



THE FONT

FOSTERING CONNECTIONS WITHIN THE ORDER OF SAINT LUKE

FROM OUR ABBOT

An Invitation

I love to anticipate events! For me, looking forward to something is half of the enjoyment. In preparing for an upcoming event, I learn and grow and ready myself to benefit from what is to come.

This year, we want to offer an anticipatory book study as we look forward to our October retreat with guest speaker Dr. Karl Kuhn. While Dr. Kuhn intends to speak about the significance of wilderness in Luke's gospel and what that might mean for us as Lukans, in 2015 he published a book entitled *The Kingdom According to Luke and Acts: a Social, Literary, and Theological Introduction*. Spending some time with this book before retreat will introduce us to Dr. Kuhn's work, ground us in Luke's writing, and afford us the opportunity to prepare for our time at retreat together!

We will hold a three-week series of Zoom sessions, on September 25, October 2, and October 9 beginning at 7:30 EST each evening. All members of the Order are invited to participate: whether or not you are able to come to retreat, whether or not you have read the book yet, and whether or not you consider yourself a Biblical scholar. We trust that the conversation will be beneficial to all.

The three sessions of this study will be led by Br. Scot Bontrager, Sr. Heather Josselyn-Cranson, and Br. Christopher Montgomery. Each one will last no more than 1 ½ hours, and the Zoom link will remain the same for each of the three meetings:

<https://regiscollege.zoom.us/j/98290317025?pwd=QzHDxgxZyEnCsU6bRkXUYbtdBaC6au.1>

Meeting ID: 982 9031 7025

Passcode: 317538

On September 25, we'll explore Part I: Luke and His World. On October 2, we're consider the second part of Kuhn's book: Luke's Narrative Artistry. And on October 9, we'll dive into Part III: Luke's Kingdom Story.

Please consider picking up a copy of Dr. Kuhn's book *The Kingdom According to Luke and Acts* and joining your siblings for this (possibly first ever??) Order-wide Zoom book

study. Any opportunity we can share for gathering is a good one... and I know that it will make me, at least, anticipate our October retreat even more.

Yours in the bonds of our community,

From Our Pastoral Care Officer

Dear Siblings in Christ

In an effort to make myself more available to the community, I will be initiating a series of Open Office Hours via Zoom starting on September 8, Monday, at 2:30 pm. At 3:30 pm following the Open Office Hours, we will have a mid-afternoon (*None*) prayer. These will continue monthly on the second Monday until further notice. If you'd like to chat, I invite you to drop in, and if more than one person joins the chat, we can continue private conversation at another time. In a group, this may be a time for us to share and to care for one another, and to honor our commitment to pray for each other. Each session will close with the office of None, using the WADO on our website.

I look forward to seeing you, and in the meanwhile, please feel free to reach out with any concerns or joys you would like to share. I am always ready to listen and to pray. You may reach me by phone, finding that information in the online directory, or by emailing me at pastordiannetc@gmail.com.

Here is the zoom link for the Open Office Hours:

Dianne Tobey Covault is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: OSL Open Office Hours

Time: Sep 8, 2025 02:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada), & Mid-afternoon prayer at 3:30 PM Eastern Standard Time.

Every month on the Second Monday, until February 9, 2026, 6 occurrence(s)

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82697602721?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82697602721?pwd=OZaka9w2SKPBmlQDJotGK2UsaU7LrS.1)
[pwd=OZaka9w2SKPBmlQDJotGK2UsaU7LrS.1](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82697602721?pwd=OZaka9w2SKPBmlQDJotGK2UsaU7LrS.1)

Meeting ID: 826 9760 2721

Passcode: 1018

In Faith

Sr. Dianne Tobey Covault, OSL

From the Chancellor General

October is coming soon, which means it is time to renew our vows. In the next few weeks, I will start printing out the reaffirmation forms and envelopes. When your form arrives, please fill it in and return it to the address on the form. Take a moment to verify that the information on the back-side is correct and note any changes that need to be made.

If you wish to make a donation via check, please include that in with your form. We will no longer be processing credit card payments from the form. You can make a credit-card donation at anytime using PayPal to chancellor@saint-luke.net

I encourage everyone to reaffirm their vows online soon. This saves us postage costs because I will not send forms to those who have reaffirmed already in 2025.

