

# St. Luke's News Special Edition 2016

*St Luke's seeks to build God's Kingdom by helping believers to develop a covenant relationship with God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—that will enrich our daily lives and equip us for service to others*



18 High Road, Orchards, 2192 / P.O. Box 92351, Norwood, 2117 (tel: 011-728-7015) office@stluke.co.za

All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer.

A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need. They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity— all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.

Acts 2:42-47 (NLT)

## From David's Desk ...

### Let's Grow The Kingdom of God Together

I don't need to remind you of how fragmented our society is becoming – the evidence is all around us. This is apparent throughout the world but in South Africa, at least in respect of race and class, it is worse than in many other places.

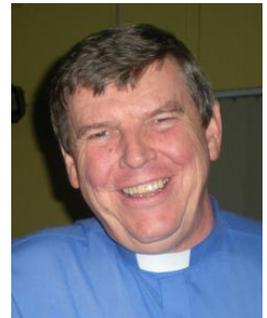
Family life is struggling – some of us see it in our own families.

Despite all this, St Luke's has always had a strong community spirit, fed by vibrant worship and the deep faith of so many.

I am convinced that the time has come to build on our strengths by introducing a well established programme called *Creating Community*. Based on an ancient monastic principle and adapted to the modern world by Simon Reed, a vicar in London, the programme helps to lead churches into becoming vibrant, God-centred communities, relevant to the needs of the people around them. The spiritual growth that emerges from these disciplines (covenant) rapidly grows the community (the kingdom of God) - thus following our vision.

We are very privileged to be able to welcome Simon Reed to St Luke's from 5 to 11 September to help us develop the tools necessary for a growing in our personal relationship with Christ. I really hope that you will be able to find the time to come and hear what Simon has to say. It could be a life-changing experience!

David



## Simon's programme for next week:

<b>Wednesday</b> 7 September	19h00-21h00	Deepening Faith & Community Connection
<b>Thursday</b> 8 September	09h30 service 17h30-19h00	The Art of Living & Dying in the Eternity of Christ What is a Soul Friend?
<b>Friday</b> 9 September	19h00-21h00	Communicating with Faith & Technology
<b>Sunday</b> 11 September	All 3 services 12h00	Community & The New Monastics Parish Bring and Braai

## What's It All About?

### *Psalm 133 1, 2a, 3 (from The Message)*

How wonderful, how beautiful,  
when brothers and sisters get along!  
It's like costly anointing oil  
It's like the dew on Mount Hermon  
flowing down the slopes of Zion.  
Yes, that's where God commands the blessing,  
ordains eternal life.

There is that saying "no one on their death bed ever wished they spent more time at the office." How sad that the idea of absence is the thing that prompts people to redirect their understanding of presence. On the whole, people when faced with death wish they had spent more time with their loved ones, they wish they had done more for their community, they wish they had been kinder and they wish they had really known God.

This is relevant in giving us an inkling about what really matters. The world around us forces us to deal with the here and now in a very compelling way...some of this is essential but much of it is not. Tasks are often easier to deal with than people, and strangers are at times easier to be kind to than our loved ones. It is possible to be very connected with many people through a variety of technological means and yet be impossibly lonely and longing for tea, company and deep relational care which really speaks into what it's all about.

It is an exciting time to be a Christian...it's always been...but in such a rapidly changing and shifting society our faith offers an anchor for today and a way of understanding and doing each and every day for everyone. This is not for an instant to say it is easy. The Way, as the early Christians referred to being followers of Jesus, entailed dedication, peril, determination, and the giving and receiving in community of great love and understanding ... people are difficult! We are all in need of salvation beyond ourselves. Faith lived out daily, supported by prayer, a thought-out way of being, the encouragement of community and sacred companionship, strengthens us to live now and die, whenever that might be, in the presence and eternity of Christ.

I encourage you all to come and engage with Simon Reed during his visit next week. Our hospitality and his wisdom and experience hold such sacred promise for each of us and all those around us in living lives immersed in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

*Diana Lawrenson*

### Simon Reed arrives in this coming week!



Looking at:  
**A Rhythm of Prayer,  
Soul Friendship and  
A Way of Life**

## St. Luke's Family working together as 'Community'

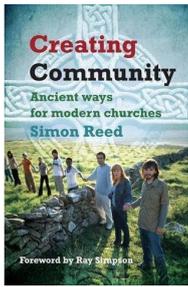


Jeff, Maria, Natalie & Lebo making sandwiches for the hungry



Spha, Maria, Michael, Jabu, Dorica, Natalie, Ray & David with the filled buckets collected for Rose of Sharon Ministries who distribute them to the poor.

