

# GOOD NEWS



*from the Church of Saint Luke*  
*JANUARY 2012*

*From the Vicar*

## Life is, simply, what it is

New Years Day, 2012

Dear Friends,

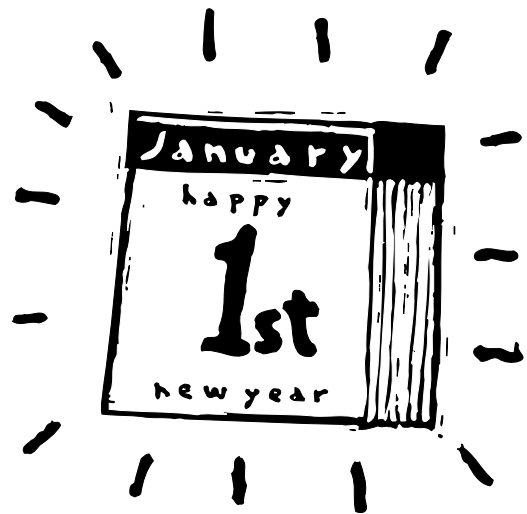
It is New Years Day. The year is set out there ahead of us. We can imagine anything we want to imagine about how the year will play. We can imagine scenarios of success. We can imagine challenges we must avoid or overcome. We can imagine a wild and rewarding political season especially since it is 2012. We can also imagine disaster if we run with our fears. We can imagine anything we want with a clean slate in front of us. But things almost never turn out the way we imagine them being for good or ill. So if you really consider reality, it is a waste of time and energy to imagine the future. It is best to live in God's time which is NOW. At this moment, I am in a warm house, on a beautiful sunny afternoon writing to you my friends. In this moment, life is good for me. I do not know what the next minutes will bring. A gem of an idea may come to be and I may say something that really makes a difference to someone. On the other hand I may enter writers block or say something stupid and not even recognize it. Life is what happens. Life simply is. What happens simply is. It is our little minds that lay the value judgment on what happens to categorize it as either good or bad. The naming of it does nothing to altar what is. It does not help it or

hinder it. It is an exercise that only the mind can appreciate and does nothing to altar what is. What is . . . is life—pulsing, vibrant, insistent, passionate life.

The biggest enemy to a wonderful year is our little minds-- our little egos' drive to control outcomes and events with our constant categorizing and naming of what is. Our self centered standards define the good and the bad instead of God doing the defining. God invites us every day to trust that he is the way the truth and the life. He invites us to embrace what happens and go with it without judging. He encourages us to live into the good news that he loves us and gives us the abundant life to be engaged without reservation. The life he offers you is tailored specifically to you. Your vocation is to live it. Your vocation is not to compare it with someone else's life or second guess your life. Your vocation is to live it fully as it comes. In this way, the eagerness and zest of the child in you (the divine child—Jesus) is released to engage with wonder all that God is doing around and with you.

In this New Year, remind yourself each day as you awaken that "This is the Day that the Lord has made, Let us rejoice and be glad in it!" Then go out and live it in each moment . . . as God rolls it out for you.

Happy New Year,  
Fr. John



# Five Lessons About How To Treat People

Stories for motivation and inspiration in the new year!  
- Authors Unknown

## 1. First Important Lesson – “Know The Cleaning Lady”

During my second month of college, our professor gave us a pop quiz. I was a conscientious student and had breezed through the questions, until I read the last one: “What is the first name of the woman who cleans the school?” Surely this was some kind of joke. I had seen the cleaning woman several times. She was tall, dark-haired and in her 50s, but how would I know her name? I handed in my paper, leaving the last question blank. Just before class ended, one student asked if the last question would count toward our quiz grade. “Absolutely,” said the professor. “In your careers, you will meet many people. All are significant. They deserve your attention and care, even if all you do is smile and say “hello.” I’ve never forgotten that lesson. I also learned her name was Dorothy.

## 2. Second Important Lesson – “Pickup In The Rain”

One night, at 11:30 p.m., an older African American woman was standing on the side of an Alabama highway trying to endure a lashing rainstorm. Her car had broken down and she desperately needed a ride. Soaking wet, she decided to flag down the next car. A young white man stopped to help her, generally unheard of in those conflict-filled 1960s. The man took her to safety, helped her get assistance and put her into a taxicab. She seemed to be in a big hurry, but wrote down his address and thanked him. Seven days went by and a knock came on the man’s door. To his surprise, a giant console color TV was delivered to his home. A special note was attached. It read: “Thank you so much for assisting me on the highway the other night. The rain drenched not only my clothes, but also my spirits. Then you came along. Because of you, I was able to make it to my dying husband’s bedside just before he passed away. God bless you for helping me and unselfishly serving others.”

Sincerely, Mrs. Nat King Cole.

