



Book of Reports  
Council Meeting

May 2025

St. Paul of the Cross Retreat Center

## MONDAY, MAY 12

4:00 PM	Target time to arrive and check in
4:30 PM	<b>Evening Prayer with Eucharist</b> (Chapel)
6:00 PM	Dinner
7:00 PM	Welcome - Becoming present to one another by each briefly sharing something of your life and journey since last we met (Assembly Room)
8:30 PM	<b>Compline</b> (Chapel)

## TUESDAY, MAY 13

7:00 AM	<b>Morning Prayer</b> (Chapel, 30 min. max.)
8:00 AM	Breakfast
9:00 am	<b>Council of the General Chapter Begins</b> (see Agenda)
	Mid-Morning Prayer mid-way through as a break; ending with Mid-Day Prayer
	Report summaries of Book of Reports
12:00 Noon	Lunch
1:30 PM	<b>Eucharist Service (Chapel)</b>
2:30 PM	Break
3:30 pm	Council meeting continues
5:30 PM	<b>Evening Prayer (Chapel)</b>
6:00 PM	Dinner
7:00 PM	Council meeting continues
	Additional report summaries / Action Items
8:30 PM	<b>Compline</b> (Chapel)

## WEDNESDAY, MAY 14

7:00 AM	<b>Morning Prayer</b> (Chapel, 30 min. max.)
8:00 AM	Breakfast
9:00 - 10:30 AM	Council meeting continues
10:45 AM	<b>Eucharist Service</b> (Chapel)
12:00 PM	Lunch
1:30 PM	Council meeting continues / Concludes with Mid-afternoon Prayer
3:00 PM	Break / Others: Self-care time - meditate, take a walk, rest, chat
5:00 PM	<b>Evening Prayer</b> (Chapel)
6:00 PM	Dinner
7:00 PM	Lukan Spiritual Disciplines
9:00 PM	<b>Compline</b> (Chapel)

## THURSDAY, MAY 15

7:30 AM	<b>Morning Prayer</b> (Chapel, 30 min. max.)
8:00 AM	Breakfast
9:00 AM	Check out of rooms / Depart with prayers for safe travel

## Agenda

### 1. Reports

- a. Abbott's Report and Discussion
  - i. Seasons and our Charism
  - ii. Support seminary chapters
  - iii. Vote
- b. Chancellor General Report - Br Scot Bontrager
  - i. Financial report
  - ii. Membership
  - iii. Minutes from May 2024 Meeting
  - iv. Minutes from October 2025 meeting
- c. Prior General's Report - Sr. Celia Halfacre
- d. Provincial General's Report - Br. Brett Iserhagen
  - i. Approval of New Chapters
  - ii. How can we support seminary chapters
  - iii. Vote
- e. Report from the Provincial Companion to the Carolinas Province
- f. Novitiate Team Report
- g. Report from the Companion to Seekers, Inquirers, and Discerners - Br. Jim DuFriend
- h. Report of the Companion to Life Vow Members - Br. Frank Richard Coats
- i. Report of the Chaplain General - Br. Christopher Montgomery
- j. Report of the Online Chaplain General - Sr. Kimberly Greway
- k. Report of the Historian - Br. Mark Stamm
- l. Other reports to be given in person

### 2. Guided Discussions and Discernment

## Spring Council Abbot's Report

April 30, 2025

As one who works in education, I am sensitive to the change of energy during different seasons. The campus where I teach is right now in a spastic mix of frantic effort and warm-weather-induced procrastination that typifies finals week at the end of the academic year. Soon, the campus will be relaxed and nearly empty, and my faculty colleagues will wear sloppy, summer clothes while pursuing our own scholarship - a task the academic year leaves little time for. Looking ahead, the beginning of September will pair crisp fall air with heightened excitement (and some apprehension) as students begin a new year.

Those of us who live in New England also adjust to changing seasons. Is it time to pack away the flannel sheets? Can we (finally) stop running the heat? Is it too early to open up the screened-in porch? If I pack away my wool sweaters and turtlenecks, will a cold snap next week make me regret my optimism?

Then again, we all live through more lengthy "seasons" in our life: some of us are in a season of caring for elderly parents. Some of us are in a season of ill health, a time of patience and withdrawal. Some of us are in a season of diapers and nursing and disrupted sleep. My household currently resides in a season on the cusp between high school and college: we dwell amid driving lessons and school play practice and college visits and SATs.

There are many facets of our life together within the Order that are not seasonal, that do not change. Our nature as a dispersed religious order remains the same. Our charism, focused on sacramental and liturgical scholarship, education, and practice, holds firm. Our namesake, Luke the evangelist, does not change.

And yet, the task of living out this charism changes in different seasons. Within the Order, we are in a season of new leadership. Three of the four General Officers are new to this body. All four are employed full-time outside of the Order. Three of the four are Gen X-ers, and one is a Millennial. We will necessarily bring change to the Order by virtue of being different people than the previous General Officers.

Outside of the Order, we are in a new political season. And while members of the Order do not all share the same political outlook - and, indeed, do not all live in the same country - we cannot pretend that our lives and our living-out of the Rule of Life and Service is not affected by the dramatic changes that we have seen over the past few months.

As an Order, we must discern how that Rule of Life and Service guides us during this particular season. This is not a decision for me alone to make, neither is it one for the

General Officers to determine. I welcome the prayerful discernment of every member of the Order as we consider what it means to magnify the sacraments, to live the sacramental life, and to affirm the apostolic hope in this moment. I have some ideas, however, that I'd like us to consider among the others that various members may suggest:

- 1) At one time, the Order of Saint Luke had active chapters at many seminaries. While not all seminarians will find a home within the Order, some will. I believe that the Order's presence and resources are gifts that seminarians deserve to know about. I want to investigate ways to reach out to seminaries and let these communities know what we have to offer.
- 2) The Order of Saint Luke began among ordained male white Methodist pastors in the United States. Our history is nothing to be ashamed of, but it does not need to restrict our current membership. Our previous Abbot has noted before that we are less male, less ordained, and less Methodist than we used to be as an Order, and that increasing diversity is a good thing. I believe that we should continue to explore how we can be accessible to people from a variety of backgrounds, denominations, occupations, nations, and situations.
- 3) The collect for our Order asks God to empower us to embody Christ's healing grace for all creation. Creation indeed is in need of healing, and I think that we should consider, as an Order, how we might move towards that healing in all of our practices. For instance, we know that long-distance travel produces CO2 emissions that contribute to global warming. And yet, meeting together is vitally important. We need to be present for one another, to embody healing grace for one another, and to remind ourselves of the "sense of community" for which we pray. We worship a God who became incarnate, and we need to be present physically with one another from time to time. I think that an honest and open conversation that takes into account both our need for embodied community and our calling to bring healing to the created world might yield new and creative possibilities.

These are just some of the topics that I look forward to discussing with all who will participate in Spring Council shortly. The opportunity to worship and work and laugh and talk and go on pilgrimage with you all buoys my spirit just now at the end of a long semester. I pray for each of you, in whatever seasons you find yourselves.

