



SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- St. Luke's Book Group
- Prayer in Action
- Upcoming liturgical days
- Birthdays in the coming months

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The Gift of Detachment

Right off the bat the word detachment might make us think of an astronaut floating out there in space detached from their tether. Or someone who is completely disconnected from reality or someone who is uncaring or aloof. While these ideas surely describe a form of detachment, they do not speak to the detachment or a process of self-differentiation that we speak about in church circles.

The mystics of old spoke of a detachment from the world's narrative of consumerism and focused on embracing the presence of God. They discovered through a practiced rule of life, that it is about engaging and finding our center in God and not in the world's priorities or determination of what is important. In doing so they experienced an inner freedom which heightened their ability to deal with life's adversities.

Have you ever got into a squabble with someone and it begins to escalate and you find yourself so enmeshed that you develop tunnel vision, blocking out everything

around you? You know in the back of your mind that the effective thing to do is cool the temperature, step back, breathe, and detach yourself emotionally. In doing so, you can engage in a healthy conversation where disagreement and misunderstanding can be addressed without the drama.

By detachment we are not talking about closing down emotionally or, in other words, giving someone the silent treatment, pretending that by your silence you are setting a healthy boundary, when in truth all you are doing is seething with emotion and, at some point, some form of a catastrophic explosion will inevitably take place.

The honest practice of detachment allows others to have greater access to your gifts, to your presence, and often, the vehicle of God's grace without your issues, your agenda, your biases getting in the way.

Give it a try! Let go and let God work in and through you.

Blessings, Ken

Sunday School Service Project

The Sunday School class learned about serving others through Jesus' teachings in the gospels of September and October. They chose to serve others in the form of a collection for Lollipop Farm Shelter. On Sunday, November 21st, they donated a full box of the most needed items to the shelter. Thank you to all who helped these kids practice their service for others!



St. Luke's Book Group—November Update

The Saint Luke's book group met on Tuesday night, November 9th, to discuss Colson Whitehead's The Nickel Boys. Attending were Mary Jo Hazelden, Susan and Dave Prener, Sandy Sucher, Dawn Santiago-Marullo, Ken Pepin, Priscilla Petersen, Cathi Franchino, Susan Veronda, Holly Wolf, and Jean Keplinger.

We had a lively discussion about a sad but compelling book. So many of the comments revolved around the abject cruelty depicted in the book and the fact that that sort of cruelty and disregard for basic human dignity continues to exist. The recent discovery of bodies from an indigenous home in Canada, conditions in many of our prisons, and the brutality we see in daily news reports are but a few examples.

We commented on the parallels between the treatment of whites and

people of color, between the civil rights laws and the Jim Crow reality of Elwood's life, and the fact that Elwood was done in by one small thing: he got into the wrong car. We noted how easy it is to be cruel when you are around others who act similarly.

We talked about Whitehead's writing style and how many of us had been blindsided by the twist at the end of the book when we found out that it was Turner not Elwood who had survived. We noted the contrast between Elwood's idealism and Turner's pragmatism, but we also noted that in the end, Turner had gotten his GED, married, and become a successful businessman - was that Elwood's influence? Did Elwood give his life so another could live and be successful?

In the end we lamented that fact that there is so much cruelty in society, but we also noted that there still is hope

and goodness. Elwood, for example, never totally gave up hope - otherwise he would not have taken notes on all the things he did and experienced. Like Elwood, we need to continue to have hope and to do the best we can.

Thanks to Cathi Franchino and Susan Veronda who included the book group in their list of "blessings" on November 21st.

Everyone is welcome to join the group on **January 11, 2022** when we will be discussing Beloved by Toni Morrison. For the time being, the plan is to meet on Zoom.

- Jean Keplinger

BELOVED
A NOVEL

TONI MORRISON

Prayer in Action

When I was a child and our family was driving north along the mountainous edge of the California Pacific Coast on Highway 101, we saw a speeding car racing down the narrow two-lane road aiming toward us. My quick-thinking father pulled right as far as possible against the mountain in the inches-wide roadside margin and set the parking brake.

A second later the car smashed into us, demolished the left side of our vehicle, careened across the road, and plunged into a deep ravine, protected by its trees from the ocean below.

Although injured, we all survived, thanks to Dad's alertness and defensive driving. [Both of the drunks also survived, although even sober, they could not remember which of them had been at the wheel.] Had there been seatbelts in those days, our injuries would have been less serious.

