
THE EPISTLE

Lamb of God

John 1:29

The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and declared, "Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

The title, "Lamb of God," sounds weak, but God has invested it with God's power. Christians still use this title in worship today. We say:

**Lamb of God,
who takes away the sins of the world,
have mercy upon us.**

**Lamb of God,
who takes away the sins of the world,
have mercy upon us.**

**Lamb of God,
who takes away the sins of the world,
grant us peace.**

Is there any among us who does not need mercy?
Is there any among us who does not need peace?

Jesus came into the world to take away our sins!
Jesus came into the world to grant us mercy! Jesus came into the world to give us peace! Jesus came to show us a new way—not the way of money or power or swords or fame—but of love. Jesus came to show us that love can transform a person's life. Jesus came to show us that love can redeem a community. Jesus came to show us that love can save the world.

Jesus came as a Lamb, not a Lion. We can all follow his example. Only a few of us are big enough and strong enough to be Lions. If Jesus had been the Lion of God, only a few of us could follow in his footsteps and be his disciples. But Jesus was the Lamb of God! We can all learn to be Lambs, transforming the world by our love and our sacrifice rather than our power.

"Lamb of God." It is a name that makes a difference!

Faithfully,

Jim McKinney



**www.stlukesumc.org or
on Facebook at
St. Luke's UMC, Memphis**

**Email info@stlukesumc.org to
be added to our email list.**

Music Ministry

Terri Theil, terri.theil@stlukesumc.org • 452-6262, ext. 103

During Lent, we are called to reflect on our Lord's suffering, death, and resurrection. During this unprecedented time in our world's history, many of you, like me, have been asking why? Several of us have faced serious illness and loss, and often we are blessed to see God's fruit come from those painful times. I am drawn to the songs of the church when I find myself on my knees asking why. One of my favorite hymns during lent is, "Ah, Holy Jesus."

Johann Heermann, was a minister in the Lutheran church in 1611 and had to stop preaching in 1634 due to a severe throat infection. Much of his ministry took place during the Thirty Year's War. At times he had to flee for his life and several times lost all of his possessions. He wrote numerous hymns during these difficult times and his personal faith and trust in God continued to be reflected in his lyrics.

In this hymn, "Ah, Holy Jesus," we see lots of 'why.' The first two stanzas in verses 1 and 2 ask questions that later, answer themselves in the following stanzas. Our Lord often answers that way. He takes our 'why' and leads our hearts to the ultimate faith . . . our faith in Him. Not earthly treasures or securities but only HIM. Through His suffering, we are humbled.

I pray that this season of Lent leads you to a deeper knowing of how our Lord and Savior loved us with such incredible grace and mercy that we have nothing to fear.

*Ah, holy Jesus, how hast thou offended,
That we to judge thee have in hate pretended?
By foes derided, by thine own rejected,
O most afflicted!*

*Who was the guilty? Who brought this upon thee?
Alas, my treason, Jesus, hath undone thee!
'Twas I, Lord Jesus, I it was denied thee;
I crucified thee.*

*Lo, the Good Shepherd for the sheep is offered;
The slave hath sinned, and the Son hath suffered.
For our atonement, while we nothing heeded,
God interceded.*

*For me, kind Jesus, was thy incarnation,
Thy mortal sorrow, and thy life's oblation;
Thy death of anguish and thy bitter passion,
For my salvation.*

*Therefore, kind Jesus, since I cannot pay thee,
I do adore thee, and will ever pray thee,
Think on thy pity and thy love unswerving,
Not my deserving*

Dear St. Luke's Family,

How can I thank you for your prayers, love and concern you have shown me over the last year or so as I have dealt with health issues! Thankfully, I am feeling better now, and I do think your expressions have played a big part of that.

I have always known that St. Luke's is a caring church in so many ways, but being the recipient of that love and care is a very humbling experience. I love you all, and I am so very thankful to be a part of our church family!

—Virginia Hathorn

Gifts in Memory

Sully Tucker by Bob & Vicky Ranson, Carolyn Phipps, Frank Peyton, Harris & Associates Land Surveyors, LLC

Gifts in Honor

Pat Anderson by Deborah Sanders

Rydge Jones by Sue Gray

Kathy Masters by Betty Carter

Dear St. Luke's,

I appreciate those who signed up to work at The Waffle Shop at Calvary Episcopal Church. As you know, the Lenten Series closed early, but I do thank you for your support.

