

# St. Luke's Voice

St. Luke's Lutheran Church, New Rochelle, NY

May 2026

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*The mission of St. Luke's Lutheran Church is to share the good news of Jesus through word and sacrament, serving, teaching, and welcoming our community.*

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## **St. Luke's Lutheran Church**

95 Eastchester Road  
New Rochelle, NY 10801

Rev. John Backe  
917-795-2392

## **Sunday Worship: 10 A.M.**

Phone: (914) 632-2116  
[StLuke654@aol.com](mailto:StLuke654@aol.com)  
website: [www.slnr.org](http://www.slnr.org)

[https://www.instagram.com/  
/st.lukes\\_new\\_ro\\_sunday\\_school/](https://www.instagram.com/st.lukes_new_ro_sunday_school/)

Visit us on Facebook:  
[https://  
www.facebook.com/slnr.org/](https://www.facebook.com/slnr.org/)

**Newsletter**  
Editor: Pat Fredericks

## **PASTOR'S MESSAGE**

*This is the first of two parts of the Pastor's Message addressing issues related to the current political situation and the upcoming elections. The second part will be in the June newsletter.*

You may have increasingly heard the term *Christian Nationalism* on news broadcasts or talk shows recently. It is often used in coverage of Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth and others close to the current administration and you may have wondered what it means.

In my understanding, I start with this definition:  
*Christian nationalism is a political ideology and cultural framework that seeks to fuse American and Christian identities.*

In this philosophy, the only "true Americans" are Christian and "real Christians" are Americans. Different expressions of what this means often include ideas that only Christians should hold elected office, public displays of Muslim, Jewish or Roman Catholic faiths should be banned and married women should not be allowed to vote. The belief that the government should be run on "Christian" values does not include feeding the hungry and caring for the homeless.

This movement should not simply be confused with traditional conservative, evangelical or fundamentalist religious movements, though there can be significant overlap.

This is not merely about a different interpretation of certain Bible verses. Christian Nationalism is a form of idolatry that puts its own political vision of America before God. This should concern us all.

*Continued on page 2*

Let me know if you have any questions or reactions to this. We need to be aware and vigilant and be clear about our own faith commitment and present a more positive, gospel-based vision to our neighbors and the world.

~Pastor John

## PASTORAL SEARCH

Pastor Nicole Schwalbe, Assistant to Bishop Foster, is working closely with the Church Council to develop the conditions that can lead to the calling of the next pastor for St. Luke's. Currently, we are assembling a **Transition Team** which will be followed by the **Call Committee**. Each of these will require participation by congregation members, which is a "big ask", given how much a small group of people are already doing. Each of these commitments should be time limited, a few months, if everything goes well. If asked, please give prayerful consideration to participating.

## WORSHIP CHANGES

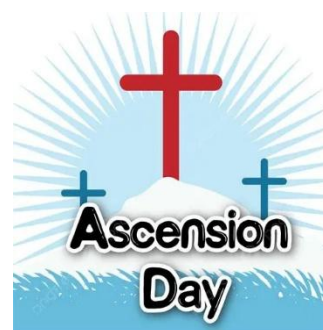


There will be several changes in our worship together during the summer. This is a continuing effort to experience different aspects of how and why we worship.

One change will be the opportunity to learn some new or less familiar hymns. From June through August, we will feature a "hymn of the month" each month which we will sing each week for that month. Another possible change is returning to exchanging the peace by choosing to shake hands. That will be optional, we will take time to gauge your willingness to do that.

## CONFERENCE WORSHIP ON ASCENSION DAY

St. Luke's will host all the congregations of the Tappan Zee Conference on Thursday, May 14 to celebrate the Ascension of Jesus, in anticipation of Pentecost. We will gather with brothers and sisters from around Westchester County at 7:30 for this special opportunity for celebration and celebration.



## MAY CHURCH COUNCIL REPORT

Mother's Day Blessings to you and your families from your Church Council!

We had 12 women attend our annual Women's retreat themed "Finding the Joy"! Koinonia is a wonderful place that our congregation is welcome to attend anytime. See their website [www.koinoniany.org](http://www.koinoniany.org) for how you can join or get involved. Angelika Ridulfo is a newly inducted Board Member. I'm sure she would welcome any questions.

Our Spring Sale is May 9<sup>th</sup>. It is one of only two fundraisers we hold each year. We need your support, either by working a table, donating baked goods, a raffle prize or coming to shop. Most importantly you can share the flyer with your family, friends, and neighbors. We need your time and your treasures to make it a success; we also need you! I'm always hopeful that our congregation members, even if they are not working at the sale, will come and support the church. We have great vendors, great raffles, gifts for Moms and YES, WE HAVE PLANTS! We will only have Saturday for full sale, Sunday will be any leftover baked goods and plants only. Come shop, have lunch. We have a great Picnic Lunch menu!