Yours in the bonds of our community,

Sr. Heather, Abbot

**Balance Sheet**  
**The Order of Saint Luke**  
As of April 21, 2025

DISTRIBUTION ACCOUNT	TOTAL
<b>Assets</b>	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
Inwood Bank Checking (TX)	6,817.99
PayPal balance account	451.34
TD Bank CD	10,941.96
TD Bank Checking	7,467.01
UMF of West Virginia James White Memorial	3,741.36
UMF of West Virginia Legacy	24,824.40
Total for Bank Accounts	\$54,244.06
Accounts Receivable	
Accounts Receivable (AIR)	
Total for Accounts Receivable	0
Other Current Assets	
Undeposited Funds	
Total for Other Current Assets	0
Total for Current Assets	\$54,244.06
Fixed Assets	
Other Assets	
Total for Assets	\$54,244.06
<b>Liabilities and Equity</b>	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	
Accounts Payable (A/P)	
Total for Accounts Payable	0
Credit Cards	
Other Current Liabilities	
Total for Current liabilities	0
Long-term Liabilities	
Total for liabilities	0
Equity	
Retained Earnings	-4,986.49
Net Income	4,948.72
Opening Balance Equity	54,281.83
Total for Equity	\$54,244.06
Total for liabilities andEquity	\$54,244.06

# Bill Payment List

The Order of Saint Luke

October 13, 2024-April 21, 2025

DATE	NUM	VENDOR	AMOUNT
Inwood Bank Checking (TX)			
02/26/2025		Inwood National Bank	-193.69
02/20/2025	1001	Church Mutual	-860.00
03/01/2025	1003	First United Methodist Church Garland	-71.78
03/03/2025		Linode	-6.68
03/05/2025		Google	-12.96
03/12/2025		Inwood National Bank	-35.00
03/17/2025		Lightspeed	-4.10
04/02/2025		Linode	-12.79
03/27/2025		Inwood National Bank	-10.00
04/07/2025		Google	-12.96
02/25/2025		Inwood National Bank	-6,000.00
04/11/2025		FedEx 5037 (Notre Dame)	-2,444.94
04/11/2025		Lightspeed	-1.03
04/16/2025		Lightspeed	-1.30
Total for Inwood Bank Checking (TX)			<b>-\$9,667.23</b>
PayPal balance account			
03/03/2025		The Rolling Explorer	-300.00
03/15/2025		Intuit Inc	-18.66
04/07/2025		PayPal	-1.09
04/15/2025		Intuit Inc	-18.66
Total for PayPat balance account			<b>-\$338.41</b>
TD Bank Checking			
03/15/2025		Jeanette Block	-612.59
Total for TD Bank Checking			<b>-\$612.59</b>
Accounts Receivable (A/R)			
03/04/2025	OSLP-JBLBO		46.00
03/04/2025	OSLP-XI8FA		23.00
03/06/2025	OSLP-BXWIY		23.00
03/11/2025	OSLP-KFAW7		8.05
04/07/2025	OSLP-MRB2M		17.19
04/10/2025	OSLP-VDC4O		25.30
04/15/2025	OSLP-MA9EX		34.50
Total for Accounts Receivable (AIR)			<b>\$177.04</b>
Undeposited Funds			
03/04/2025		PayPal	-1.74
03/12/2025		PayPal	-9.68
03/15/2025		PayPal	-9.68
03/23/2025		PayPal	-11.13
04/02/2025		PayPal	-11.13
04/03/2025		PayPat	-11.13

# Bill Payment List

## The Order of Saint Luke

October 13, 2024-April 21, 2025

DATE	NUM	VENDOR	AMOUNT
04/03/2025		PayPal	-11.13
04/05/2025		PayPal	-11.13
04/09/2025		PayPal	-11.13
04/15/2025		PayPal	-11.13
04/08/2025		PayPal	-2.46
04/15/2025		PayPal	-2.46
Total for Undeposited Funds			-\$103.93
Accounts Payable (NP)			
02/18/2025	2025-1001	The Rolling Explorer	300.00
02/20/2025	0241160	Church Mutual	860.00
03/01/2025		First United Methodist Church Garland	71.78
03/17/2025	SBNKN00103306	FedEx 5037 (Notre Dame)	2,444.94
Total for Accounts Payable (A/P)			\$3,676.72
TOTAL			-\$6,868.40



## Chancellor General's Report:

These first 6-months as Chancellor General have been a learning experience for me. Since our primary address has moved to Texas, we had to file for a Texas business license in order to open a bank account. The Secretary of State took quite some time to process the paperwork. After several months, our banking situation is almost sorted out. Most of our money is still stored in the New Jersey bank account and in a certificate of deposit. These will be transferred to Texas in May 2025 when the CD matures.

Reserves and restricted funds are still stored in the West Virginia Methodist Foundation. These will remain as-is unless needed.

### Memberships:

I have written a new membership management database because the previous database, ServantKeeper, was not designed for organizations like ours. The new database seems to be working well and doubles as our online membership directory.

The database can be accessed at <https://saint-luke.net/oo>

We currently have 393 members in good standing (using an expansive definition of good standing). We have not removed folks who have not officially renewed their vows since 2020. Around 100 persons who had not renewed their vows since before 2020 were moved to "friend" status. This is a change in how we operate; previously, we would mark those who have not reaffirmed their vows as "removed." Friends continue to receive communication from the order; those who are removed do not. As such, it is more inline with our culture and spirituality to keep those who have not reaffirmed as friends rather than "casting them to the outer darkness."

We have had seven first professions since October 1, 2024 and three people have asked to be added as friends of the order.

Category	Count
Life Vows	70
Annual Vows (new or reaffirmed 2024/2025)	212
Annual Vows (last reaffirmed in 2023)	37
Annual Vows (last reaffirmed 2020-2022)	74
Friends	137

2024 was the first time in a few years that we mailed out the reaffirmation forms. About 80% of those who reaffirmed used the mailed forms. Many people who had not reaffirmed in several years responded to the paper forms. Given this information, I

recommend that we continue to offer the paper forms for the time being. Printing and mailing costs were almost \$400 total. I encourage all members to reaffirm online to help save on postage costs-especially for those who are unable to give a financial contribution. For those who give a contribution, the online processing costs are similar to the cost of postage so there is no substantial difference in overhead.

We have not mailed update forms to life-vowed members in many years. As a consequence, we have only received a few online updates from our life-vowed members. This fall we will mail forms to all life-vowed members and encourage them to send any updates. I encourage life-vowed members to fill out the online form annually so we can be sure we have correct address information.

### **Expenses:**

I have started to learn QuickBooks for tracking our finances. The reports attached are generated from there. Right now we are paying \$18/mo for the smallest version of QuickBooks, budgeting in QuickBooks requires an upgrade to the \$50/mo package. Since this currently seems like an unnecessary expense, a budget utilization report is not readily available. I hope to have a solution in place for October. We are below budget in each line.

Our largest budget item is the May Council, most of which goes to reimburse the travel expenses.

