your joy may be overflowing.

Jesus speaks further of the future

²⁵⁻²⁸ "I have been speaking to you in parables—but the time is coming to give up parables and tell you plainly about the Father. When that time comes, you will make your requests to him in my own name, for I need make no promise to plead to the Father for you, for the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. Yes, I did come from the Father and I came into the world. Now I leave the world behind and return to the Father."

²⁹⁻³⁰ “Now you are speaking plainly,” cried the disciples, “and are not using parables. Now we know that everything is known to you—no more questions are needed. This makes us sure that you did come from God.”

³¹⁻³³ “So you believe in me now?” replied Jesus. “The time is coming, indeed, it has already come, when you will be scattered, every one of you going home and leaving me alone. Yet I am not really alone for the Father is with me. I have told you all this so that you may find your peace in me. You will find trouble in the world—but, never lose heart, I have conquered the world!”

NOTE: Here is Christ’s wonderful promise to those who accept Him as Lord: “If you ask anything of the Father, He will give it to you in my name” (v.23). This is probably the only condition the Bible puts on God’s bounty. (William Sydnor)

LECTIONARY READINGS

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON – Ezekiel 34:25-31 (RSV)

God, the True Shepherd

³⁴²⁵ “I will make with them a covenant of peace and banish wild beasts from the land, so that they may dwell securely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods. ²⁶ And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will send down the showers in their season; they shall be showers of blessing. ²⁷ And the trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and the earth shall yield its increase, and they shall be secure in their land; and they shall know that I am the Lord, when I break the bars of their yoke, and deliver them from the hand of those who enslaved them. ²⁸ They shall no more be a prey to the nations, nor shall the beasts of the land devour them; they shall dwell securely, and none shall make them afraid. ²⁹ And I will provide for them prosperous ^[c] plantations so that they shall no more be consumed with hunger in the land, and no longer suffer the reproach of the nations. ³⁰ And they shall know that I, the Lord their God, am with them, and that they, the house of Israel, are my people, says the Lord God. ³¹ And you are my sheep, the sheep of my pasture, and I am your God, says the Lord God.”

NOTE: The prophet closes a section on the shepherds of Israel (their kings and others who had oversight of them) and their sheep with this reassuring covenant of peace. The description of the Good Shepherd in St. John (10:1-18) can be appreciated more fully against this background. On Rogation Sunday we hear particularly the promise that there “shall be showers of blessing” (v. 26). (William Sydnor)

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON – St. Luke 11:1-13 (J.B. Phillips)

Jesus gives a model prayer

11 One day it happened that Jesus was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said, “Lord, teach us how to pray, as John used to teach his disciples.”

²⁻⁴ “When you pray,” returned Jesus, “you should say, ‘Father, may your name be honoured—may your kingdom come! Give us each day the bread we need, and forgive us our sins, for we forgive anyone who owes anything to us; and keep us clear of temptation.’”

The willingness of the Father to answer prayer

⁵⁻⁸ Then he added, “If any of you has a friend, and goes to him in the middle of the night and says, ‘Lend me three loaves, my dear fellow, for a friend of mine has just arrived after a journey and I have no food to put in front of him’; and then he answers from inside the house, ‘Don’t bother me with your troubles. The front door is locked and my children and I have gone to bed. I simply cannot get up now and give you anything!’ Yet, I tell you, that even if he won’t get up and give him what he wants simply because he is his friend, yet if he persists, he will rouse himself and give him everything he needs.”

⁹⁻¹⁰ And so I tell you, ask and it will be given you, search and you will find, knock and the door will be opened to you. The one who asks will always receive; the one who is searching will always find, and the door is opened to the man who knocks.”

¹¹⁻¹³ “Some of you are fathers, and if your son asks you for some fish, would you give him a snake instead, or if he asks you for an egg, would you make him a present of a scorpion? So, if you, for all your evil, know how to give good things to your children, how much more likely is it that your Heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”

NOTE: The Lord’s Prayer and the Master’s teaching on prayer means a great deal to us on a Sunday when our thinking hovers around asking (*rogare*) (William Sydnor)

The Fifth Sunday after Easter

This Sunday’s Focus

Asking for showers of blessings

Preacher: The Rector

Sunday Worship Options (10 a.m.)

