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**“The Mission of St. Luke’s Episcopal Church is to live in Christ, to love the World, and to serve one another.”**

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# Our history



## St. Luke's, 1923

Ada was established in July of 1891, and early in its settlement, several Episcopal families moved into the area. The roots of St. Luke's are in the organization of a guild for Episcopal women who began meeting in their homes about 1910.

In 1939 the cornerstone was laid for the present church building. The church proper, and other later additions were built of native limestone quarried near Ada. The architectural design is reputed to have been modeled after designs attributed to Sir Christopher Wren. As St. Luke's grew and expanded, additional space was needed. The first parish hall connected to the church, a surplus WWII Army Air Corps barracks, was purchased and moved from East Central University by one of the founding families, and renovated in 1949.

In 1951 a new rectory was built to the east of the parish hall. In 1961 the Christian Education building (Blake Hall) was added to the facilities. In 1981, the original parish hall was demolished and the present parish hall, which included a basement, kitchen, nursery, new offices, choir room, and vesting sacristy was built, and the original vesting sacristy in the church was converted into the columbarium. In 1991, the rectory was converted into the church offices, a parking lot to the east of the new offices was paved, and in 1992 the previous office in the parish hall was remodeled into a larger vesting sacristy.

Today, St. Luke's is generally recognized as a jewel of church architecture, certainly one of the most aesthetically pleasing churches in the diocese, and indeed, in the entire region. Our church setting is one of worshipful serenity, inside and out.

**“God has been doing amazing work at St. Luke's.”**

# Our community



**“We are a progressive, quality-oriented community located in the rolling hills of southern Oklahoma.”**

You might recognize our water tower from country music star Blake Shelton’s album, *Bringing Back Sunshine*, but Ada is much more than the home of numerous famous musicians and artists. It is a little town with a BIG spirit - one that is dedicated to its local public schools and university as well as its infrastructure and social services.

Ada has an estimated population of 17,000, and is the county seat of Pontotoc County, Oklahoma, which has an estimated population of 38,000. Ada is within easy driving distance of three major cities. It is located 83 miles southeast of Oklahoma City, 120 miles southwest of Tulsa, and 160 miles north of Dallas/Ft. Worth. The city was established in 1891, is a quality oriented city located in the rolling hills of southern Oklahoma, and has been described as a place where the West meets the South. It is large enough to offer many bigger city amenities, such as a four-year university (East Central University) and a thriving business climate, yet still small enough to provide a safe and fun place to raise a family.

Ada boasts four school districts - Ada, Byng, Latta, and Vanoss - each a distinct size to meet any family’s needs. It also has three major hospitals and six public parks, including two public aquatic centers. There are numerous local and national retail and dining offerings as well as two movie theaters and two performing art theaters as well.

# Our ministries



## Matthew 25

St. Luke's Church collaborates with Asbury United Methodist Church in an ecumenical food distribution program for the community. Volunteers from several churches are involved in the labor intensive process of packing and distributing food to qualifying families twice a month. Recipients are allowed to receive food from any one of the three. Funding for the Food Pantry is generated through donations from churches, civic groups, and individuals as well as food drives sponsored by various groups in the community. The Regional Food Bank provides food either free or at very low cost. Wal-Mart donates their surplus produce and meat as a supplement.

### Amount contributed in 2023

**\$6,000**



## Emergency Food Pantry

St. Luke's Church office provides an emergency food pantry that is open to the public. The pantry is stocked mainly through donations from church members. In 2023, the pantry fed an average of 15 families per month. This May alone, 28 households (totaling 99 people) were fed. Each family's box of groceries consists of at least three full dinners, snack options, and items for breakfast, and is personalized based on each family or individual's needs.

### Number of families served in 2023

**180**

# Our ministries

ADA, OKLAHOMA

ST. LUKE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH



## Tabitha's Orphanage - Haiti

Following the hurricane that devastated Haiti, several parishioners went there to render such assistance as they could. While there, they found an orphanage located in Cap-Haitien which was in need of assistance. On their return, a special collection was made for the orphanage's benefit, and since then the Easter Offering has often been designated for Tabitha's Orphanage. These funds are used to supply the orphanage with basic necessities as well as school uniforms and supplies. Tabitha's Orphanage provides full care for children to attend school, church, and to live on campus.