The constitution and by-laws do not mandate an in-person council meeting. Changing this meeting to quarterly online meetings would be a substantial savings to the order. The current elected officers meet for prayer and conversation on Zoom every week. Having quarterly leadership meetings would be very easy. While we love being in each other's presence, the COVID pandemic showed that there are many ways of sharing in fellowship that do not require us being physically together, especially if we are able to meet physically for our October retreat.

Doxology is the second largest expense at around two-thousand dollars per issue. We currently print and mail copies to all life-vowed members and annual vowed members who have given at any level in the past 24-calendar months. We also send copies to anyone who has paid for a subscription in the past five years and to a list of thirty-six schools of theology whether they have paid or not.

### **Doxology Printed Copies** (after March 2025 cleanup)

Life vowed member (gift 2023-2025)	8
Life vowed member (no gift 2023-2025)	62
Annual vowed member who have made a financial gift	286
Paid Subscriber (Friend)	15

**Other Comments:**

The office of the Chancellor General is defined by the constitution and is quite unusual. One person is charged with both collecting income and funding expenses and also with managing the membership rolls. This strikes me as very odd. In most organizations, these would be three distinct rolls. I would like the General Council to review the constitution and determine if these functions should be separated into distinct roles.

**Technology Update**

The website continues to serve us well. WADO continues to be the most used part of the website. Other than the online directory, nothing significant has changed.

WADO had 6,500 page-views in the first three weeks of April, with an average 250 users per day. The homepage was viewed 750 times in the same timeframe.

We are slowly migrating to role-based @saint-luke.net email addresses; this will facilitate change-over of officers in the future. As we find accounts that need to be migrated to these role-based accounts, we make the change. The largest outstanding issue on this front is our Amazon on-demand printing account, which is tied to Abbe Elizabeth's email address; migrating it will require manually moving the publication files to the new account.

Br. Scot Bontrager,  
Chancellor General

Order of Saint Luke

Council Meeting May 13 - 16, 2024

St. Paul of the Cross Monastery

Monday, May 13, 2024

Those present Sr. Abbot Elizabeth Moore, Sr. Barb Lee, Br. Brett Isernhagen, Sr. Barbara Blackmon-Fortune, Sr. Debbie Neill, Br. French Ball, Sr. Kimberly Greway, Br. Scot Bontrager, Br. Mark Stamm, Sr. Heather Josselyn-Cranson, Br. Brent Sturm, Br. George Crisp, Sr. Gail Dugan, Br. Dwight Vogel.

We gathered in the chapel for Eucharist at 4:30 pm followed by dinner. We then gathered in the assembly room to catch up with each other. We ended the day with Compline.

Tuesday, May 14, 2024

We gathered for morning prayer at 7:00 a.m, followed by breakfast. We then began the council meeting at 9:00 a.m.

Report of the Abbot

Abbot Elizabeth indicated she has written her last report as our Abbot. She expressed thanksgiving for our siblings who have "yes" in their vocabulary. Abbot reminded us about our speaker for the October retreat, Dr. Gordon Lathrop (October 14 - 17). Abbot is concerned that we do not have more priors attending this meeting. The priors serve as the nominating committee. Has the way we function changed? We need the fellowship of each other; should we zoom more?

Abbot has been working on the publications since it has been changed so much. Should we re-examine our charter for publications? We filled in a gap with writings out of print; we would make them available. What does the market want and what is helpful for people to do.

Report of the Prior General

We have 18 seminaries on our list for Hickman Awards; Asbury closed their Florida campus. Br. George wants to invite the Hickman award winners to come to retreat. We voted by consensus to have Br. George invite the H

ickman recipients to retreat. Dr. Lathrop was invited by Br. Daniel Benedict and a follow up zoom conversation with Br. George followed. We will meet at St. Paul in 2025; dates to be announced. We are still using E. Preston Rice as our potter for the Hickman awards.

Report of the Chancellor General

Retreat July 1 registration Transfer tile AmEx Keep reimbursement policy as is. It can be changed later. Br. Brent Motion approved and \$52,800.00 as per Sr. Jeanette's report. And refer to the general Chapter the budget of \$52,800.00 for the 2024-25 year. Sr. Jeanette to work with ServantKeeper on getting email/text service for the virtual ministry.

Report of the Provincial General

We went over Sr. Heather's report. She has three action items: The Winged Ox Chapter needs to be discontinued; new Central Oregon Seekers Chapter; and reform the East Ohio Chapter into St. Julian Chapter. Sr. Celia and Sr. Kimberly have thinned out the worship items for our life together.

We divided the questions for the action items. The Winged Ox Chapter was unanimously discontinued. We are concerned about Central Oregon using the word Seekers in their name as

the OSI has a seeker group who are looking to join as members. We approved the Chapter, but Sr. Heather will email the leaders to see if they are willing to be known as the Central Oregon Chapter. The East Ohio Chapter wants to reform as the St. Julian Chapter which was unanimously approved. Sr. Heather reported on the Provincial Companions she has a chart of the United States.

When we join the OSI, we are a member of the Order and a participant in the chapter. Abbot feels we need to make this very clear. Br. Scot and Br. French will look at the Bylaws so see if we need a specific change due to virtual gathering. The Bylaws need to be amended to reflect the terms of membership and participating in a Chapter.

Companion for Life-Vowed Members

No report. We think it may be Br. Jim DuFriend.

Virtual Meetings

Sr. Kimberly reported on the Virtual Meetings that are scheduled monthly. There is a minimum of approximately 22 people. Everyone does the services differently.

Website

Br. Scot shared that others can use the website to edit their own content rather than have him do the work. He has experienced that folks buy more tools, but one will do all the jobs and consolidate. Br. Scot does not want to continue with the video component of our time together. He would like to hand over the day to day content of the website. He will continue with the technical side of the website. Br. Scot would like to handle the website. WADO continues; just needs more content. We discussed more work on the Marian Feasts. More and more people use WADO everyday. We discussed using the website and our tools more effectively. Sr.

Kimberly encouraged us to explore the website.

Report of Publications

Sr. Abbot shared that we do not have any new publications to report on. We received a manuscript from Br. Matthias. It is not a book, but a pamphlet. Sr. Elizabeth worked with him and the publication is only 14 pages long. She has also worked with Br. Robert George. "Living the Rule: a Beginning." It is a short version of Food for Pilgrims. It is short enough that it would be interesting reading for people in the cohort groups. Sr. Elizabeth never got to do an in depth study of the publications. If she puts together the sales history over time, we sold about \$24,000.00 in 2011- 2012. Our sales have dropped dramatically, and we have taken things out of the catalog that were not selling, but they can be obtained through used book sales. We sell our own worship resources and we sell them to ourselves. Resources from non-OSI writers are really in sharp decline. There is a question about the administrative costs of having them in a catalog so perhaps we need to shrink them even more.

