

**CHURCH STAFF**

Senior Pastor .....Rev. Dr. David Lower  
Associate Pastor ..... Rev. Shannon Dill  
Associate Pastor.....Rev. Phil Brown  
Director of Music & Organist..... Clair Maxwell  
Director of Children’s Ministries.....Catherine Anne Thomas  
Director of Saint Luke’s Little Saints Preschool..... Carol Perry  
Director of Communications.....Tina Knoedler  
Facility Manager..... Roby Price  
Treasurer.....Mark Rogers  
Intern for Children & Youth Ministry..... Erin Rugh  
Church Administrator..... Pam Melton  
Administrative Assistant, CE & Music Ministry..... Liz Catlett  
Receptionist..... Sally Hawkins

**SAINT LUKE’S PERIMETER COUNSELING CENTER**

**Georgia C. Griffin, J.D., M.Div.**  
Director, Perimeter Center  
Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist/Mediator  
404.636.1457, ext.452 • www.cccgeorgia.org

**LEADERSHIP**

Terry Nall, *Clerk to Session*

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**ELDERS**

**Class of 2018:**

Gerald Aldridge, Carol Allen,  
Barbara Douglass, Anne Hallum,  
Forrest Herrick (*Youth*), Dan Joyce,  
Jean Kammerer, Chip Williams,  
Bill Womack

**Class of 2019:**

Al Bridges, Beth Eisenmesser,  
Sonny Jester, Bob Pile,  
Bob Polensek, Terri Potter,  
Whitney Samuelson, Steven Vivian

**Class of 2020:**

Carol Ciepluch, Leslie Hamlin,  
Kay Loerch (*Asst. Clerk of Session*),  
Florence Luranc, J J Singley, Kelly Sloan,  
Steve Thornton, Brad Troha

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**DEACONS**

**Class of 2018:**

Justine Burney, Bobby Ferretti,  
Mary Frances Kitchens (*Youth*),  
Diane Lemaster, Joe Luranc,  
Lucy Painter, Debbie Parkes,  
Ron Valdes, Shari Wassell,  
Kristen Wescott (*Moderator*)

**Class of 2019:**

Melissa Blakely, Alyson Cohen,  
Mark Douglass, A.J.Favero,  
Carol Hickey, Dorothy Kitchens (*Vice  
Moderator*), Carol Waller, Al Wang,  
Scott Zannini

**Class of 2020:**

Thomas Brown, Karleen Buchholz,  
Jenny Cummiskey, Ron Davis, Kris Hull  
Daryl Moore, Emily Ritzler,  
Vivian Smith, Suzanne Thatcher



**SAINT LUKE’S**  
P R E S B Y T E R I A N C H U R C H



December 17, 2017

5:00pm



1978 Mount Vernon Road Dunwoody, GA 30338  
770.393.1424 www.slpres.org Office Hours: M-F, 8:30am-4:30pm

**SUNDAY SPOTLIGHT:**



**LIVING NATIVITY** — Thursday, December 21, 6pm-7:30pm. Hear beautiful music, experience the nativity gospel and remember the reason for the season! Invite friends and family, all are welcome at Saint Luke's.



**SCHEDULE FOR DECEMBER 24** — Please join us on Sunday, December 24 at 10:30am for the Advent Four worship service in the chapel. Saint Luke's Christmas Eve services will be held later in the day beginning at 5pm with the beloved family service, followed by the 8pm Candlelight and Choir service in the sanctuary. The 11pm Candlelight in the chapel concludes the Christmas Eve service line-up. We look forward to seeing you as we welcome the Christ child!

**December 17, 2017**

Third Sunday of Advent

**Liturgical Color:** *Purple*

*Purple marks the season of preparation and penitence: Advent and Lent.*

**SUNDAY SCHEDULE**

8:30am Chapel Communion Service

9:30am Sunday School

10:30am Sanctuary Worship Service

*Nursery available at all services and Sunday School.*

**WELCOME, GUESTS!**

We are delighted you are worshipping with us! For more information about our programs, ministries or membership, please contact one of our pastors at 770.393.1424.

**SERVING TODAY**

Communion Servers: . . . . . Laura Strange,  
Stan Thornton

Readers: . . . . . Leslie Berry, Bob and Sharon  
Polensek, Jan Slater and Laura Strange

Ushers: . . . . . Paula Morris

**MISSION**

Responding to God's call  
and empowered by the Holy Spirit,  
we invite all to join us in  
knowing, serving, and sharing  
Jesus Christ here and  
around the world.

**VISION**

To be a beacon  
of faith, hope, and love—  
every member an active disciple  
in Christ's ministry.

**SAINT LUKE'S STEPHEN MINISTERS**

People don't always need advice. Sometimes all they really need is a hand to hold, an ear to listen, and a heart to understand them.  
  