- Reaffirm at any time using the online form at <https://saint-luke.net/reaffirmation/> —You can use this same form to update your address information at any time.
- Verify your last reaffirmation date and other details using the online directory at <https://saint-luke.net/oo/>

As a reminder, anyone who does not reaffirm for three years is removed from our membership roll but kept as a “friend of the order.” If you are listed as a friend in the directory but want to reaffirm, you may do so at any time. We do not send reaffirmation forms to friends. So, please ensure that you are in good standing if you wish to remain a member of the Order.

Br. Scot Bontrager
Chancellor General

Retreat 2025

From Our Prior General, Sr. Celia Halfacre

“In the Wilderness with Jesus” — 2025 Order of Saint Luke Retreat

Registration Deadline: September 24

Register at: <https://saint-luke.net/2025-us-fall-retreat/>

This fall, join the Order of Saint Luke for a time of rest, renewal, and holy conversation at the Mercy Conference and Retreat Center in St. Louis. Nestled on 72 acres of trees, trails, and prayerful spaces, Mercy Center offers the perfect setting to explore the deep connection between Jesus’ ministry and the natural world.

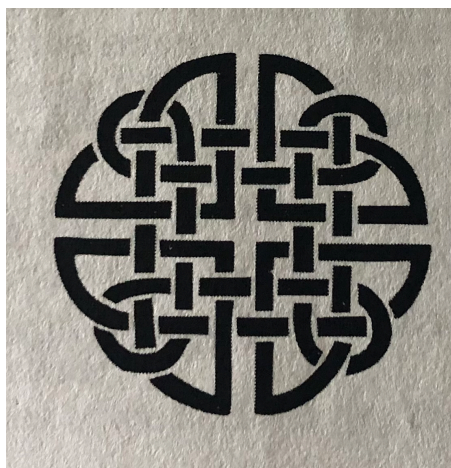
In Luke's Gospel and Acts, wilderness and creation aren't just scenic backgrounds — they are *active partners* in the work of the Kingdom. Jesus prays on mountainsides, teaches from boats, and journeys through deserts. These places shape his ministry and sustain his spirit.

During our retreat, we'll study, pray, and worship together as we consider how we, too, might partner with nature to deepen our life with God, strengthen our service to others, and bear faithful witness to the gospel.

Retreat Sessions:

1. Wilderness and the New Exodus to God's Kingdom
Luke 3:1-20; Luke 4:1-3
2. The Importance of Nature in Jesus' Ministry and Spirituality
Luke 6:12-16; Luke 9:28-36
3. The Importance of Nature in Our Ministry and Spirituality
Acts 8:26-40; Acts 16:11-15

Come ready to step away from the noise, breathe in God's creation, and discover fresh ways to live out your calling in harmony with the world God has made.



Remembering Our Past ...

As We Live Into Our Future

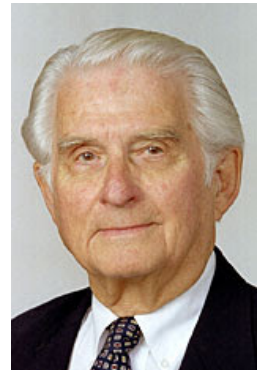
The 1984 Convocation: A Recollection

by Br. Daniel Luke Sojourner Francis

In 1984 I was in my sixth year of membership in the Order of Saint Luke. I was a newbie and my antennae were up! Attending the 1984 Convocation in Jeanette Pennsylvania was my introduction to the Order at the General Chapter level. What follows is a brief recollection of the convocation based on notes in my journal. I hope it offers some perspective, especially for more recent members.

Flying from California on October 8, I arrived in Newark NJ on Peoples Express and connected to Pittsburg. Sr. Emily Byrd met Sr. Sarah Flynn and me and hosted us at her home in Nobletown.

The convocation began with Eucharist using service music composed by Carlton “Sam” Young and Bishop James Ault, OSL (photo right) presiding. In the afternoon, Bishop Ault gave an address: “The Sacraments in the General Ministry”.



The Executive Committee included Br. Milt Peden (Mississippi), David Bort (Vermont), Michael J. O'Donnell (East Ohio), Ken Smith (NNJ), Logan Swanger (Central PA), Jim Morgan (Western Michigan). There were eleven chapters (including two new chapters—Central PA and West Michigan). There were 305 members; 21 members were removed. I am not sure of the criteria for the action.



In the evening, “Sam” Young (photo left), editor of forthcoming United Methodist Hymnal gave an address titled “Imperatives in Christian Worship”.