What do we do to get new materials? Should we survey our membership as to what they need and want. Br. Scot's wife drafts surveys for Survey Monkey

Nominating Report

The Nominating Committee recommended Sr. Heather Josslyn--Cranson as Abbott, Br. Brett Isernhagen as Provincial Companion, Br. Scot Bontrager as Chancellor General and Sr. Dianne Covault as Prior General. All were nominated by consensus. Per the Constitution, "The names go to ballot as soon as practical after the council meeting. Ballots must be returned within sixty

days after the initial mailing. The Officers shall be invested at the next General Convocation. The Abbot shall appoint a chairperson to oversee the process of nominations and election, who will be a non-voting member of the Committee. "

We have decided the ballots will go out by July 1, 2024. Folks can respond by email. Send out a slate of officers and vote via email. Br. Brent will receive the responses as our monitor. Br. George as charged Sr. Jeanette and Br. Scot to find the best way to reach the membership. Photos of the nominees will go on the webpage with an explanation of the process to vote between July 1, 2024 - August 29, 2024.

Br. George thanked the nominating committee for doing the important work of nominating officers.

Eucharist was celebrated followed by dinner. We postponed the balance of our meeting until Wednesday and had an early compline. An early night for rest and pilgrimage.

Wednesday, May 15, 2024

After morning prayer and breakfast, we met in the assembly room. In Sr. Abbot's absence, Br. George gathered the nominating committee to continue their work. Sr. Dianne would like to say, "not yet" to the nomination so she can focus on her role as our pastoral care officer. She is also serving in her conference and would like to continue that service first. The committee did not have a new nomination for Prior General.

Pastoral Care Report

Sr. Dianne shared that she is working to become more visible to our siblings and is fleshing out her position.

Report of Companion for Seekers, Inquirers, and Discerners

See the report on Page 13.

Report of OSP Historian

Br. Mark supplemented in written report. He is planning retirement and has to go through the materials in his offices as some of those are related to OSL. Br. Mark discovered that Jean Audrey Powers was a significant female leader in 1996, although not an officer, she was a leader not only in the Order but in the church. Br. Mark has found very interesting historical information on Br. David Bort, Br. Hoyt Hickman and Br. Vernon Schmidt. Br. Dwight shared that Jean Audrey Powers moved to Pilgrim Place and became active in the CalPac subchapter.

We gathered in the Chapel for Eucharist.

After lunch the nominating committee met again. Sr. Dianne decline to serve as our Prior General as she is busy with her ministry and conference responsibilities. Sr. Celia Halfacre was nominated and agreed to serve as long as Br. George would mentor her. Perhaps a discussion is needed on restructuring the responsibilities that come with the positions. The committee discussed adding a retreat coordinator to plan and execute the retreat and perhaps a sub-position so the leadership is staggered. There are not too many past Chancellor Generals, nor Chaplain Generals. The Constitution and Bylaws should be studied to see how we can restructure our leadership. Most of what was discussed today in the nominating committee will require Abbatial appointment.

Br. George thanked the nominating committee for their very important work and specifically Br. Brent in bringing his expertise in leading this committee over the years.

We changed the schedule for the evening so that Compline would be completed early if siblings wanted to gather for pilgrimage.

Br. George set the dates for 2025 as follows: Council May 12 - 15, 2025 and Retreat October 13 - 16, 2025.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Sr. Jeanette M. Block, Chancellor General



The Order of Saint Luke - October Retreat  
General Chapter Meeting  
October 14-17,2024

### **Monday, October 14**

We gathered for opening worship in the chapel followed by dinner and a time together in the conference room. We returned to the chapel for Compline

### **Tuesday, October 15**

We gathered in the conference room for Dr. Gordon Lathrop's opening lecture. After mid-morning prayer, we began the general chapter meeting. There are 53 retreatants: Sr. Elinor Bayse, Br. Daniel Benedict, Sr. Barbara Blackmon-Fortune, Br. Bill Blackmon-Fonune, Sr. Jeanette Block, Sr. Marianne Brown, Br. Scot Bontrager, Br. Jim Caffrey, Br. Guy Camp, Br. Jeffrey Cartwright, Sr. Nancy Cartwright, Br. Warren Coile, Br. David Collette, Sr. Dianne Covault, Br. George Crisp, Sr. Anna Crocker, Br. Jim DuFriend, Sr. Gail Duggan, Sr. Sarah Elewononi, Br. Dean Emerson, Sr. Cherlyn Gates, Br. Sean Cray, Sr. Kimberly Greway, Sr. Celia Halfacre, Br. Jonathan Hehn, Br. Brett Isemhager, Sr. Heather Josselyn-Cranson, Sr. Laura King, Sr. Derek Kubilus, Sr. Barbara Lee, Debrean Loy, Br. Randy Loy, Br. Don McAvoy, Sr. Dianne McCleary, Br. Christopher Montgomery, Sr. Elizabeth Moore, Sr. Debbie Neill, Br. Kevin Orr, Sr. Abby Peper, Sr. Fafrbairn Powers, Br. James Radloff, Br. Louis Serra, Br. Robert George Schall, Br. Mark Stamm, Br. Brent Sturm, Sr. Carolyn Tanner, Br. Matthias, Br. Dwight Vogel, Sr. Becky Walker, Br. Chuck Wolfram.

### **Abbot's Report**

Sr. Abbot Elizabeth Moore opened with prayer. First she says thank you to the chapters for signing up for virtual services with Sr. Kimberly Greway. She thanked Br. Scot Bontrager for picking up all of the membership duties over the summer. Abbot continued by thanking Br. Daniel Benedict, Sr. Barbara Lee and Br. Jim DuFriend for leading the novitiate process. The Canons hold the institutional memory and encourage the leadership in the Order. Br. French Ball, Br. Michael o-connell, Sr. Barb Lee, Br. Mark Stanlm, Br. Brent Sturm, Br. Dwight Vogel. Sr. Abbot appointed Br. Daniel Benedict as a Canon and confirmed the continuing appointment of the cun-ent Canons.

### **Report of the Prior General**

Br. George Crisp thanked the body for the privilege of serving. He has served as an Officer since 2000 and it is time to retire. Part of the responsibilities is to oversee the issuance of the Hoyt Hickman Award. E. Preston Rice is the potter we use for the gifts presented to winners. Sr. Dianne McCleary is present as our Hickman Award.

Spring council May 12- 15, 2025 at St. Paul of the Cross. The Retreat in October will be held at the Mercy Conference and Retreat Center, St. Louis MO on October 20- 23, 2025. Sr. Celia Halfacre will be the new Prior General and will advise or the speaker at a later date.



### **Report of the Chancellor General**

Sr. Jeanette Block asked for a Motion to Affirm the election of Officers held over the summer to elect the following: Heather Josslyn-Cranson as Abbot; Scot Bontrager as Chancellor General / Administrator; Brett Isernhagen as Provincial General; and Celia Halfacre as Prior General. The Motion was made by Br. Brent Sturm and seconded by Sr. Barbara Lee; all approved.