## Creating Community: Ancient Ways for Modern Churches (The Bible Reading Fellowship 2013)



Some quotes from Simon's book, *...a Way of Life is a simple summary set of guidelines, outlining what it means in practice to live a God Centred life....it's the "To Do" list for how to connect with God and how to connect God with the whole of life (28).*

*A Soul Friend is a mature Christian who is in sympathy with our Way of Life, and helps us to discern and respond appropriately to God's will, grow in maturity, responsibility and wholeness, and to deepen our relationship with God. (78).*

*[Jesus' ]desire for solitude is also notable, but what frequently gets overlooked is not how long Jesus prayed, or with whom, but when he prayed: morning and evening. The intimacy and spontaneity of Jesus' prayer life were carried by the time honoured structures of prayer which he learned from his people and could be traced back deep into their scriptures (95).*

*Drawing on the past but listening to the present, [we] draw strength from a Way of Life, a rhythm of prayer and a network of Soul Friends. Rediscovering and embracing these neglected ancient practices will produce truly adult disciples who connect deeply with God and connect God with the whole of life. In a world that increasingly seeks security in either harsh authoritarianism or rigid fundamentalism, these practices will keep us reflective, learning, listening, accountable, flexible, available, open and welcoming (139-140).*

### What I have learnt from having a Soul Friend

I was immediately drawn to the notion of soul friendship as part of community when it was first mentioned at St Luke's some time ago. After thinking about it, and after being encouraged to start a soul friendship as a Council member, I approached someone to be my soul friend and was delighted that she agreed to my request.

I now see my soul friend regularly, about once a month to every six weeks, and I have been truly humbled by her commitment to me despite not really knowing her before. I look forward to each session as I can talk about anything I want to! I am sometimes prepared with something to talk about and sometimes not, but it doesn't matter. When I am stuck for things to say, very relevant questions are put to me about my spiritual life that makes me think deeply about my walk and purpose as a believer.

As time has gone by, I have learnt to relax with my soul friend because I know that she is utterly trustworthy and I know that what I say to her will stay between us. Being with her is indeed a safe place where I am heard and understood. Having this kind of relationship in today's world is like gold and I treasure it more and more. It makes me feel emotionally and spiritually grounded and it affirms not only who I am, but most importantly, my relationship with Jesus. It is making me think differently about my life and I have become expectant about the future and what God may have in store for me. This is very exciting.

I can really highly recommend having an *anam* (soul) *cara* (friend) and I encourage you to do the same. There are people in our own circles who long for this kind of friendship and what a wonderful way it is to help others grow spiritually, or to even draw someone to Christ over a period of time.

*Jenni Gous*



## Events and services NOT to be missed

### Corporate Prayer @ St. Luke's

Corporate prayer is an important part of the life of the church, along with worship, sound doctrine, communion, and fellowship. The early church met regularly to learn the doctrine of the apostles, break bread, and pray together (Acts 2:42). Corporate prayer edifies and unifies us as we share our common faith. The same Holy Spirit who dwells within each believer causes our hearts to rejoice as we hear praises to our Lord and Saviour, knitting us together in a unique bond of fellowship found nowhere else in life.

Please consider joining one or all of the Prayer Meetings that take place in our Church weekly. You are welcome to join for all or part of the meetings, so please come, even if only for 15 minutes..

#### Monday—Friday:

08h30—09h00

Morning Devotions

16h30—17h00

Evening Prayer

#### Monday

17h30—18h30

Prayers for St. Luke's

#### Thursday:

13h00—14h00

Prayers for our Country

#### Saturday (2nd Sat of each month)

09h00—10h00

Prayers for St. Luke's

All Welcome

#### "CITCHIN COOK-UP"

on the first Friday of each month (unless otherwise advertised) — @ 6pm  
to cook for the Thursday stew kitchen

**Bring:** \* R120 for stew ingredients  
\* Liquid refreshment (for you)

*Come and enjoy supper, songs and good company; ~  
no experience necessary!*

## Dates to Diarise

<b>5-11 Sep</b>	<i>Simon Reed Visit—Creating Community</i>
<b>17 Sept</b>	<i>SAINTS with Bishop Steve and Moses Thabethe</i>
<b>16 Oct</b>	<i>St. Luke's Day</i>
<b>23 Oct</b>	<i>Bible Sunday</i>
<b>1 Nov</b>	<i>All Souls' Service</i>
<b>6 Nov</b>	<i>Baptisms</i>
<b>12 Nov</b>	<i>Confirmation at St. Luke's</i>
<b>16 Nov</b>	<i>Holy Spirit Refreshment</i>

## SAINTS in September!

### Bishop Steve & Moses Thabethe

at the SAINTS workshop  
on **Saturday 17 September**  
at St Luke's from **09h00 to 12h00**.

He will be talking on:

**"What contribution can we best make to the new South Africa?"**

The cost is R30

We hope to see you here!

