

From Father Nik

What kind of story did Luke write? In the prologue, he says that others have already put their hands to writing the story of Jesus and “the things which have been accomplished among us,” but he has attempted “to write an orderly account” (1:1-3). Luke is the only gospel writer that tells us there were other written accounts of Jesus, and that he relied on some of these other sources. In the years after Jesus’ death and resurrection, his disciples and friends wrote letters, lists of his sayings, and—eventually—stories about his life. Mark, it seems, was the first to collect these sayings and stories into a gospel around AD 70. The New Testament scholar, Richard Burridge has argued that the gospels are best understood as examples of the ancient genre known as βίος (*Bios*)—that is, the Life of a hero.

Sometimes this genre is spoken of as ancient Biography, but that can be confusing because these stories weren’t written like modern Biographies. An ancient *Bios* wasn’t interested in getting underneath the public image of the person or revealing their inner thoughts and personal life. The *Bios* used standard tropes to show how the subject of the story conformed to the virtues of a hero and lived an exemplary life. This seems to fit Luke’s Gospel, as well as the other three gospels; however, we also have to remember that Luke’s Gospel is only the first part of a two-volume story, Luke-Acts. Putting the Acts of the Apostles together with Luke’s Gospel, we find that the category of *Bios* needs to be expanded.

When scholars take Luke’s Gospel and Acts together as a single story (as it seems Luke intended), it grows from a *Bios* to an ancient History. One piece of supporting evidence for the claim that Luke wrote a History is that he dedicates the text to an individual named Theophilus (Lk 1:3 & Acts 1:1). Dedicating the work to a patron was standard practice in the prologue of an ancient History. However, it’s not entirely clear that Theophilus was an actual person and Luke’s benefactor. The name means “Lover of God” or “Friend of God,” suggesting to some that he represents all Christian readers of Luke’s story. “If you love God,” St Ambrose wrote two centuries later, “it was written to you.”

Diocesan Annual Council

From Thursday, January 21 through Saturday, January 23 the Diocese of Virginia is holding its 221st Annual Council. Our Lay Delegate is Paul Newell & our Alternate Delegate is Scott Smythe.

Parish Annual Meeting

Our Annual Meeting will be held in the church after worship next Sunday, January 24. The Vestry and Treasurer will report to the congregation, and three new vestry members will be elected.

LENT

Lent begins with *Ash Wednesday* on February 10 – we'll observe the holy day with Eucharist & imposition of ashes at 6:30pm.

Before the Lenten fasting begins, we'll indulge in a **Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper** from 6:30pm to 7:30pm on Tuesday, February 9.

It's also traditional to prepare catechumens for Baptism or the reaffirmation of baptismal vows during Lent— as well as preparing confirmands for Confirmation and new members for Reception into the Episcopal Church. These classes will begin on Wednesday, Feb 17 at 6:30pm.

Coffee Hour

Thanks to the Aderhold family for today's refreshments!

The Cost of Discipleship

Starting in the February, the Men's & Women's Book Groups will be reading *Discipleship* by Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

Christian Education

Godly Play Children are invited to hear the Word in a fun, learning environment in the Parish House during the first half of our Sunday morning worship; after which, they join their parents in church for Communion.

J2A Youth Group will meet at the church on Sunday, January 17 from 3 to 5pm to help the Wood Ministry. Please bring \$5 for Pizza. (Youth can come earlier if they'd like to help the Wood Ministry longer).

The Adult Sunday School meets Sunday mornings at 9am in the parish hall to study the Gospel according to Luke.

Small Groups

The Women's Book Group will meet next on Thursday, February 21, at 10am to discuss the first two chapters of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's *Discipleship* (Reader's Edition – Fortress Press). Please contact Kathy for directions: boysthree@embarqmail.com

The Men's Book Group will meet Thursday, January 21, at 7:30am at Ashland Coffee & Tea to discuss the Preface to Dietrich Bonhoeffer's *Discipleship* and the context of its writing and publication.

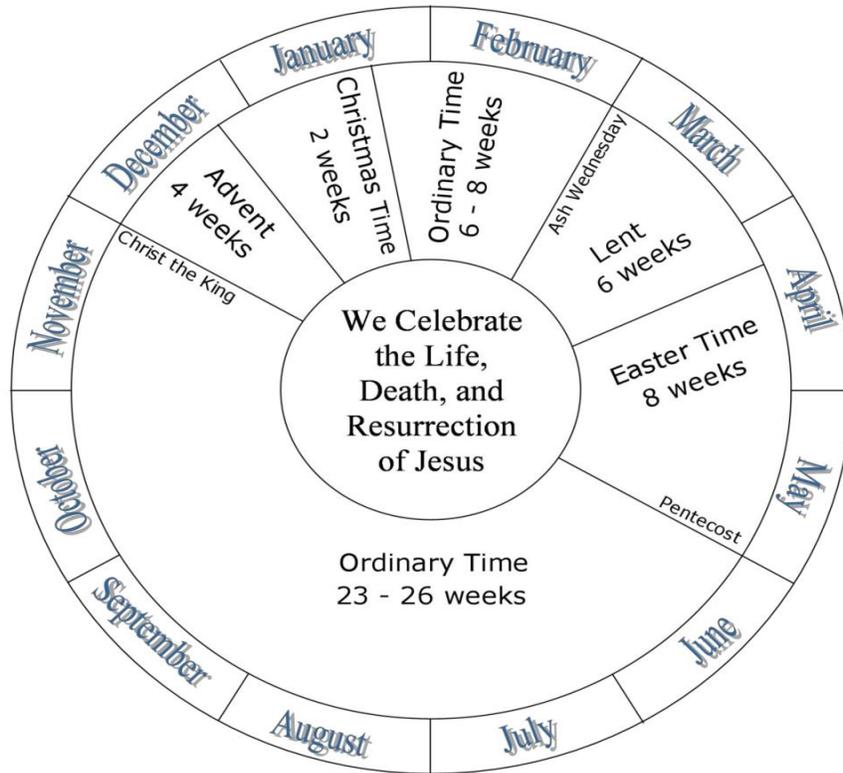
Christian Formation

Catechism Classes will begin in Lent on Wednesday, Feb 17 at 6:30pm. These classes are for those who wish to be baptized, confirmed, or received into the Episcopal Church.

If you have never been Baptized or Confirmed, and are interested in receiving these sacraments, please contact Fr Nik – KnicholasForti@gmail.com

These classes are also for those considering Reaffirming their Baptismal Covenant.

The Liturgical Year



Nik's Calendar

Thursday, Jan 14 – Fresh Start, 9:30am-3:30pm

Friday, Jan 15 – New Rector Boot Camp, 9:30am-4:30pm

Wednesday, Jan 20 – Diocesan Meeting, 7-8pm

Thurs, Jan 21-Sat, Jan 23 – Diocesan Annual Council; Reston, VA

Thursday, Jan 28 – Theology Lecture by the Rev'd Dr Sonderegger, noon-2pm

Looking Ahead

Thursday, Jan 21 – Men's Book Group, 7:30-8:30am

Sunday, Jan 24 – Parish Annual Meeting, 11:30am

Tuesday, Feb 9 – Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, Parish Hall, 6:30pm

Wednesday, Feb 10 – Ash Wednesday: Eucharist at 6:30pm

Saturday, Feb 13 – Vestry Retreat, 9am-2pm

Office hours: Jacquie Alleva, our parish secretary, works Tuesday & Wednesday mornings and Thursday afternoons. If you would like to submit an announcement, please do so by noon on Thursday.