Amount Donated in 2023

**\$1,100**



## Meals on Wheels

St. Luke's provides volunteers on a monthly basis to help deliver meals with the Meals on Wheels Program operated in conjunction with Mercy Hospital. Meals on Wheels operates in virtually every community in America through partnership with local programs like that of Mercy Hospital. The program depends on volunteer drivers like our dedicated delivery drivers from St. Luke's.

Number of Meals Delivered Each Week

**Up to 50**

# Our ministries

ADA, OKLAHOMA



## Youth Group

St. Luke's Youth Group is the heart of our children's ministry. Our Wednesday night evenings invite youth from grades 6th-12th to gather for fun, fellowship, and FOOD! Our Youth Group numbers have grown significantly since 2020. With these growing numbers, funds were allocated to redecorate the outdated space with new paint, furniture, and electronics.

Our Youth Group also participates in service projects, such as ringing the bell for the Salvation Army and volunteering at the local soup kitchen. In addition, for fun, field trips to the zoo, arcade, and movie theater, as well as an annual pool party, are planned each year.

### ~ Youth Group Participant

**"Youth is fun because everyone who goes is fun and the food is always good!"**



## Trunk or Treat

In 2022, as part of their quarterly service project, the Youth Group began hosting an annual community Trunk or Treat.

The youth request candy donations from the parish and ask other parishioners to volunteer and decorate their trunks in order to provide plenty of "trunk or treating" options to the local kids.

A prize for the best decorated trunk is held each year to encourage the congregation to get creative and go all out for this fun community event.

### Amount of Candy Pieces Handed Out

**THOUSANDS!**

ST. LUKE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

# Our ministries

ADA, OKLAHOMA

ST. LUKE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH



## Blessing of the Animals

Our congregation looks forward to the annual Blessing of the Animals held on the grounds of the church. In recent years, we've tied this to a charitable outreach partnering with the local animal shelter. What was once a simple blessing of the animals has evolved to a fun, family-friendly event. There are yard games, pumpkin painting, popcorn and live music to entertain the community. Both monetary and item donations are collected for the animal shelter. Each pet receives a blessing and a St. Francis medallion for their collar. Over the years, all types of animals have been blessed; dogs, cats, snakes, and even horses!

St. Francis of Assisi ~

**"All things of creation are children of the Father and thus brothers of man."**



## Coalgate Ministry

St. Luke's newest ministry is not just working to rebuild a church, but also reconnecting the community to St. Peter's Church, Coalgate. The work began with the combined effort of St. Luke's, Ada, St. John's, Durant, as well as some of the great people of the local community all coming together for a workday. Since then, many repairs and maintenance issues have been addressed and weekly services, followed by a lunch and formation class have resumed. Moving forward, efforts are being placed, not just to beautify the campus, but also reach further out so as to help this small mission grow in faith and community.

Quote from Longtime Coalgate Parishioner

**"I am so thrilled and thankful to be able to worship here again!"**



# Our worship



ADA, OKLAHOMA

ST. LUKE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

## Worship Services

We believe that worship changes lives. We come together in the presence of God to sing, praise, and give thanks. The Holy Eucharist is celebrated every Sunday at 9am, and every Wednesday at 6pm at St. Luke's. The Sunday service is accompanied by traditional hymns played on the organ with music led by our choir. Our youth and other members of the church serve as acolytes, ushers and lectors each week. Often we send Lay Eucharistic Ministers to visit our sick and homebound with communion following the service. Our Sunday service is streamed on Facebook each week where virtual attendees can respond and interact with the service.

After the service each Sunday, our congregational volunteers provide coffee and refreshments in the Parish Hall. There are 3 Sunday school groups for children (preschool, elementary, and Jr. High/High School) and an adult Sunday school class led by church members.

Another weekly service offering is the Healing Eucharist, held every Wednesday at 6pm in the church. We also have an active E.F.M class.