Thinking ahead about protective measures helps keep ourselves and others alive.

Seatbelts were attached to airplane seats, and eventually manufactured for automobiles. Although optional, Bill and I gladly paid extra for seatbelts when we were able to buy a car which offered them. When we picked up the car, our salesman proudly told us that he had read the manual and installed them himself! Unknowingly, we wore these brand-new things incorrectly at first, but drove safely, and were grateful that we could be prepared ahead to protect ourselves and others.

When we had children to transport, one mom told me "I never bother with a seatbelt. I say a prayer for protection when I get behind the wheel." ... I chose for our children *not* to be in a carpool with her.

In the years since, we have realized that **seatbelts save lives** and now they are mandatory. People no longer argue about buckling up! And when I start the car, I do say a prayer: to be a courteous and responsible driver, to anticipate potential hazards, to protect the well-being of pedestrians and everyone on the road, that all may safely reach their destinations.

As a child, I was inoculated against smallpox, like my parents, and theirs! General George Washington insisted that his soldiers get smallpox vaccinations! It was the only vaccine available and it worked. I endured and survived whooping cough, measles, chicken pox. I did not get polio, yet a close friend who did spent her few remaining years in an iron lung. People prayed for vaccines against these diseases!

We have them now! We can spare ourselves, our children, the elderly, neighbors and friends near and far, from the risk and ruin of disease. **Free** COVID-19 inoculations are readily available! Let us look ahead for potential hazards, take protective measures, save everyone from unnecessary risk which may be due to our own carelessness or a lack of concern for the wellbeing of others.

I used to pray that God would feed the hungry, or do this or that, but now I pray that he will guide me to do whatever I'm supposed to do. I used to pray for answers, but now I pray for strength.

I used to *believe* that prayer changes things, but now I *know* that prayer changes us, and we change things.

--- Susan Conroy, **Praying with Mother Teresa**

- Priscilla E Petersen

NOT FOR
CHILDREN'S
EYES!

The Magic of Santa Claus

The Unasked Question: I began preparing for it when my children were very young. In my mind, I started working on the answer to what I thought would be an inevitable question. I was sure that someday Michael and Natalie would want to know if Santa Claus was “real”. I was determined to give them a more satisfying answer than just yes or no. Much to my surprise, neither of them asked. However, there were hints along the way that gave us a window into their ever-evolving thinking on the subject of magical visitors.

Mom, Santa is a person. But the Easter Bunny is a bunny. Is the real Easter Bunny just a person in a bunny costume? Where does he even live?

Dylan and Bridget don't have a chimney. If Santa can get into their house without one, why can't he just go in everyone's house that way? And what even IS that way?

There is just no way reindeer can fly. They weigh, like, a thousand pounds. Bats are the only mammals that can fly.

Mom, why did the Easter Bunny give me jelly beans? (Chin goes down and to the side, eyebrows go up) Doesn't he know that I don't like jelly beans...?

Mom, the tooth fairy took my tooth even though I left a note under my pillow saying I wanted to keep it. Can she give it back to me tonight? (Same chin/eyebrow routine, different kid)

In these moments, Mike and I would exchange panicked glances, trip over half-baked answers, or simply join them in their complete and justified confusion. I can only assume that parents everywhere can relate.

There comes a point, however, when we want our children to think through situations that seem beyond the bounds of possibility or contradict things they know for sure. Would we want our eventual teenagers still believing that one man could visit every country in the world in one night? Of course not. We educate our kids to be problem solvers, to connect learned information, and to question things that don't add up. This is age-appropriate growth. But what, then, becomes of the magic of Christmas?

Knowing that the question “Is Santa Claus real?” did not have a simple answer, I made it my mission to craft an explanation that was both historical and inspirational. I'd had a general awareness that there was an actual person, at some point in history, named St. Nicholas. However, I didn't have any idea how he got so many aliases or how elves and flying reindeer became a part of his narrative.



No surprise, the internet provided me with a lengthy history filled with contradictory accounts of this real man's life. Among the less debated details are the fact that he lived during the 3rd century, was born in present-day Turkey, loved children, and lived a life in service to God. Beyond this, my deep-dive led me to a number of legends which may or may not have a foothold in truth. As I read through the lore, I found myself hoping to find something magical. But true to form, the rabbit hole that is the internet left me feeling drained and forgetful of the point of my quest.