We continue to be a busy working Council doing all we can to help with the preservation and furtherance of our beloved church. Pastor Nicole Schwalbe, Asst to the Bishop, led us in worship on Palm Sunday and again met with the council and congregation members about our transition forward. There are some interesting options that we will be exploring further. We are working diligently to meet all criteria requested by the Synod. Stay Tuned!

Thank you to Pastor Backe and Pastor Brown for leading us in worship every Sunday!

### Make A Difference



Iryna is always looking for new members for choir... that means you!!! Even if you are not ready to join the Choir, please SING with the choir on Sundays! We need your voices!

We continue to look for new Lectors and Communion Assistants. Please see Susanne Kuligowski if you are interested; for Ushers, please see Denise Tolles to join her team.

It takes a village, or a congregation, to make our church successful, every hour counts. Your time, your talents and your treasures are all meaningful to us.

PLEASE like, follow and join our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/slnr.org/>

Also visit our website, [www.slnr.org](http://www.slnr.org). We need help managing the website, if you have skills and time and would like to help us with that, please contact me or Susanne.

Thank you for all you do to help maintain our church and our congregation!

Your Church Council  
Dawn McEvoy, Church Council President



## SOCIAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE HAPPENINGS

April was another busy month for the Social Ministry Team, as we continued sending cards to the sick and making phone calls to check-in on the homebound. The list of members that request your prayers is available in the bulletin every Sunday, and every phone call or card is valuable to ensure that members know we genuinely care.



Some of our Committee Members enjoyed the Women's Retreat at Koinonia this April, and we took the opportunity to make a small craft to show our care for HOPE Community Services. Small wooden crosses were inscribed with a short message of hope and then delivered along with the meal we cooked on April 19.

Some of these crosses were also placed in the donation envelope basket in our Church Narthex, and you are welcome to take one 😊

Next activities coming up will be welcoming our two partnership groups Hearts & Homes and HOPE to our Spring Sale. We will offer once again for their clients to shop the Rummage Sale for free during the last hour of the sale. Following are the links to these organizations if you would like to learn more or look for additional volunteer opportunities.

- [Hearts & Homes for Refugees](https://www.heartsandhomesforrefugees.org/howcanihelp)
- <https://www.heartsandhomesforrefugees.org/howcanihelp>

**For our May HOPE Cook session on May 24 we are putting out an urgent appeal to everyone who is able to lend a helping hand:**

**Our core staff will not be here, and therefore we plan to make this an easy to assemble meal for which no actual cooking is required.**

**We do however need hearts & hands to assemble the food and store it in the fridges for pick-up.**

**Please contact either Denise (914) 725-1529 or Angelika (914) 646-7925 if you are available to help – it is so much appreciated by us and especially by the families at HOPE who will receive the meals!**

Peace,

Angelika Ridulfo

Committee Members: Jennifer Archer, Patricia Fredericks, Susanne Kuligowski, Leam McEvoy, Camille O'Garro, Joan Bast, Bill Rodriguez, Denise Tolles

## THRIVENT CHOICE

Thanks to everyone who directs their Thrivent Choice Dollars to St. Luke's. If you are a Thrivent member or own a Thrivent product, but don't know about Choice Dollars, ask your Thrivent representative.

Direct your  
Thrivent Choice  
Dollars  
Today! 

# HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY from the Fellowship Committee



Thank you all for all you do for our church and participating in our Fellowship Events.

Happy Mother's Day to all our Moms, Grandmothers, Care Givers... we are so blessed to have them and to be them!

We had a fabulous Women's Retreat at Koinonia. The theme was "Finding the Joy" and we sure did. Please consider joining us for this one or the Family Retreat planned for October. You will be glad you did and we will be so glad to have you!



Our Annual Spring Sale is May 9<sup>th</sup> – In time for Mothers Day! We need your help! We need you to tell your friends, your family, neighbors. Share the flyer with everyone and on your social medias. We can't do it without you! We will have plants, raffles, baked goods, great vendors and a café. PLEASE JOIN US! Also, looking ahead to June we will be planning our end of the year picnic! Save the Date for June 14<sup>th</sup>!

Thank you to Carla, our Church secretary, Greg Hines, our custodian, and especially Pastor Backe, our coverage Pastor, and Pastor Brown, for leading us in Worship. We will have a few special guests worshipping with us this summer.

We continue to try to expand our presence in the community, through our social media page, the Chamber of Commerce and FB/Instagram groups. Please like and follow our page.