## 61

Sunday Worship Average Attendance

# Our fellowship

ADA, OKLAHOMA



## Dinner for Eight

Small groups of 6-8 are formed with the intention of further connecting people from the church. The members of the group host the others to share a meal and get to know one another outside of the church in a more social setting. These can be hosted in the form of a dinner, a brunch, a picnic, or one of endless options. Bringing together members of the church that otherwise may not connect socially helps us to build friendships within the church.

### Quote from Dinner for 8 Guest

**"Dinner for 8 was a great way to get to know others from the church more personally. There is something special about sharing a meal and getting to know one another on a different level."**



## Social Hour

Holy Happy Hour is a monthly come and go gathering usually held on the third Friday of each month from 5:30-7:30 pm. It is hosted by a member of the church at their home. Appetizers or a light meal are usually served with beverage options. The goal of this gathering is to foster fellowship and develop friendships in an informal setting among church members and friends.

### Quote from Holy Happy Hour Guest

**"Meeting people in their homes really does break down barriers. It has made me see other members as friends now instead of just people I attend church with."**

ST. LUKE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

# Our fellowship

ADA, OKLAHOMA

ST. LUKE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH



## Men's Breakfast

Food, fellowship, and meditation are shared at the Men's Breakfast. All the men of the congregation and their friends are invited to attend the gathering at the Aldridge Coffee Shop and Cafe on the first Tuesday morning of each month.

Breakfast is "dutch treat" and ordered from the menu at 6:45 a.m. and the event ends in time for everyone to make it to work by 8 a.m.

### Quote from Men's Breakfast Regular

**"Men's breakfast has been a great way for me to get to know the other men in church - to learn about their families and their professions."**



## Creative Prayer Collage

The Christian church has a long tradition of meditative and artful prayer practices. Our creative prayer group meets once a month in contemplative and artistic prayer. Time is spent in quiet, meditative art via collage. At the end of the session members may share their prayer and collage inspiration with the group. We encourage the group to keep the collage near for the rest of the month, and perhaps journal about it.

### Quote from Creative Prayer Participant

**"Sometimes when you struggle to find the words, a picture can become a prayer in and of itself."**

# Our future outlook

## Focusing on our youth is the key to our future

The future is looking bright at St. Luke's! Over the past several years, our youth attendance has nearly tripled! This in part is due to our strong and committed youth formation committee as well as to the diligence of our parents and their desire to have their children be active members of St. Luke's.

As our elementary and secondary student population has significantly grown, we see an opportunity to expand our ministry to college age youth. Ada is home to East Central University and St. Luke's would love to reach college-age youth now that our youth program has such a strong foundation.

## Expanding our community ministries extends Christ's presence in our world

At St. Luke's, we are committed to caring for our neighbors. We feel that our church and its mission goes well beyond our walls and those who regularly attend Sunday service. We desire to be the hands and feet of Christ in our community. This is evident in our abundance of ministries that extend well beyond our parish hall. We are not only looking for a rector of St. Luke's, we are looking for a rector of Ada - a rector who will care as passionately for our parishioners as he/she does for our community members as a whole.

**"I think God is encouraging St. Luke's to reach out and minister outside the walls of the church."**

**"Our welcoming presence in Ada is crucial in that we are the only church openly welcome to all."**

# Our future outlook

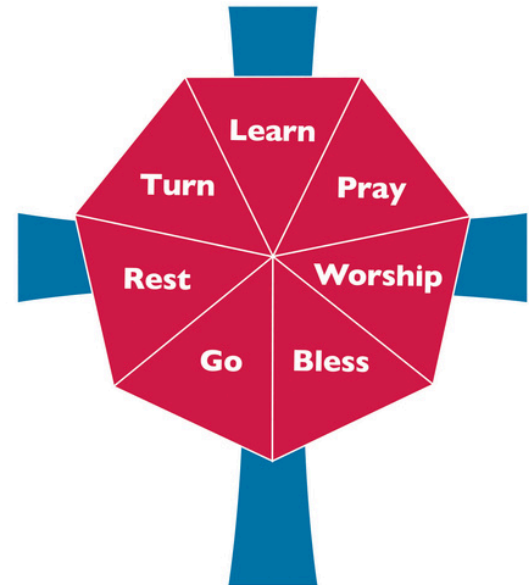
**“God may be the source of love, but people are often the vessels.”**

**~ Bishop Michael Curry**

St Luke’s is excited and optimistic as we begin our search for a new Rector. We would welcome an outgoing, friendly person who will engage with the community both within and outside the walls of St. Luke’s.