## 3. Third Important Lesson – “Remember Those Who Serve”

In the days when an ice cream sundae cost much less, a 10 year-old boy entered a hotel coffee shop and sat at a table. A waitress put a glass of water in front of him. “How much is an ice cream sundae?” he asked. “50¢,” replied the waitress. The little boy pulled his hand out of his pocket and studied the coins in it. “Well, how much is a plain dish of ice cream?” he inquired. By now more people were waiting for a table and the waitress was growing impatient. “35¢!” she brusquely replied. The little boy again counted his coins. “I’ll have the plain ice cream,” he said. The waitress brought the ice cream, put the bill on the table and walked away. The boy finished the ice cream, paid the cashier and left. When the waitress came

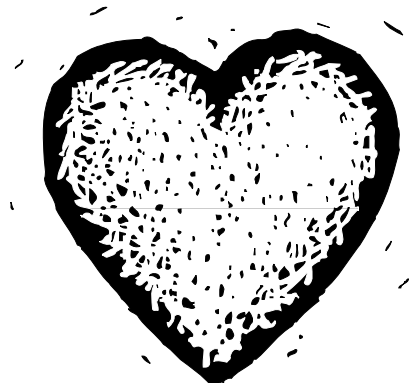
back, she began to cry as she wiped down the table. There, placed neatly beside the empty dish, were two nickels and five pennies. You see, he couldn’t have the sundae, because he had to have enough left to leave her a tip.

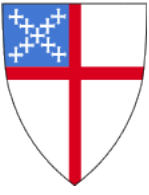
## 4. Fourth Important Lesson – “The Obstacles In Our Path”

In ancient times, a King had a boulder placed on a roadway. Then he hid himself and watched to see if anyone would remove the huge rock. Some of the king’s wealthiest merchants and courtiers came by and simply walked around it. Many loudly blamed the King for not keeping the roads clear, but none did anything about getting the stone out of the way. Then a peasant came along carrying a load of vegetables. Upon approaching the boulder, the peasant laid down his burden and tried to move the stone to the side of the road. After much pushing and straining, he finally succeeded. After the peasant picked up his load of vegetables, he noticed a purse lying in the road where the boulder had been. The purse contained many gold coins and a note from the King indicating that the gold was for the person who removed the boulder from the roadway. The peasant learned what many of us never understand – “Every obstacle presents an opportunity to improve our condition.”

## 5. Fifth Important Lesson – “Giving When It Counts”

Many years ago, when I worked as a volunteer at a hospital, I got to know a little girl named Liz who was suffering from a rare and serious disease. Her only chance of recovery appeared to be a blood transfusion from her 5-year-old brother, who had miraculously survived the same disease and had developed the antibodies needed to combat the illness. The doctor explained the situation to her little brother, and asked the little boy if he would be willing to give his blood to his sister. I saw him hesitate for only a moment before taking a deep breath and saying, “Yes, I’ll do it if it will save her.” As the transfusion progressed, he lay in bed next to his sister and smiled, as we all did, seeing the color returning to her cheeks. Then his face grew pale and his smile faded. He looked up at the doctor and asked with a trembling voice, “Will I start to die right away?” Being young, the little boy had misunderstood the doctor; he thought he was going to have to give his sister all of his blood in order to save her.





# Church of Saint Luke

PO Box 551

Excelsior Springs MO 64024

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## FYI

\* Let Cindy Roth know each month who needs to be on the prayer list.

## Taking Down the Greens

Putting away the decorations seems to go much faster than putting them up. And many hands make light work, so plan to join in after church on Sunday, January 8. Epiphany cake will be served afterwards.

## Annual Meeting

The St. Luke's Annual Meeting will be Sunday, January 29th after church. Bring soup or sandwiches for potluck. Fr. John will present his yearly report, and candidates for the Bishop's Committee will be approved.

## Bible Study

The first session will be Wednesday, January 11 at 7:00 pm. Shannon says participants should read the book of Mark prior to the first class.

## JANUARY CALENDAR

- 1/1- FEAST OF THE HOLY NAME  
10 am- Holy Eucharist
- 1/8- EPIPHANY 1 10 am- Holy Eucharist  
Bishop's Committee meets, Epiphany Cake at Coffee Hour, Undecorate the church
- 1/15- EPIPHANY 2 10 am- Holy Eucharist
- 1/22- EPIPHANY 3 10 am- Holy Eucharist
- 1/29- EPIPHANY 4 10 am- Holy Eucharist  
Annual Meeting and Potluck after church

## FYI

◆ Thanks to Carla Kirkland, Tisha Mason, Diane Montague and Janet Burrell for St. Luke's beautiful tree in the display in the Hall of Waters. If you didn't see it, it was decorated with white and gold ornaments, Episcopal shields, and scrolls with the words *scripture*, *reason*, and *tradition* written in decorative script.

### Good News

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Keith Montague, Junior Warden;  
Cheryl Galloway, Bob Nance  
Shawn Roney

St. Luke's is an Episcopal Community boldly acting in the ways of God as revealed in the life of Jesus.