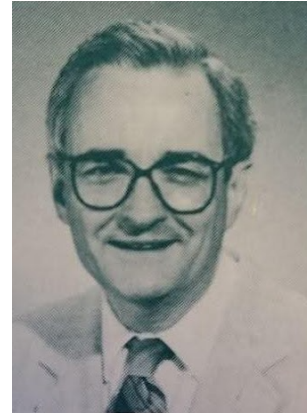
On October 10, after morning prayer, Kendall McCabe gave an address: “Today’s Spirituality and the Sacraments in United Methodism Today”. Near the end of his talk, McCabe urged us not to go back to Wesley (“because he made his mistakes”), but “to go forward”. He went on to say what is timely in our day: “We don’t say the daily office when we feel like it—but [say it] daily because it is there to say. Trust the faithfulness of God and life in the Spirit

among broken bodies and the shed blood of this world.” Earlier in the address he had told us of Filipino activists who were grounded in the prayers of the liturgy and so their lives had become liturgical when life must be yielded, and blood spilled; they lived in sacrifice. I’ll add here that this reminds me of the OSL prayer in the MP and EP on WADO that includes these lines:

grant that, by your Spirit,
we may accept the call to service
to become one with the broken bread of your Church,
one with the new wine of your kin-dom,
and one with the oil of healing and gladness
for the wounded and oppressed of this world.

In the afternoon, Br. Hoyt Hickman (photo right) addressed us on the current four priorities of the Section on Worship of the General Board of Discipleship:

1. follow through work on the ritual
2. work with the hymnal revision committee
3. the preaching project (a project that included David Buttrick working with selected pastors)
4. inclusiveness and wholeness in worship.



In his talk he focused on the forthcoming *The Book of Services* (1985), which distilled and gathered up the work of the Supplemental Worship Resource Series (SWR) that started in 1972.

In the evening, Br. Michael J. O'Donnell (photo right) talked to the community on the topic, "The Order of Saint Luke: A Physical and Spiritual Community". He mused about how to increase the sense of community:

1. Gather in physical community: "we have a covenant to be together in the community"
2. Publish a newsletter to connect us (*The Font* came into being)
3. Pray with partners, urging us to pair up with one other member
4. Develop new chapters
5. Embody a "monastic sense" of life together. In my recollection this was powerful and significant in the hearing of those at the convocation. Br. Michael challenged us to hold a new vision of the Order that struck fire with some and put off others. I think this became a central issue of conversation in the 1984 Convocation and one that shifted the direction and character of the Order under Br. Michael's leadership. I included in my journal the words, "Abbot or Abbess" and I think he must have pitched that language into the discussion. *Note: for a more complete picture and thoroughly researched consideration of the evolution of our move from a society to a religious community see Br. Mark Stamm's article, "Presidents, Abbots, and Other General Officers ..." piece in [Doxology 35:3](#).*



On October 11, the concluding day of the convocation, James F. White did a “walk-through commentary”—item by item—of the evolving Word and Table service that would be in *The Book of Services*.

The 1984 Convocation was significant as many churches (Episcopal, Lutheran, Roman, Reformed, and United Methodist) were revising their ritual resources considering Vatican II and the so called “ecumenical consensus”. And it marked a substantial evolution in how we understood ourselves as a community of religious embracing liturgical renewal.

I feel privileged to have been there and share this in hope that it fills in some of the Order’s story. I hope that others who were there will share their memories of the convocation.

Br. Daniel is a life-vowed member and served as abbot of the Order from 2009-2016.

Newest Member of the Order



On Monday, July 28, 2025, Dustin DeBord became a member of The Order of Saint Luke. As he stated in a Facebook post, this was “a journey that has been years in the making. With brothers and sisters of the Order present, I professed initial vows to the Rule of Life and Service of the Order.”

Br. Taylor Burton Edwards served as Dustin’s companion during the novitiate process and presented him to the community assembled online for the “Monthly Online Liturgy” hosted by the Mid-Atlantic Chapter. Br. Brett Iserhagen, Provincial General of the Order and Prior of the chapter officiated for the profession service.



Dustin’s wife, Natasha (also a UM presbyter/elder) was present to vest him with the Lukan scapular on behalf of the digitally assembled members.






Dustin is a United Methodist presbyter (elder in UM parlance) and serves as pastor of [Mt. Carmel and River Hill; Cherokee Circuit of the United Methodist Church](#) in Tennessee. We rejoice to welcome Br. Dustin to our common life and work of living the Rule of Life and Service.


Editor’s Note: Siblings in the Order, let us rejoice with Br. Dustin and let us keep him in our prayers.