Our parish survey indicated that ministry during personal crisis and pastoral care was a high priority along with incorporating new members and communicating the Gospel.

We are also seeking continued spiritual development of our members through thought-provoking sermons, our liturgy and Christian education. Our new priest will have the advantage of strong lay leadership and enthusiastic, supportive deacons to assist in their transition into the life and work of the parish.



**THE WAY OF LOVE**  
*Practices for Jesus-Centered Life*

THE *Episcopal* CHURCH 

We hope our new priest will have some of the following qualities and abilities:

- The ability to demonstrate commitment to the youth programs as a primary and vital component of parish life with a possible outreach, an addition of a college program;
- The desire to participate and ecumenical efforts in the community through outreach, volunteerism and education;
- Be an episcopal presence in our community;
- Inspire and lead our parish towards the future through shared leadership with our laity and other clergy;
- Consider new styles and forms of worship in addition to traditional services, and innovations in parish life to attract newcomers;
- Bring experience in motivating and overseeing the design and implementation of successful youth programs, ministries, and Christian education.

**“Someone to help us reach out to others and love one another.”**

**“Who hangs out in the Parish Hall drinking coffee and chatting.”**

# Our stability

“Mrs. McKeel’s generosity is very heart-warming and sets a standard for philanthropic donations that should be acknowledged by our community. She was a wonderful lady and truly loved Ada.”

~ M. Keyword Deese, senior vice president & trust officer for Vision Bank



ADA, OKLAHOMA

## John Boyce and Ayleene Mckeel Charitable Trust

The John Boyce and Ayleene Mckeel Charitable Trust accumulates and distributes income exclusively to educational, scientific, literary, and charitable organizations specified by the grantor or trustee. The trust supports several organizations such as the Salvation Army, ECU Foundation, Unity Point, Ada Arts Council, Ada Boys and Girls Club, Ada City Schools Foundation, and Ada Senior Care Center. Additionally, funds were designated to support St. Luke's Episcopal Church.

Principal

**\$5 Million**

Annual Interest  
Allocated to St.  
Luke's

**75% of the interest paid  
out quarterly**

St. Luke's  
Unallocated/  
Re-invested Funds

**Approximately 71% of that interest is  
unspent then re-invested each year**

ST. LUKE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

# Our financials

## Debt Free.

St. Luke's is debt free thanks to the blessing of our endowment. For 2024, we have a total of 47 pledges amounting to \$193,296.04 in revenue. The McKeel Trust Income in the amount of \$98,331.32 includes income from the McKeel trust annual giving as well as non-pledged income.

## Our Staff

Deacons - Bobby Saunkeah and Robert Willis  
 Parish Administrator - Nickey McEwen  
 Choir Director - Chris Bragg  
 Organist - Farren Rowan  
 Sexton - Robert Martinez  
 Nursery Attendants - Shelly Morrison and  
 Bryleigh Morrison

## Our Vestry

Senior Warden - Angus McFarlane  
 Junior Warden - Katrina McCurdy  
 Treasurer - Barbara Suess  
 Secretary - Diane Criswell  
 Erin Bigelow  
 Phillip Cody  
 Anne Escobedo  
 Bridget Forshay  
 Joy Dawn Miller  
 Shirley Mixon  
 Phyllis Wallace  
 Tonya Wood