The General Chapter also Motioned and Affirmed that Br. Scot Bontrager be given the authority to handle all administrative business affairs that include but are not limited to:

- Open a new bank account
- Obtain a new bank credit card
- Oversee the two accounts held with the Foundation of West Virginia
- Handle all financial affairs of the Order of Saint Luke
- Prepare a yearly budget for the Order of Saint Luke
- Handle all banking affairs of the Order of Saint Luke
- Handle all mailing needs for the Order of Saint Luke
- Any other business that may be directed by the Abbot and/or the General Officers.

Sr. Jeanette Block asked for a Motion to approve the budget for 2024-25. So moved by Br. Brent Sturm and Sr. Debbie Neil and approved by the body.

### **Report of the Provincial General**

Sr. Heather Josslyn-Cranson expanded her written report to include that the CalPac Chapter is reorganizing so it includes the Claremont Sub-Chapter. They would like to be known as the All Saints Chapter.

Abbot Elizabeth shared that Doxology needs to be discussed, a new editor needs to be appointed and a new Life-Vowed Members. OSL Publications will be given at May council.

### **Report of the Chaplain General**

Sr. Celia Halfacre shared that Br. Lewis Worthington still has some holy hardware: she will connect with him to see what he has. She gave thanks to Br. Derick Kubulik for preparing the worship booklet.

### **Report of Webscribe and Tech-Sibling**

Sr. Kimberly Greway shared that she is also Chaplain General for the Virtual Meetings. She would like to have one or two people to work on the responsibilities. Go to our website, click on Get Involved and the What's App Community to chat with members.

Br. Scot Bontrager reported on the Website and is looking for someone to be the Webmaster. If there is content that needs to go on the website, we can get it done. Br. Mark Stamm and Br. Scot have started the Digital Archive Research Team (DART) so it can be accessed and not lost in history. He has used his personal Zoom at \$18.00 per month. Google Meet is free and he is encourage to the OSL's Google Meet account. Still uploading WADO (Web Amplified Daily Office). Br. Scot also shared that his new data base is an on line directory.

### **DORT Report (Daily Office Revision Team)**

Br. Dwight Vogel expanded his report to share that there are 422 days in a liturgical year x.3 years and everything needs to be entered. It is a huge task. He would like to see the Lucan Psalter entered. Abbot Elizabeth has volunteered to enter any corrections needed into WADO.

### **Report of Pastoral Care Officer**

Sr. Dianne Tobey Covault introduced herself and indicated she would like to get to know everyone and has included herself in the What's App community. Perhaps online office hours.

### **Companion for Seekers, Inquirers, and Discerners**

Br. Jim shared there is a lot of interest in the Order. Br. Daniel Benedict shared the distinction of the terms. Seekers is one who asks questions. Inquirers fill out a form to begin the process of discernment. Discerners are matched with a companion to enter the time of final discernment.

### **Historian**

Br. Mark Stamm expanded on his written report in the Book of Reports. He is also working as a guest Editor in Doxology.

### **Novitiate Team Report**

Br. Daniel Benedict reported that we are 78 years old as religiously vowed sisters and brothers. We have become ecumenical and diverse and we have a sense of what it is to live into the vows we take. Sr. Sarah, Sr. Carol Gathagan and Br. Daniel spoke about the need for a novitiate especially in the age of digital meetings where other have no personal contact with members in the Order. Many of us no longer meet in person. He extended the invitation for younger members to become in a mentoring relationship like Br. Jim DuFriend and Sr. Barb Lee.

The remainder of the minutes were taken by our newly elected and installed Chancellor General. Br. Scot Bontrager.

Respectfully submitted,

Sr. Jeanette M. Block OSL  
Chancellor General

### **Minutes, General Chapter, Oct 16 2024**

Doxology Report: Br. Johnathan Hehn reported that Doxology stalled, two issues are ready for production. We are waiting on the print designer. We have 4 guest editors lined up. 3 have been doing their work, one will not complete her issue. His intention is to get the issues printed and mailed before the end of the calendar year. They will be labeled as normal, but distributed in the 4th (current) quarter of 2024.

Br. Dan Benedict suggested we ask Gordon Lathrop to publish his lectures as the 4th/ Pentecost issue.

Sr. Abbot suggested the title "Some Assembly Required" for doxology edition of Lathrop lectures.

The minutes from the 2025 Spring council meeting were presented for approval. Sr. Barb seconded approving the minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

Br. Dean Emerson pushed the book/merch table wares and encouraged support of the work of the order through Br. Dean's ministry.

Sr. Abbot Heather announced that Br. Christopher Montgomery would be willing to be Chaplain General as an abbatial appointment.

The gathered body then split into groups to discuss questions of ideas for future retreats and work for the order.

Group 1's ideas:

- Centering Prayer
- Embodiment in Liturgy and Prayer
- Lectionaries and their basis
- Why the Revised Common Lectionary
- Orcjination to-what/for-what?
- BEM, Our Sacred Trust
- Psalmody

Group 2's ideas:

- Iconography - do-again? Instead of wrting, how to pray
- The Daily/Ordinary Holy things - Kathleen Norris, Sacramental Living, Br.

Lawrence

- How can we prepare individuals/congregations better for assembly/worship/ baptism/communion (new member class is not a thing, Catachesis is not a thing)
- Sacred Music - chanting and liturgical music - use music, lesser known uses/
- Sequences - service music
- Spiritual Practices - Lectio devina , centering prayer
- Eucharistic Theologies and Technicalities - practicalities of presiding - extended the table

Group 3

- Eastern Orthodox - basis & ideals
- Refugee / muslim concerns (how do we be Church/hospitality)
- Mendicant - Dispersed orders
- Here we are, lay and clergy assembled, what do we get that congregations don't

Group 4

- Spiritual Disciplines - Talk about those and connect those and personality and ways of being

Activity associated with it - Icons, we actually wrote them that year. Praying with icons.

We liked this year's program because we knew what book to read in advanced. Came in prepared and ready to ask questions. NAAL members know great people.

#### Group 5

Vocation (not just ordination)

Lukan Spirituality - what we do and why

Ecumenicalism - what is being done and why/where

What are our weak points?

Sacred Architecture

#### Group 6

History and development of our liturgy - ancient and contemporary - gather the stories

Visual worship arts, not just icons

Hymn writing / prayer writing

#### Group 7

Non-Textual aspects of worship - apart from words

Novitiate seeking/inquiring/discerning - reflecting on the mystagogy - living the

Lukan pattern (Br. Dwight)

#### Question #2 - Who is not here?

Age, White, Focus on Seminary chapters

We dismissed for the day

October 17

We gathered for breakfast and dismissed to travel.

Submitted

Br. Scot Bontrage, OSL

Chancellor General

## Prior General Report

Grace and peace to you in the name of Jesus Christ, our Risen Lord.

Since our last meeting, I am pleased to report that the Order's life and mission continue to flourish. This October, we will gather for our annual retreat at a new location: Mercy Conference and Retreat Center, 2039 North Geyer Road, St. Louis, MO 63131-3332. The Mercy Center's beautiful and prayerful setting offers us a fresh space to reflect, renew, and deepen our shared vocation as people of Word and Table. Br. Scot and I hope to travel to the retreat center to look around and get a feel for the place. Dr. Karl Kuhn will lead our retreat this year. He is still preparing for our time together, but so far he is looking to talk with us about Luke's consistent portrayal of Jesus retreating to isolated settings in nature to pray, the role of wilderness in Luke's narrative, and how that might inform our understanding of Lukan spirituality.