Stephen Ministry is a caring and listening ministry providing confidential, one-to-one Christian care to people facing difficulty. Stephen Ministers are members of Saint Luke's who receive fifty hours of training before they are commissioned and assigned care receivers. They participate in monthly group supervision and continuing education.

If you are experiencing difficult times and would like a Stephen Minister to help, please contact Stephen Ministry Referrals Coordinators:

Rev. Shannon Dill at [shannondill@slpres.org](mailto:shannondill@slpres.org), 770-393-1424, ext. 229 or  
Laura Strange, [jandlstrange@comcast.net](mailto:jandlstrange@comcast.net), 770-392-9284.

If you have a friend in need, have the person call or obtain permission to inquire on their behalf.

**People:** Lord, hear our prayer, and in Your merciful love, answer.

**Leader:** God of love, in this Christmas Season we embrace and offer up to you all that used to be which is now lost to us, and cannot be again. With celebration all around us, memories of what was, and fears of what may be, weigh heavy on our hearts. Please hold us close in your embrace, be near to us this night, until the light returns and morning comes.

**People:** Lord, hear our prayer, and in Your merciful love, answer.

**Leader:** Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work, or watch, or weep this night, and give thine angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, Lord; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous; and all for thy love's sake. Amen.

**Closing Hymn #122\*** Silent Night, Holy Night! *STILLE NACHT*

**Benediction\***

**Postlude\*** In the Bleak Midwinter/Away in the Manger *arr. Phil Perkins*

*Worship Notes:  
Music: All rights reserved. Reprinted under OneLicense.net A-719333.*

## In Preparation for Worship

Friends, we gather here this evening for comfort and rest from all that might overwhelm us. We will light candles and pray deeply. We will give ourselves permission to simply be— or to rest— or to wrestle with darkness, and to comfort each other and hold faith for one another.



**Prelude** Mary, Did You Know? *arr. Jack Schrader*

**Welcome** Shannon Dill

### Call to Worship\*

**Leader:** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

**People:** The Word became flesh and lived among us, full of grace and truth, and we have seen His glory.

**Leader:** In Him was life, and that life was the light of all.

**People:** The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness cannot overcome it.

**Opening Hymn #83\*** Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus *STUTT GART*

**Call to Prayer\*** Laura Strange

**Leader:** The Lord be with you.

**People:** And also with you.

**Leader:** Let us pray.

**God of mercy, hear our prayers in this Advent season for ourselves,  
our families and friends who live with the struggle of illness,  
the pain of loss, the confusion of uncertainty, the hurt of disappointment.**

**We ask for strength for today, courage for tomorrow, and peace for the past.**

**In this time of worship, surround us with the comfort of the Holy Spirit  
and breathe new life into our weary souls.**

**We ask these things in the name of Christ, who shares our life in joy and sorrow,  
death and new birth, despair and promise. Amen.**

## STORIES OF LIGHT AND WORDS OF GOD'S PROMISES

*The candle lighting service includes the lighting of memorial candles along with scripture readings, each followed by a congregational response.*

*As each candle is lit, we are reminded that in the midst of darkness, light will shine.*

### Light of Remembrance

Revelation 21:1-5

Bob Polensek

Reader: Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with humans. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

We light this first candle to remember those whom we have loved and lost. We pause to remember clearly, their faces, their voices, their bodies. We embrace and give thanks for the memories that bind them to us in this season of expectation, when all Creation waits for the Light.

**People: We remember them with love. May God's eternal love surround them.**



### Light of Comfort

Isaiah 40:1- 8, 11

Leslie Berry

Reader: Comfort, O comfort my people,  
says your God.  
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,  
and cry to her  
that she has served her term,  
that her penalty is paid,  
that she has received from the Lord's hand  
double for all her sins.

Bring your peace into our violence  
Bid our hungry souls be filled  
Word now breaking heaven's silence  
Welcome to our world.

Fragile fingers sent to heal us  
Tender brow prepared for thorns  
Tiny heart whose blood will save us  
Unto us is born.

So wrap our injured flesh around you  
Breathe our air and walk our sod  
Rob our sin and make us holy  
Perfect Son of God.

### Intercession for Healing and Wholeness

Leader: God of wisdom, we come to you this Christmas Season tired,  
in turmoil, and in pain.  
As the nights have grown longer, so has darkness grown  
and wrapped itself around our hearts.  
In this season of longest night,  
we ask your healing blessings upon all that we carry in our hearts --  
sorrow we fear may never end, wounds we cannot even put into words.

**People: Lord, hear our prayer, and in Your merciful love, answer.**

Leader: God of mercy and compassion,  
there are those among us who are grieving over what might have been.  
Death or loss or terrible hurt has changed our experience of Christmas.  
We remember that once it was a special day for us, too,  
but someone or something precious has gone away from us in this life.  
We have lost a beloved, a job, a goal, a cause, a dream.  
We find ourselves adrift and alone.  
We are weary from the journey, and we have found no room at the inn.  
We come to you seeking rest, and peace, and shelter from the storm.