After some time away, I reminded myself of my original purpose: I wasn't writing a term paper on the man; I just wanted to have something meaningful to say to my kids when they asked how they "really" got all of those gifts. To that end, I took the liberty of combining the most inspiring parts of the stories I found and molding them into a magical truth that, I believed, would work for my family.

Because they never asked, this explanation sat on the shelf in my mind for more than a few Christmases. Though seemingly content with their own conclusions about Christmas magic, I still wanted to share with them, at ages fourteen and twelve, the answer to an unasked question that took my mind and heart over a decade to synthesize. So here it is. This is what I have now shared with Michael and Natalie. Perhaps you'll find something here worthy of sharing, too.

Santa Claus was a real person. He really lived. But as people do, he grew old and he passed away. His real name was Nicholas, but it seems that he did not have a wife. Nicholas did not live in a cold part of the world, but because of his connection to Christmas, we think of him as living in a cold, snowy place. The name Santa Claus came from Nicholas's Dutch nickname, Sinter Klaas, a shortened form of Sint Nikolaas.

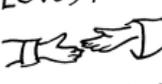
Although he did not have children of his own, Nicholas always loved children. It is said that each Christmas, he gave handmade presents to all of the children in his village. He did this for many years. When he passed away, the village parents took up the charge and continued to give gifts to their children on his behalf; these gifts were "from" Nicholas. Because he had started something selfless and beautiful, they carried on his tradition and ultimately helped create his legacy.

The gifts you get from Santa each Christmas are a continuation of this legacy. Along with families all over the world, we honor this great man by keeping his annual tradition alive.

The real Nicholas, who was sainted for his kindness, valued two things that we value: generosity and community. He was generous with his time, his talent and his resources. He didn't travel the world to give gifts to every child; he took care of the people around him. One person cannot give so much to so many. But all of us can be generous with what we do have and love the people who are right around us. Your gifts on Christmas morning come to you because a real man and his real community inspired the world to do just that. And that is nothing short of magical.

- Melissa Panara, Christmas 2021

2021 Advent Calendar created by Rev. Merry Watters & Thomas Mousin

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
LIGHT ONE 28 CANDLE.  JER. 33:14-16	BELIEVE. 29  ISA. 7:14	BE PATIENT. 30  ROM. 18:24-25	VISIT 1 SOTENI.ORG  WORLD AIDS DAY MT. 25:34-36	LISTEN. 2  1 KINGS 19:11	KEEP HOPING. 3  HEB. 11:1-3.	TASTE IT. 4  PS. 34:8-10
LIGHT TWO 5 CANDLES.  LK. 1:68-79	SURPRISE SOMEONE. 6  MT. 6:1-4	SEE THE LIGHT. 7  JN. 1:6-9	FOLLOW. 8  ISA. 11:1-6	TRUST. 9  PS. 62:5-8	BE STRONG. 10  LK. 10:25-28	REMEMBER 11 REFUGEES.  DEUT. 26:10,11
LIGHT THREE 12 CANDLES.  ZEPH. 3:14-20	DRINK DEEPLY. 13  ISA. 12:2,3	BE GENTLE 14  PHIL. 4:4-7	SHARE IT. 15  LK. 3:10,11	WATCH FOR 16 ANGELS.  PS. 91:1-12	JESUS LOVES ME. 17  ROM. 8:37-39	VISIT THEM. 18  2 JN. 12
LIGHT FOUR 19 CANDLES.  MIC. 5:2-5A	Rejoice 20  LK. 1:46-55	MAKE ROOM. 21  LK. 2:1-7	WELCOME 22 HIM.  ISA. 9:6	PREPARE TO 23 TELL IT.  LK. 2:8-30	24  JN. 1:14	

TAKE WINTER GREENS AND FORM A WREATH, WITH CANDLES SET TO LIGHT.
THEN LISTEN TO THE PROPHETS' WORDS, HOWEVER LONG THE NIGHT.
COME, SING WITH THEM THEIR SONGS OF HOPE, THE COMING OF GOD'S REIGN.
AND WITH THEM DARE TO LISTEN FOR A MOTHER'S BIRTHING PAIN.
FOR NOT BY POWER OR BY MIGHT SHALL COME THE PROMISED DAY,
BUT RATHER FROM A HELPLESS CHILD UPON A BED OF HAY.
SO LISTEN FOR THE SOUND OF LOVE, AS WORD ENFLESHED BECOMES
OUR WAY AND TRUTH, OUR SONG TO SING SO THAT GOD'S WILL IS DONE.