1. In-church. Those who wish to worship in the church are asked to seat in designated areas to ensure social distancing.
2. 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 delivered to cars in plastic bags.
3. In-pavilion. As the weather becomes warmer, a speaker has been set up in the church pavilion. Those choosing this option should space themselves out. Dogs are welcomed if kept quiet and under control.
4. Online. Services will continue to be live-streamed 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.

HOLY COMMUNION ON ASCENSION DAY

The Holy Communion will be celebrated at noon on Ascension Day, May 25. Ascension Day commemorates Jesus' visible departure from His followers 40 days after Easter Day. It always falls on Thursday. Ascension-tide covers a period of ten days.



The Paschal candle, which has been burning throughout Easter-tide, is extinguished following the Gospel.



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FIRST AID CPR CLASS

Parish nurse and vestry member Rosanne Johnston is spearheading a first aid CPR class. Class is open to 10 persons. Cost is \$25 per person. Please email her at rosannejohnston@aol.com if you wish to participate.



SACRAMENTS AND OTHER RITES

Ordination and Unction (healing)

Readings in preparation for this coming week's Bible Study
In-person, Tuesday, 11:30 p.m.
On-line (Zoom), Wednesday, 6 p.m.

Day 1 – In the OT, the Aaronic/Levitical Priesthood was responsible for carrying out the duties of educating, blessing, performing sacrifices and exercising judgment of Torah, **Leviticus 16**; Aaron's son Eleazar is appointed as priest, **Genesis 1: 26-31**.

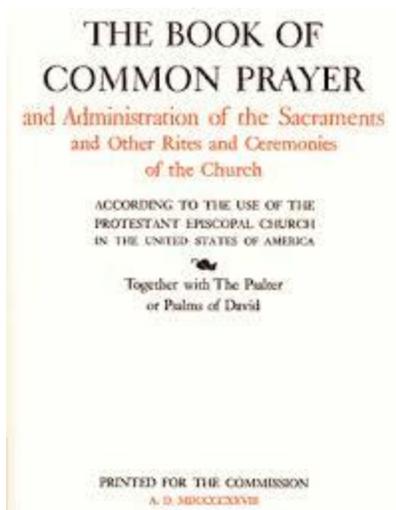
Day 2 – Jesus is the Great High Priest; old order is ended, **Hebrews 9**; all of God's people now have access to God and can offer spiritual sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving, **1 Peter 2:9**; **Hebrews 13:15**.

Day 3 – Jesus calls 12 men; these are to be the foundation stones of the New Israel, **Matthew 4:18-22**, **Matthew 10:1-4**, **Luke 6:12-16**; **Matthew 28:19-20**; Judas replaced, **Acts 1: 1:21–26**.

Day 4 – First Deacons chosen to assist in the work of the ministry. **Acts 6:1-15**; Various ministries in the Early Church, **Luke 6:12-16**; Paul reminds Timothy of his setting apart, **1 Timothy 1:4-14**.

Day 5 – James, the Lord’s brother, leader of the church in Jerusalem (‘Bishop of Jerusalem’), **Galatians 1:18-19**; Titus, an embryonic bishop, given oversight of Crete, **Titus 1:5-16**; elders (presbyter) set apart / ordained, **Acts 14:20-28**.

Day 6 – Healing in the Early Church, **James 5:13-15**



NEED A PRAYER BOOK?

The Book of Common Prayer is a treasury of religious devotion. While in no way replacing the Bible, it turns the Bible into prayer, teaching God’s people to think and pray biblically and Christianly. If you don’t have one of your own or would like to share this treasure with a friend, call the church office [(706) 632-8245] to secure a copy of a new paperback edition.

These books are being mailed free to anyone in St.

Luke’s online congregation who requests one.

Voluntary donations to assist with our online ministry are appreciated.

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 2021

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 2021.

Name _____

Address _____

Amount _____

_____ Weekly _____ Monthly _____ Yearly

(Please tick the appropriate blank)

Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him to store, as God has prospered him.



SIGN-UP FOR FLOWERS

A sign-up sheet for Altar flowers is available in Thomason Hall for 2021.

Please sign up for days you wish to commemorate.

Flowers are needed for July 18 and 25; Aug. 15, 22 and 29. Please email or call Kathryn Noblett at the church office to sign up.

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