The Hoyt L. Hickman Award continues to be a meaningful expression of the Order's commitment to excellence in liturgical leadership. This year, we have awarded 14 graduating students from theological schools across our network. Each recipient received a handmade ceramic chalice and paten crafted by E. Preston Rice. One additional award is pending due to a timing miscommunication with the school. Unfortunately, I was not notified in time to coordinate with Preston before his international travels. The final award will be delivered after graduation.

As I grow into this role of Prior General, I am deeply grateful for your support and for the legacy of faithful leadership that has come before me. Transition always includes a learning curve, and I am committed to doing that learning with humility, good humor, and hope. I'm already making notes for how to improve communication and logistics going forward-and I trust the Holy Spirit is helping connect the dots along the way.

Thank you for the privilege of serving our Order. I look forward to the ways we will continue to grow together in worship, study, and holy friendship.

In the peace of Christ,  
Sr. Celia Halfacre

## Report of the Provincial General for Spring Council 2025

Dear friends,

It has been a sincere honor and delight to serve as one of your General Officers these past eight months. I'll start this report with the most exciting news: I have received two covenanting documents to present this meeting! **One is for an association in the Carolinas and the other is for a proposed South Texas Chapter.** Br. Stephen Ball, current provincial companion to the Carolinas would be the prior for the proposed Carolinas Association, and that group has been active for quite a few months now. Sr. Dianne McCleary would be the prior for the South Texas chapter. If both of these are ratified, we will have **19 chapters/associations** on the books! Of these 19, 16 responded to my requests for information about membership and activity. Additionally, covenanting documents have been sent to the Philippines for formation of another chapter, and to interested parties in Puerto Rico, but I have not received either of them back yet.

Here are the current chapters and association, in alphabetical order along with the information shared with me in their reports.

### All Saints Chapter

Formerly the Cal-Pac chapter. Br. Terry Van Hook is the prior, and the group is in the process of rebuilding.

### Carolinas Association (proposed)

Br. Stephen Ball is the prior, and the association is still establishing themselves. They plan to meet monthly for prayer and accountability. Meetings are currently online with hopes to arrange in-person gatherings soon.

### Central Oregon Seekers Chapter

Br. David Two Hawks is the prior. The chapter meets on Mondays in-person for prayer and study together, and have lead prayer services around the community in different churches and settings.

### Charles Mosebrook Chapter (Philippines)

This chapter did not respond to any of my three emails. Do we have a contact for them to determine activity?

#### Dayspring Chapter (non-geographic)

Sr. Barbara Blackmon-Fortune is the prior, and the chapter continues to meet weekly online for prayer. Sr. Barbara noted that several members are currently companioning inquirers!

#### European Association

Br. Christopher Skillen graciously responded to my request for information, but there was confusion around if the European members are officially an association or not. They are listed online in the "Chapter Life" section as such, but it was news to Br. Christopher. If we can confirm their official status, I can get back with him to take care of any paperwork that may need done, as they are very nearly chapter size!

They meet for evening prayer weekly online, but that may be in flux as they try to settle on times that work for most of their participants. They have three guests who are either preparing to take vows or exploring life in the Order.

#### Hoyt Hickman Chapter (Pennsylvania area)

Sr. Kimberly Greway is the prior. They meet over Zoom every other Tuesday.

#### Illinois Great Rivers Chapter

Br. Mick Laflin is the prior, and the group meets every first Wednesday, in person with a digital option.

#### Koinonia Chapter (Alabama area)

Br. Jim DuFriend is the acting prior, but I don't believe they've formally elected anyone to replace br. Aiden after he had to step down. They meet on Monday mornings over zoom.

#### Mid-Atlantic Chapter

Br. Brett Isernhagen is the prior, and the chapter continues to meet on Monday mornings over Zoom. Chapter meetings consist of the mid-morning office and a time of study and discussion. We've been chanting through the Psalter and reflecting using the Lectio Divina method, as well as discussing Doxology articles as each issue is published.

#### New Jersey Chapter

Sr. Debbie Neil is the prior, and the chapter meets in-person monthly for prayer and book study.

#### Perkins SoT Chapter

The Perkins Chapter is currently inactive

### Philippines

Br. Ador Tolentino is the prior. The chapter consists of 9 sub-chapters across the country and 85 members between them. Last year they were officially recognized by their Annual Conference and permitted to teach at the district and conference level. Their last convocation was held February 4-6, 2022 on "The History of Liturgical Worship"<sup>11</sup>.

### South Texas Chapter (proposed)

Sr. Dianne McCleary would be the prior, if approved. The group meets weekly on Thursdays over Zoom.

### Singapore Chapter

Br. Anthony Goh is the prior, and reports that the retreat center his wife and he are building is half way completed! The Philippines chapter has expressed interested in using the center upon its completion, and so I look forward to the inter-chapter cooperation! They meet in-person, but have not been able to meet since October 2024.

### St. Francis Chapter (Ohio Area)

Sr. Alice-Kay Lovelace is the prior. The chapter is currently meeting over Zoom but is working towards resuming in-person gatherings. The expansion of their geographic area is making coordinating difficult, even as it allows for more participation.

### Trinity Chapter (North Texas area)

Sr. Jennifer Kilpatrick is the acting prior until elections can be held. The chapter meets in person, and has met once since the October 2024 retreat.

### Upper New York Chapter

This chapter did not respond to my requests for a report.

### Winged Ox Association

This association did not respond to my request for a report, and I seem to remember voting to discontinue the association at a previous meeting but I couldn't find a record of that decision.



## Talking Points:

- As you can see, out of the twelve chapters that specified, 4 meet in-person while 8 meet primarily online. Zoom technology has done a lot for increasing participation in the life of the Order all over the world. That said, the rules for chapters specify that each chapter must meet for worship and sharing the Eucharist, which cannot be shared digitally. I don't want "perfect" to be the enemy of the "good" but I feel like the rules need to be addressed or else a good deal of our chapters would be in violation. Many of our chapters, even ones geographically based are essentially non-geographic at this time.
- Online meetings have also made it possible for people to participate in the lives of chapters they would otherwise not be able to, and even to participate in the lives of several chapters. This is great! But it does raise an issue. Several chapters have participants that join in meetings with other chapters. In some of those chapters, the number of participants that exclusively/primarily participate in *that* chapter may fall below the threshold laid out in the rules. In theory, we could have many chapters made up primarily of the same participants.
- Stemming from the two previous points, I'd like to have a discussion on what exactly chapters and associations exist to do, and what the difference between them may be in this digital age. Some chapters may slip below 5 participants, but still meet regularly to pray an office and support each other. Another chapter may meet weekly with ten participants and pray an office and with each other but not have an additional formational/educational activity.
- We need to revisit seminary chapters. I don't know of one that is currently active, and Perkins may be the only one that has been active within my memory (maybe Boston, too, but I can't be sure). There has been some pushback about shuttering them, as they have been fruitful on-ramps into membership, but with fewer Lukans on faculty at seminaries these days compared to previous generations we need to rethink our approach to these groups.
- We need to revisit the Charles Mosebrook Chapter, the Winged Ox association, and the European Association.