<https://www.facebook.com/slnr.org/>

website: [www.slnr.org](http://www.slnr.org)

God's Blessings

Yours In Christ, Dawn McEvoy, Chair

**The Fellowship Committee**

Leam, Melissa and Vicky McEvoy; Susanne and Jacob Kuligowski; Lydia Bersito;

Renee and Shari Taylor; Angelika Ridulfo; Julia Ungewitter and Traci Daniele

**And again, thank you to our fabulous Kitchen help, Leam, Joan Bast and Bill Rodriguez.**



THE SUNDAY  
SCHOOL SAYS  
HAPPY  
MOTHER'S DAY

Happy Mother's Day to all our Moms!!  
We are so blessed to have each & every one of you!

Our Sunday School has been busy learning all of God's Good News, from Palm Sunday to Doubting Thomas. We are now focusing on what came next. The kids are learning to use their Bibles and having great discussions. They are so smart!!! Ask them, "What did you learn in Sunday School today"?

Cait will have a table at the Spring Sale... Tommy will be working in the Café... please come support them!

The Sunday School staff consists of:

Superintendent - Dawn McEvoy  
Assistant Superintendent - Karen Fontecchio  
Treasurer - Traci Daniele  
Teachers – Melissa McEvoy,  
Shari Taylor and Jacob Kuligowski

Our Sunday School is small yet mighty!  
They are the future of this church!



Please help support our church and all the extras we do for the children .... Our Sunday school is self-sustaining through your contributions. You can help to support the Sunday school by using your child's Sunday school offering envelope every Sunday or you can just write us a check, made payable to St. Luke's Sunday School. Your contributions enable us to maintain a high standard of excellence. Your blessed gifts are always appreciated. Thank you to those that have contributed. You have sustained our mission this year.

Thank you to our dedicated staff, the congregation, the parents and families.

We are always looking to increase Church and Sunday School membership. We have started to have more of a community presence and will work to increase that every year. If you have any ideas, please let us know. ALL are always welcome!

*Respectfully Submitted, Dawn McEvoy – Superintendent*

## WORSHIP WITH BISHOP FOSTER



Mark your calendars to save the date!

Bishop Katrina Foster will lead worship and preach at St. Luke's on **Sunday, November 15<sup>th</sup>**.

Be sure to join us for this special occasion. Watch for details in the coming months.

## ELECTRONIC GIVING

To facilitate our financial stewardship, the Church Council has approved adopting systems that will allow donations and pledges to be fulfilled through electronic giving platforms. These may be used for one-time gifts as well as regular weekly or monthly giving. More details in the coming months.

## BOOK CLUB CORNER

*There never yet have been, nor are there now, too many good books.*

--- Martin Luther

### UPCOMING TITLES and AUTHORS

**APRIL --- *QUEENS OF CRIME* by MARIE BENEDICT** (Postponed from March)

And *ISOLA* by ALLEGRA GOODMAN

**MAY --- *SOME BRIGHT NOWHERE* by ANN PACKER**

**JUNE --- *TELL ME EVERYTHING* by ELIZABETH STROUT**

**SUMMER READ: *THE LONELINESS OF SONIA AND SUNNY* by KIRAN DESAI**

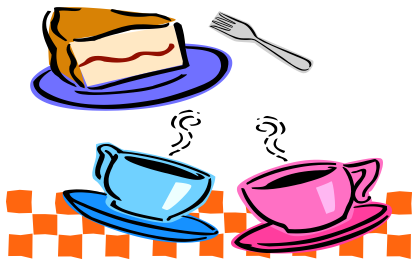
St. Luke's Book Club continues to meet monthly at Barnes & Noble in Scarsdale. We enjoy sharing lunch together as we review and discuss our current selection. Books can be comforting, astonishing and illuminating, changing the way we feel about and interact with the world around us.

We welcome new members! Please consider joining us!



***"Reading gives us someplace to go when we have to stay where we are"***

--- attributed to **Mason Cooley** (1927–2002)



# Coffee Hour Assignment Sheet Spring Summer 2026

<u>Date</u>	<u>Committee</u>
Mar 22 - Lent	Social Ministry
Mar 29 – Palm Sunday	Fellowship
Apr 5 – Easter	Sunday School
Apr 12 – Koinonia Women’s Retreat	Church Council
Apr 19	Altar Guild
Apr 26	Senior Choir
May 3	Social Ministry
May 10 – Mother’s Day	Fellowship
May 17	Sunday School
May 24	Church Council
May 31	Altar Guild
June 7	Senior Choir
June 14	Sunday School
June 21 Father’s Day	Fellowship
June 28	Social Ministry
July 5	Church Council
July 12	Altar Guild
July 19	Senior Choir
July 26	Social Ministry
Aug 2	Fellowship
Aug 9	Sunday School
Aug 16	Church Council
Aug 23	Altar Guild
Aug 30	Senior Choir
Sept 6 – RALLY DAY	Sunday School
Sept 13	Social Ministry