**People: Lord, hear our prayer, and in Your merciful love, answer.**

Leader: God of grace, in the spirit of the season, grant us all that we need  
to comfort us as we journey through this Christmas season.  
We ask that you shelter and sustain all those of us,  
both here and throughout the world,  
who wander or want or weep or are heavy laden,  
that we may be lifted up in courage and journey on in Thy peace.

## Unison Prayer

**Loving God, hear our prayers and remind us that  
by Your grace, mercy and love light will shine in the midst of darkness.  
We ask all these things in the strong name of Jesus. Amen.**

## Hymn #104\*

O Lord, How Shall I Meet You VALET WILL ICH DER GEBEN

## The Lord's Supper and Invitation to Light Candles

*Communion will be served by intinction (dipping the bread into the cup). If you would like to be served where you are sitting, please raise your hand. Everyone is invited to participate in the sacrament. Children who have discussed the sacrament with their parents and/or a pastor are welcome. The cup holds grape juice, not wine, during this service. A server with gluten-free wafers will be standing directly in front of the communion table for those who prefer this option.*

*After you have received communion, you are invited to light a candle from the Christ candle in memory of a loved one or as a sign of hope.*

## Prayer of Thanksgiving and The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our debts,  
as we forgive our debtors;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, and the power,  
and the glory, forever. Amen.**

## Communion Music

Welcome to Our World Michael W. Smith

Tears are falling, hearts are breaking  
How we need to hear from God.  
You've been promised, we've been waiting  
Welcome, Holy Child.

Hope that you don't mind our manger  
How I wish we could have known,  
But long-awaited Holy Stranger  
Make yourself at home.

A voice cries out:

“In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,  
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.  
Every valley shall be lifted up,  
and every mountain and hill be made low;  
the uneven ground shall become level,  
and the rough places a plain.  
Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,  
and all people shall see it together,  
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”  
A voice says, “Cry out!”  
And I said, “What shall I cry?”  
All people are grass,  
their constancy is like the flower of the field.  
The grass withers, the flower fades,  
when the breath of the Lord blows upon it;  
surely the people are grass.  
The grass withers, the flower fades;  
but the word of our God will stand forever.  
He will feed his flock like a shepherd;  
he will gather the lambs in his arms,  
and carry them in his bosom,  
and gently lead the mother sheep.

We light this second candle to remember the pain of loss:  
loss of relationships, loss of trust, loss of jobs,  
loss of health, loss of faith, the loss of joy.  
We acknowledge and embrace the pain of the past, O God,  
and we offer it to You, asking that into our wounded hearts and open hands,  
You will place the gift of peace.

**People: We remember that through You all things are possible.**



## Light of Self Love

Romans 8: 28-31, 35, 37-39

Sharon Polensek

Reader: We know that all things work together for good for those who love God,  
who are called according to his purpose.  
For those whom he foreknew he predestined  
to be conformed to the image of his Son,  
in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family.  
And those whom he predestined he also called;  
and those whom he called he also justified;  
and those whom he justified he also glorified.  
What then are we to say about these things?  
If God is for us, who is against us?  
Who will separate us from the love of Christ?  
Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine,  
or nakedness, or peril, or sword?  
No, in all these things we are more than conquerors  
through him who loved us.  
For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers,  
nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth,  
nor anything else in all creation,  
will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

We light this third candle to remember ourselves this Christmas time.  
We pause and remember the past weeks, months, and for some of us years,  
that have been heavy with our burdens.  
We accept and lay before You, God, the sharpness of memory,  
the sadness and grief, the hurt and fear, the anger and pain.  
We lay before you the time we have walked alone, in darkness;  
and in knowledge of our own mortality.

**People: We remember that though we have journeyed far,  
and that, while lost, we may have turned away from the light,  
the light itself has not failed.**



## Light of Hope

Psalms 23

Jan Slater

Reader: The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

He makes me lie down in green pastures;  
He leads me beside still waters;  
he restores my soul.  
He leads me in right paths  
for his name's sake.  
Even though I walk through the darkest valley,  
I fear no evil;  
for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff—  
they comfort me.  
You prepare a table before me  
in the presence of my enemies;  
you anoint my head with oil;  
my cup overflows.  
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me  
all the days of my life,  
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord  
my whole life long.

We light this fourth candle to remember faith, the gift of light  
and hope that God offers to us in the stories of Christmas,  
which both also began in abandonment, insecurity,  
and humbleness, in a time of war and in a poor stable.  
We remember that the loving God who came to share this life with us  
promises us comfort and peace.

**People: We remember the One who shares our burdens,  
who shows us the way to the Light,  
and who journeys with us into all our tomorrows.**