# The Order of Saint Luke

## COVENANTING DOCUMENT

For making application to become a local Chapter or Association in The Order of Saint Luke, Completed applications should be e-mailed to the Provincial General

REGION: Texas \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: November 20, 2024 \_\_\_\_\_

I. TYPE OF APPLICATION [*local Chapter* or *Association*] [No fewer than five members shall generally be required to form a Local Chapter; two members to form an Association.]:

\_\_\_\_\_ **Chapter** \_\_\_\_\_

II. NUMBER OF MEMBERS AT TIME OF APPLICATION: 5 \_\_\_\_\_

III. NAME [Of local Chapter or Association]: South Texas \_\_\_\_\_

IV. LOCATION: Texas \_\_\_\_\_

V. PLAN OF ACTION: [Application shall include a plan of action detailing how the proposed Local Chapter or Association intends to serve the needs of members and meet the goals and objectives of the *Order*. This Plan should include information on anticipated number of annual meetings (Local Chapters must meet at least twice a year; Associations at least annually), and the anticipated content of these meetings (meetings shall include worship and may include business, spiritual formation, or an issue study).]

We are currently meeting every Thursday morning via zoom for morning prayer. There are a couple of people interested in the Order that we are bringing in for prayer. For prospective members and our own reminders, discussions on the Rule of Life and Service will take place monthly. This chapter meets via zoom and is open to anyone in South Texas who is not in a large city with access to a physical group.

VI. STRUCTURE (including names and addresses of principal officers): [Officers of a Local Chapter shall be *Prior* (President) and *Sub-Prior* (Vice President). The offices of *Chancellor* (Secretary/ Treasurer), *Chaplain*, and *Formation Officer* are optional but encouraged. No particular officers are required for Associations. Associations and Local Chapters may establish such other officers as may serve their

Interim Approval Granted By: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

----- Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Final Approval By General Council: \_\_\_\_\_

needs.]

Prior: \_Dianne McCleary\_538 Brookhollow Dr Port Lavaca. Txx 77979\_

Sub-Prior: Debbie Wade c/o Pollard UMC 3030 Copeland Rd. Tyler. Texas 75701

Other Officers: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Interim Approval Granted By: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date:

\_\_\_\_\_

Final Approval By General Council: \_\_\_\_\_



January 27, 2025

To Sister Abbott, Brother Provincial General, and all the Officers of the General Chapter of the Order of Saint Luke, greetings.

Grace and Peace to you in the name of our Lord. Jesus Christ.

On behalf of those Siblings now living and laboring in the Carolinas Province of the Order of Saint Luke, please hear our fervent request:

*Whereas* there are no active chapters within the borders of the Carolinas Province of the Order of Saint Luke:

*And whereas* the Carolinas Province comprises a large geographical area, specifically North and South Carolina;

*And whereas* the members of the General Chapter who live within the boundaries of the Carolinas Province are spread throughout the Province, to its very borders;

*And whereas* a longing for the comfort, support, and solidarity of a monastic community has been made known by various members of the Province to the Provincial Companion;

*And whereas* the number of members expressing such a desire is below the minimum number for the establishment of a Chapter;

*And whereas* those members desiring to organize envision a more formal and traditional structure than a Covenant Community;

*And whereas* those members have developed a Plan of Action to further the work and ministry of the Order, and to embody the Rule of Life and Service:

to wit:

- The organizing members shall structure themselves as an Association
- The Association shall be named The Carolinas Association
- The core group of members propose to meet virtually by Zoom at least monthly
- The purpose of each virtual meeting shall be to pray, to offer mutual support and accountability to the Rule of Life and Service
- The Prior of the Association shall be Br. Stephen Ball, OSL
- Other officers shall be appointed as deemed right and necessary by the Association
- The Prior shall, until other officers be appointed, maintain records of the activities of the Association and report regularly to the Provincial General
- The Association shall endeavor to establish a regular online presence as a point of contact for both present and potential members
- The Prior shall lead members of the Association in reaching out to unaffiliated General Chapter members within the borders of the Carolinas Province with the intent of growing numbers sufficient to the formation of a Chapter
- The Prior shall endeavor to gather members together in person periodically for the purpose of Celebrating Holy Communion, whether in a centralized location or in regional locations convenient to concentrations of the membership

Therefore Br. Prior Stephen B. Ball, OSL and Br. Daniel Phebus petition the General Council of the Order of Saint Luke for a Charter for The Carolinas Association and admit it to the rolls of affiliated organizations with all responsibilities and privileges appropriate to its status.

Respectfully Submitted.

Br. Stephen B. Ball, OSL

Provincial Companion to the Carolinas Province

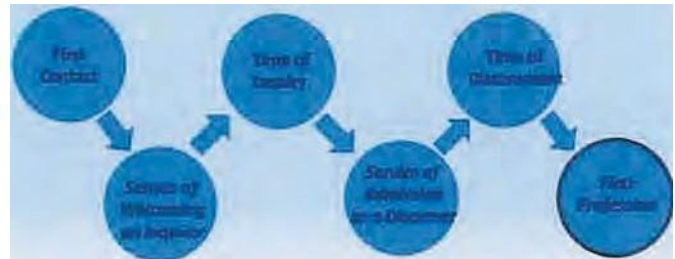
The Order of Saint Luke

# Novitiate Team Report

The Novitiate Team consists of myself, Br. Jim Dufriend, Companion for Seekers, Inquirers, and Discerners; and Sr. Barbara Lee, whose wise counsel is most helpful.

Cohort IV began in January 2025 and completed its five sessions in May 2025. Cohort V will begin in August.

## OSL NOVITIATE An Accompanied Journey



**Background:** Creation and initiation of the Order's novitiate began in 2018, with Sr. Carol Gathagan as Companion for Seekers, Inquirers and Final Discerners, Br. Daniel Benedict as Team Leader, and Sr. Barbara Lee as Consultant/Advisor. Prior to the implementation, email exchanges with Sr. Sarah Flynn prompted me as abbot to take seriously the need for some process to welcome and form those discerning a call to membership and living the Rule of Life and Service. Sr. Sarah is, in my estimation, one of the wise ones in the background who speaks prophetically to us. In this way she is a treasured leader.

The process continues to evolve and an increasing number of resources, both persons and documents to support seekers. Most recently Br. William (David Collette) has created a book that compiles most of the scattered resources to serve as "a practical formational tool for those setting out on the journey of exploration and spiritual growth within the context of the Order of Saint Luke". (*A Lukan Pilgrimage*, p. 7) It is also for companions guiding Seekers, Inquirers, and Final Discerners. The volume is in the editorial process with consideration of how best to use the book in the novitiate process. I commend Br. William, along with the Central Oregon Seekers Chapter, for his vision and diligence and the chapter's pioneering the 'pilgrimage'. Additionally, Br. Abbe Brendan is considering a revision of *Food for Pilgrims*. More on that as the revision takes shape.