**Please select members of your committee to honor your dates. You need to set up, clean up and bring milk, juice & dessert etc. You can use this time to promote your committee or upcoming events! If your committee would like to contribute coffee supplies that would be great too!**

**Coffee Hour has become a great Fellowship hour, Thanks to all of you!**

**ANY questions or conflicts please contact Dawn McEvoy at email: [mmcevoy33@aol.com](mailto:mmcevoy33@aol.com)**

**(cell) 347-604-3969 . Thank you! HELP and DONATIONS are WELCOME any Sunday!!**

St. Luke's Lutheran Church  
Mother's Day Spring Sale  
May 9, 2026  
10am - 3pm  
95 Eastchester Road, New Rochelle, NY

PLANTS

RUMMAGE

RAFFLES

BAKE SALE, CAFÉ

AVON, Tastefully Simple, Mary Kay,  
Ancient Brew Candles, Coily Girl Wreaths,  
Photo Magnets,  
Face Painting and Balloons



# *End of Year Congregation Picnic/BBQ*

**Hosted by the Sunday School**

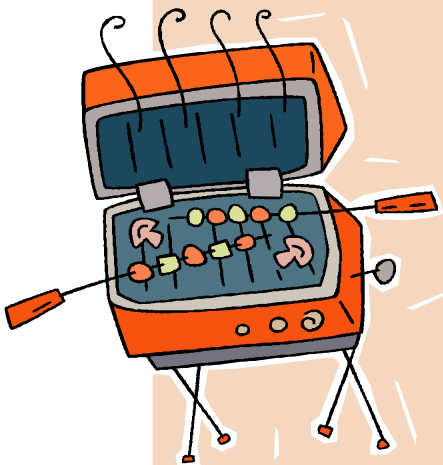
Please join us for our end of year celebration –  
All are WELCOME! Please rsvp.

June 14<sup>th</sup> at 11am  
in Fellowship Hall and Backyard  
immediately following service

***RSVP to:***

Dawn at [mmcevoy33@aol.com](mailto:mmcevoy33@aol.com) or use sign up in Narthex

*St. Luke's Lutheran Church  
95 Eastchester Road  
New Rochelle, NY 10801*



## AROUND THE PARISH

### IN OUR Thoughts and Prayers

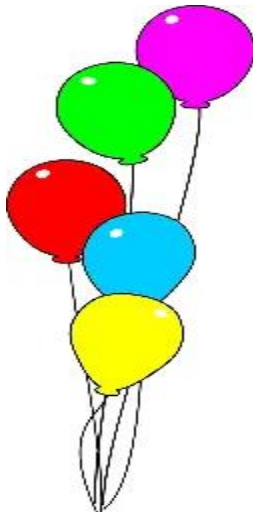
In Our Prayers this month are those hospitalized, with health concerns, or in transition or treatment, and all those in our Sunday prayers.

PRAYER LIST UPDATES: We are revising our Prayer List. We will remove names after a month or unless instructed otherwise. If you have a name to add, contact the church office.

## MAY BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

### Birthdays

5/1	Shari Taylor	5/21	Victoria McEvoy
5/2	Thomas Breen Sean Taylor	5/22	Nancy LoPresti Michael Dassler
5/6	Olivia Connors	5/24	Matthew Brent Conor Ahyoung
5/10	Carmen Thompson Faith Forsberg	5/26	Susan Johansen-Shiels Matthieu Rankis
5/12	Leam McEvoy Melissa Rubicco	5/27	Roberta Dassler Karen Fontecchio
5/15	Sherry Fraser-Pulvermiller	5/28	Megan Fontecchio
5/16	Daniel Brisson	5/31	Kristen Johnson-Head
5/17	John Rubicco		



### Anniversaries

5/3	Michael & Nadia Dassler
5/18	Clifford & Roberta Dassler
5/18	Kristen & Matthew Head
5/22	Joan Bast-Rodriguez & William Rodriguez

## **Thank you to the Patrons of St. Luke's Voice – 2026**

Jennifer Archer  
Alexandra Palmeri  
Art Rankis

Aija Sears  
Nancy Sigler  
Ernest & Rosalind Wallace



The deadline for submission of information and articles for the June, July, August issue, will be Thursday, May 21<sup>st</sup>