### Signed Pledges

47



### Total Amount Pledged

\$193,296.04



### McKeel Trust Income

\$98,331.32



### Other Income

\$32,660.01



### 2024 Budgeted Income

\$324,287.37



### 2024 Budgeted Expenses

\$324,287.37

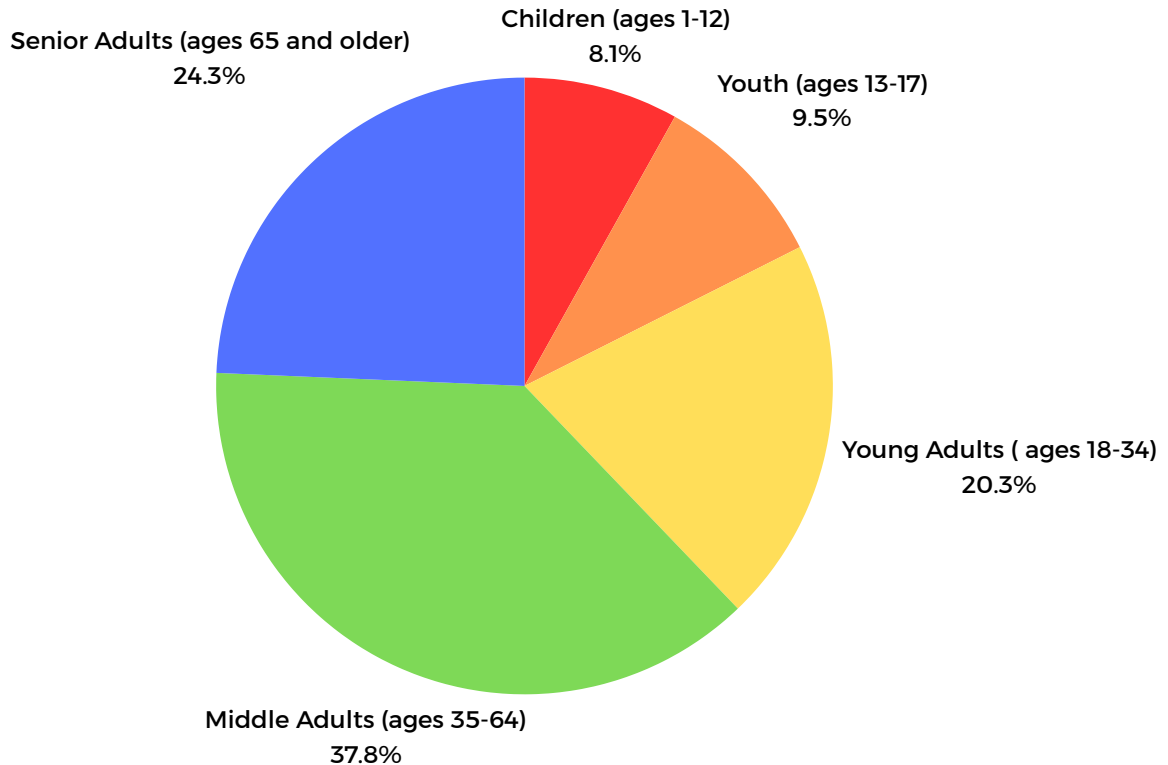


### Net Difference

\$0



# Our demographics



According to our latest parish survey, more than 55% of our congregation have been members for more than 15 years. We are a welcoming church with 80% responding that it is easy for new members to become involved in the life of the church. In addition, 43% of respondents stated they are involved in three or more ministries offered by the church, such as ushering, teaching Sunday school, volunteering at Matthew 25, etc. As the data shows, we are a very passionate and involved congregation who are committed to the success and vitality of St. Luke's and our surrounding community.

We pride ourselves on our inclusivity and welcoming atmosphere - as many of our guests have noted how welcomed but not intimidated or inundated they feel when they visit St. Luke's. We also love our liturgy, our diversity, that we are small enough to get to know one another, and the beauty of our buildings. We value the history and traditions of the Episcopal church and our own traditions, such as waiting with Jesus in our columbarium from the end of the Maunday Thursday service until the noon service on Good Friday.



# Our application process

*Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I; send me!"*

*Isaiah 6:8*



## To apply:

To apply to be St. Luke's next Rector, please submit the following materials electronically to:

Episcopal Diocese of Oklahoma  
 Attn: The Rev. Canon Betsy Randall,  
 Canon to the Ordinary  
 Email: [canonbetsy@epiok.org](mailto:canonbetsy@epiok.org)

- Resume/Curriculum Vitae
- A copy of your updated OTM profile
- A "Letter of Interest" that highlights why you believe you may be called to serve as Rector of St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Ada, OK.