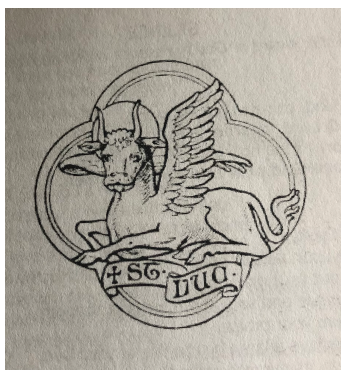
Hoyt Hickman Recipients 2025

We are pleased to share this year’s Hoyt Hickman Award recipients! These faithful leaders have made significant contributions to worship and liturgy in the life of the church. We’ll have the joy of meeting some of them in person during our retreat.

Recipient Name	School	Picture
Rae Guthrie	Drew Theological School	
Pauline Ong	Claremont School of Theology	

Rachel Feters	St. Paul School of Theology	
Matthew Grauberger	Boston University School of Theology	
Katie Girffis	Candler School of Theology	
Joanne Slawter	Palmer Seminary	
Mackenzie Smith	Duke Divinity School	
Matlidah Dondo	Garrette- Evangelical Theological Seminary	

Jaylon Tasby	Methodist Theological School of Ohio	
Ray W. Allen, III	<i>Gammon Theological Seminary</i> <i>Atlanta, GA</i>	
Clara Kathryn Pass	Wesley Theological Seminary	
Emily Mahoney	Asbury Theological Seminary	
Sandy Garcia	Christian Theological Seminary	
Tracy Winters	United Theological Seminary	
Kwang Oh	Perkins School of Theology	
mailed		



The Font Archived

Thanks to our Chancellor General, Br. Scot Bontrager, and several collaborators (Sr.



Magdelene Ruth, Br. Abbé Daniel Benedict, and Br. Abbé Mark Stamm) there is now an archive of *The Font* available for looking back on the journey we the Order have taken since the mid-90's. *The Font* is Order's in-house newsletter for members and friends.

Currently, the earliest issue available is one from 1995 and there are missing issues. If you have (or think you have) a missing digital issue, please contact Br. Scot at chancellor@saint-luke.net.

Visit it at [Archive of The Font](#)

From Our Historian

Siblings,

Just a few thoughts from your historian.

1. I have recordings of several interview that I've conducted with members of the Order, past and present. I need volunteers for transcribing them. Note that the transcription doesn't have to be perfect, and for a variety of reasons achieving a perfect transcription can be difficult. Thus, your best effort is all I ask, and I'm willing to coach you and there are other experienced transcribers who can guide you. If you're willing, please let me know and you can try your hand at the process. I won't give you more than one at a time, so fret not about overload.
2. Consider writing and submitting a short account of your life and your ministry, as it was expressed both within the Order and in your wider circles. Living the sacramental life has unfolded in many and varied ways among us—both within and beyond the Order—and it is good to have some record of these stories, expressed in your own words. You may decide how much to write and what to emphasize, but I would especially appreciate narratives in the range of five to ten pages.
3. If you have electronic copies of *Sacramental Life* that do not currently appear on the website, please submit those to the webscribe, Br. Scot Bontrager. In addition, please let both Brother Scot and me know if you'd be willing to scan copies of *Sacramental Life* and other documents that we may wish to upload.

Br. Mark W. Stamm, mwstamm@att.net

*Editor's Note: The Retreat information from the last issue of **the Font** is reprinted here.*

The Order of Saint Luke

Retreat 2025 - October 20-23

Guest Speaker: Dr. Karl Kuhn

Dr. Kuhn is the Grace Chair of Religious Studies at Lakeland University in Madison, WI. He has written two books on Luke: *Luke: The Elite Evangelist* (Liturgical Press, 2010) and *The Kingdom According to Luke and Acts: A Social, Literary, and Theological Introduction* (Baker, 2015).



We will gather at Mercy Conference and Retreat Center in St. Louis, MO. Mercy offers us comfortable places for worship and gathering indoors, as well as Stations of the Cross, a Grotto, an 11-circuit labyrinth, and a walking path, all outdoors.

There are a variety of rooming options at Mercy: 38 double rooms, 7 singles, and 16 singles that share bathrooms. Early Bird prices (until Aug 1) for the retreat, including all meals, plentiful snacks/coffee, and all programming are as follows:

Double room (shared with a roommate) - \$432

Single room (with shared bathroom) - \$462

Single room (with private bathroom) - \$495

Commuter price (for those staying elsewhere) - \$290

We encourage you to register early – please do so here:

<https://saint-luke.net/2025-us-fall-retreat/2025-registration/>

If you have questions about the retreat, visit www.mercycenterstl.org or contact our
Chancellor General: pastorcelia@gmail.com