—Doey Barrar

Children's Ministry

Terri Theil, terri.theil@stlukesumc.org • 452-6262, ext. 103

Dear parents, I hope you are enjoying the videos we have put together for your kids. We miss you terribly and pray that we will all be together soon.

Now that you have been at home with your kids you have assumed many new roles: teacher, comforter, PE coach, health coach, and the list goes on

Recently, I read this article on kids and social distancing. It can be so confusing and scary for us, and more so for your young children.

Your young children don't understand why they need to stay away from people

Young children are accustomed to living in a world as the weak ones who need to be protected by stronger people. This current crisis reverses that role. "It seems to be that children just aren't as affected, and they don't seem to get as sick," says epidemiologist Emily Landon, medical director for infection prevention and control at University of

Chicago Medicine. Explain to them that God has equipped their young bodies with a special ability to help fight off the virus, and that ability helps prevent them from getting sick. But because the virus can still be transmitted by them, they have to keep their distance from older people who are more vulnerable.

It's also helpful to make it as personal as possible. Point out their friends and family who may be more susceptible, such as those who are elderly, pregnant, have diabetes, or are recovering from cancer. Children are likely to be more willing to contribute to the cause when they realize their sacrifices have heroic implications and that their actions could literally save lives.

Lastly, embrace technology. Face time and other video engaging options are at your finger-tips. Connecting is important and necessary for all of us!

Stay well, stay safe, and practice social distancing!

—Mrs. Terri and all the children's ministry volunteers

Youth & Young Adults

Beth Ryan, beth.ryan@stlukesumc.org • 452-6262, ext. 119

Youth Ministry

Youth Ministry at St. Luke's is still happening, but in some very different ways! We currently "meet" in an online platform called Zoom. We are able to see each other and interact with one another. It is going very well! In this ever-changing situation, we ask for your prayers for wisdom and guidance as we continue to try to stay in touch with our young people and making disciples!

Young Adults

Community Nights at Wesley Foundation has gone online! If you know a Young Adult who would like to be connected to that group, please let Beth know!

Membership Information

We want to be sure we have current addresses and phone numbers for all our members. If you have not notified the church of any recent updates in your contact information, please let me know. Also, if you have adult children who are still members of St. Luke's, please let us know their

current addresses and phone numbers. We want to keep our database current!

Virginia Hathorn, Membership Secretary
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THE EPISTLE

St. Luke's United Methodist Church
480 S. Highland Street
Memphis, Tennessee 38111-4302

Sunday Worship at 8:30 and 11 a.m.

"We are becoming a faithful community of disciples striving to share the heart, mind, and hands of Jesus Christ with ALL people."

From Bishop Bill McAlilly

*Nashville Episcopal Area of
The United Methodist Church*

March 27, 2020: Our mission in this season is to share the Good News of Jesus Christ in the face of disruption and distance.

The number of persons worshipping with us virtually has grown exponentially thanks to the technology of livestreaming and interactive worship.

Daily, I learn of the amazing creativity of our leaders in this season of disruption. I give thanks to God for all our pastors are doing to be faithful. I learned today of a pastor who is driving to the homes of her parishioners, calling the parishioner on the phone and inviting the person to come to the window while she offers a prayer of blessing.

Congregations are gathering on Sunday in their cars in the church parking lot and technology is allowing the worship service to be broadcast over FM radio signals.

Virtual Communion and Continued Remote Worship

In thinking about how we might engage our people virtually with regard to our liturgical traditions, I have reflected on John Wesley as a practical theologian as well as an innovator. He wanted pastors on the frontier to have the ability to offer the sacraments, so he ordained Francis Asbury and Thomas Coke.

After prayerful and careful consideration of the theological concerns with virtual communion, I have offered guidance to our pastors as to how to offer Virtual Communion while exercising sacramental authority.

Based on the best information I have been able to receive from multiple sources, I have determined that it will be in the best interest of our communities for worship services to be suspended through April 26. Should it become necessary to continue that suspension after April 26, we will notify you.

Annual Conference 2020

It is my deep hope that we will be able to gather in June for Annual Conference. At this time, we have not made a decision about postponing Annual Conference. However, we will make that decision no later than May 1.