

Parish Community Letter - October 2025

Thank you to Wendy Coxell for taking the time to write for this month's edition.

Dear friends,

October 18th, the Feast day of St Luke will be the anniversary of the last cafe church service I led at St Peter's. I had just returned from a holiday with my husband to Holy Island, Northumbria. There I was inspired by the illuminated manuscripts, entitled the Lindisfarne gospels and decided to find out more about St Luke. The following notes were used in the service.

St Luke was born about AD 10 in Antioch in Syria a part of the Greek speaking empire and could have been called Lucas or Loukas which meant Bringer of Light. He is always depicted as curly haired with a winged oxen calf (representing Christ the supreme Sacrifice) and holding a copy of the gospel.

Luke could have been one of the 70 disciples but was recorded as being a companion of St Paul, joining him in AD 51 at Troas in Asia Minor. He travelled with Paul to Jerusalem, and finally died in Thebes, Greece aged 84. Referred to as the 'beloved physician' by Paul in Colossians 4:14 he is the patron saint of doctors, surgeons and butchers.

Luke was certainly an early Christian Evangelist, and is attributed as making the largest contribution to the New Testament; with his account of Christ's teaching which makes up Luke, the third gospel; and his orderly writing about the early church and Christ's death in the Acts of the Apostles.

His written Greek shows him to be highly educated and in both his writings he addresses a Roman official called Theophilus. Luke gathered material from eye witnesses and followers of Jesus giving reference to specific dates. 'Days of Herod the King', '15th year of Tiberius Caesar', and 'Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea.' He gives summaries of 35 parables and 23 unique stories which include women; as well as including the only accounts of the Prodigal Son, the Good Samaritan, and the encounter on the Emmaus road.

Luke a Gentile, who never met Jesus. does not quote from Jewish scripture but uses his accounts to proclaim the gospel to all unbelievers. He preached Jesus as the

Saviour of all people regardless of social standing, and focused on the humanity of Jesus. He emphasized the role of women and Christ's compassion for the poor and oppressed, encouraging tenderness for the less fortunate.

On a personal note, my husband was taken ill in Northumbria and after a short illness died in Farnham. Since then many of my family and friends have become frail and passed on and I have had some health issues. I give grateful thanks to all the members of the Wrecclesham community who have shown me great kindness during some difficult moments.

During my darker moments I have been sustained by recalling verses, many from **Luke**. With my early years convent education my first prayers are:

Hail Mary - Luke 1 28:42 and the **Lord's Prayer - Luke 11**

Other remembered verses come from the Anglican Book of Common Prayer.

The Magnificat. *My soul magnifies the Lord.* **Luke 1:46-55**

Benedictus. *Blessed be the Lord.* **Luke 1:68**

Nunc Dimmitis. *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace* **Luke 2:29-32**

Gloria. Glory to God in the highest **Luke 2:14**

Luke's accounts encourage consistent and faithful prayer **Luke 18:1** and urge us to keep watch at all times and pray **Luke 21:36**.

In conclusion my friends, I urge you as members of the parish of Wrecclesham to continue to support each other during the interregnum: by following the teachings of Christ and continuing to show great compassion to all who are poor, needy, sick or broken-hearted. **The Beatitudes - Luke 6 v 20-26**

A prayer for St Luke's day

Almighty God, you inspired your servant St Luke the Evangelist and Physician to set forth in the gospel the love and healing power of your son. In faithfully detailing the humanity of Jesus, he also showed the divinity of Jesus and his genuine compassion for mankind. Inspire our physicians with professionalism and with divine compassion for their patients. Enable them to cure the ills of both body and spirit that afflict so many in our day. **Amen**