DEVOTIONS BY REV. MERRY WATTERS • ADVENT 2021 • www.thomasmousin.com • POEM & DESIGN BY REV. THOMAS MOUSIN

ADVENT

Thank you, Holly Wolf, for sharing!

DECEMBER 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Staff Meeting 	2	3	4 Theology Pub 7pm Zoom 
5  2nd Sunday of Advent	6	7 	8 Choir Practice	9 	10	11 Theology Pub 7pm Zoom
12 3rd Sunday of Advent	13	14 	15 Choir Practice	16	17	18 Theology Pub 7pm Zoom
19 4th Sunday of Advent Neighborhood Carols	20 	21 Vestry Meeting	22 Choir Practice	23	24 5pm Service & Pageant	25 Merry Christmas!
26 1st Sunday after Christmas	27	28	29 Choir Practice	30 	31 	

JANUARY 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 Theology Pub 7pm Zoom
2 2nd Sunday after Christmas	3	4 	5 Choir Practice	6 	7 	8 Theology Pub 7pm Zoom
9 1st Sunday after the Epiphany	10	11 	12 Choir Practice	13	14	15 Theology Pub 7pm Zoom
16  2nd Sunday after the Epiphany	17	18 Vestry Meeting	19 Choir Practice	20 	21	22 Theology Pub 7pm Zoom
23  3rd Sunday after the Epiphany	24	25 	26 Choir Practice	27	28	29 Theology Pub 7pm Zoom
30  4th Sunday after the Epiphany	31					

FEBRUARY 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 	2 Choir Practice	3	4	5 Theology Pub 7pm Zoom
6  Sunday after the Epiphany	7	8 	9 Choir Practice	10	11 	12 Theology Pub 7pm Zoom
13  Sunday after the Epiphany	14	15  Vestry Meeting	16 Choir Practice	17	18	19 Theology Pub 7pm Zoom
20 7th Sunday after the Epiphany	21	22	23	24	25	26  Theology Pub 7pm Zoom
27 Last Sunday after the Epiphany	28					

December, January, & February Birthdays & Anniversaries

December 1—Ann Rugelis	January 4—Valerie McKenzie	February 1—Ford Smith
December 4—Susan Jasie	January 4—Karen Keegan	February 6—Jon Liston
December 5—Sue Veronda	January 4—Bill Steenburgh	February 7—David Prener
December 7—Suzanne Roscoe	January 6—Phil Wilkinson	February 7—Paul Cusker
December 7—Henry Bacon	January 7—Cathi Franchino	February 8—Jackie Masciangelo
December 9—Jean Patterson	January 11—Sharon Scott	February 8—Meg McGee
December 14—Susan Prener	January 16—Terry Solomon	February 10—Bill Hardin
December 20—Andrea D’Orsi	January 20—Jeremy Thayer	February 11—David Grantham
December 30—Jim Keegan	January 23—Marti St. George	February 13—William Petersen
December 31—Grosvenor Richardson	January 25—Matthew Irving	February 14—Hunter Wasson
	January 30—AJ Bacon	February 25—Peter Osborn
		February 26—Sharon Murray

If your birthday or anniversary is missing from our list and you would like it included, please email the church office at slukefpt@frontiernet.net



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8:00am—Holy Eucharist

A quiet service; no music

10:00am—Holy Eucharist

Organ/piano music; Children's Christian
Education for all children ages Pre-K through
12th grade

**From July 4th to Labor Day,
there is one service with music at 9:00am**

Our service is always available on YouTube
Find our Sunday Worship Playlist at:
<https://bit.ly/StLukesSundayWorship>
Find our YouTube Channel at:
<https://bit.ly/StLukesFairportYouTube>

Office Hours: Tues.-Fri. 9:00am—1:00pm

We are an open, Christ-centered community, caring for each other, and doing God's work in the world.

Our Holiday, Advent, and Christmas Schedule:

Sunday, December 5

Second Sunday of Advent
8 am and 10 am services, Holy Eucharist

Sunday, December 13

Third Sunday of Advent
8 am and 10 am services, Holy Eucharist

Sunday, December 20

Fourth Sunday of Advent
8 am and 10 am services, Holy Eucharist
Greening of the Church following the 10am service



Friday, December 24

Christmas Eve
5 pm service, Holy Eucharist, Intergenerational Pageant with music

Saturday, December 25

Christmas Day
9 am service, Holy Eucharist

Sunday, December 26

Lessons and Carols
9 am service, NO EUCHARIST