We hope to report in more detail at the retreat in the fall.

## Priority

I have begun actively to expand the novitiate team, adding members who learn the process with us, assuming some of the work, and eventually taking the mantel from those of us who have been serving. Here is the process that I shared with Abbot Heather and to which she has given her blessing:

1. ask each of the current team (Br. Jim Dufriend and Sr. Barbara Lee) to draft a position description: a statement of the task, listing of what the task entails, and list of extant resources for doing the work, along with any concerns and questions

2. recruit successors who will come alongside the current team members for 6-12 months to learn and share leadership, with the intention that if there were a good fit, each successor would succeed the current team member

Of course, the team could be larger to better accomplish this ongoing work. We are underway on both fronts. If any in the Order feel a call to service related to the novitiate, please contact me.

Br. Daniel Benedict  
Bright Thursday  
April 24, 2025

## **Companion to Seekers, Inquirers and Discerners**

Since the October, 2024 council meeting:

As a member of the of the Novitiate Team I have received twenty (7) inquiries seeking information about the Order. Invitations were sent to those inquiring to join the Facebook Group, *Order of Snint Luke Seekers, [n.quirers, nnd Oiscerners* along with four documents: Daily Office Tan Card, Inquirer's Q&A, OSL Brochure, and Rule of Life and service. A further invitation was given to request an application for the Time of Inquiry iJ they wished to seek further information.

Of the twenty (7) seeking information, thirteen (3) applications were completed and returned. The completed applications were forwarded to Sr. Barb Lee who assigned companions to the inquirers. Br. Daniel Benedict also received a copy of the applications and invited them to participate in five (5) ZOOM sessions to help them discern whether they sensed a call to become a member of the order.

Br. Jim DuFriend

Companion for Seekers, Inquirers, and Discerners

April, 25, 2025

## Report of the Companion to Life Vowed Members

I have recently become the companion of the Life-Vowed members. I sent an email to the list I have from when I previously served in this post, and received several replies and updates from our brothers and sisters. I have access to an updated list now, and so future contacts should include everyone. My hope in this is to simply touch base and enable a forum we can hear from each other and pray for one another. Every email should include our Rule of Life and Service.

Blessings and peace,  
Br. Frank Richard Coats



Dear siblings,

In his book *Dazzling Bodies: Rethinking Spirituality and Community Formation*, Richard Valantasis asserts that the liturgy is a convergence of three bodies. The gathering of witnesses to the ongoing resurrection of Jesus consists of our personal bodies, the intrinsic imagination and *imago dei* we bear in our very spirits; the corporate bodies, the groups and families that often form the nexus of parish ministry and groups such as our beloved Order; and, the spiritual body, that great and mysterious cloud of witnesses from around the world and from centuries past that surround us as we join our voices to the eternal song.

The liturgy is the primary means of spiritual and communal formation because it is a delightful interplay of these three bodies - a divine dance. Valantasis writes that, in our liturgical participation, we "[focus] on the practice and the performances [that infuse] the physical world with the reality of God." It is nothing less than world-creation.

My life has been shaped and formed by this sweeping narrative enactment of our collective story in the liturgy, and nowhere has that formation been more evident than in the Order's worship life. I took my first profession of vows in 2013 during a period of intense depression and an internal struggle over the direction of my pastoral calling. I was engaged in doctoral work in liturgical studies, but my body craved a community in which those studies could be realized in physical, tangible ways. To say that the Order of Saint Luke was salvific is no understatement; it immersed my weary body and spirit into our shared charism of life.

As I take the reins as Chaplain-General from Sr. Celia, I must admit that it is a daunting task to plan and coordinate the liturgical life of a group as storied and committed to liturgical vibrancy as our Order. I dip my toe in the waters of our work with the spring 2025 general chapter gathering. I trust that I prove capable of the faith our dear Sr. Abbot Heather has in me for this task.

Yours, in holy peace,

Br. Christopher+

## **Online Chaplain General's report**

### **Online Liturgies**

The Order of Saint Luke® as a dispersed community relies heavily on digital means to enhance our prayer and liturgical life. Over the past year, we have continued to harness technology for communal worship: offering services via Zoom, Google Meet, and live-stream, and using social media such as Facebook and YouTube to keep members connected.

The Chaplain General organized a series of monthly online liturgies tied to the church calendar, each led by volunteer chapters or small groups. These monthly online liturgies near minor feast days allow the whole Order to worship and fellowship together. Each liturgy begins with a time of gathering in which we catch up with one another, ensure that everyone is connected to audio and video, disburse the liturgy to participants, and remind the assembly of online worship etiquette and logistics.

The liturgies are available to the assembly in a variety of formats depending on the creators of that particular liturgy. Some choose to create a slide presentation which can be screen-shared; others distribute a file to attendees; still others use WADO at <https://saint-luke.net/wado>

We now use the same Google Meet link for every monthly liturgy so that there is less confusion and more consistency. Information about the upcoming liturgy and a record of past liturgies may be found at <https://saint-luke.net/events/online/>. There you will also find most of the written liturgies and some recordings of the gatherings.

### **Past Liturgies**

June 24, 2024	Nativity of John the Baptist	Dayspring Chapter
August 16, 2024	Brother Roger of Taizé	New Jersey Chapter
November 1, 2024	Evensong for All Saints	Abbot Heather and Br. Louis Serra
December 10, 2024	The "O" Antiphons in Advent	New Jersey Chapter
January 7, 2025	Baptism of Our Lord	Dayspring Chapter
March 20, 2025	Cuthbert of Lindisfarne	Mid-Atlantic Chapter
April 29, 2025	Laura Askew Haygood	Hoyt Hickman Chapter

### **Upcoming Liturgies**

May	All-Saints Cal-Pac Chapter
June	Canon Daniel Benedict
July	
August	
September	
October	

### **Social Media and Communications**

We continued to use our Facebook page, Facebook group, and a newly active WhatsApp community to share prayers, announcements, discussions, and fellowship. You can join the WhatsApp Community by visiting the Get Involved section of our website or going to: <https://chat.whatsapp.com/Bc56RdFqpOeHFo37kPZ7jF>

The WhatsApp community has a General chat room for everyone who has joined the OS� WhatsApp Community, an Announcements chat for upcoming events, and currently thirteen chapters rooms. Sr. Nancy Cartwright has been instrumental in announcing in many of the rooms a 10-minute reminder before many of the chapter meetings.

WhatsApp also enables Chapters to hold phone calls or video calls with those in the particular chapter room. This is helpful for planning meetings, emergencies, or regular chapter meetings.

### **Looking Forward**

1. Balancing service times across North America, Europe, and Asia remains complex. While our European prayer service has a convenient overlap (6:30 PM UK = 1:30 PM US Eastern), no single time works for all. We occasionally record services for later viewing to accommodate distant members.
2. We would like to better engage with our Asian chapters for participation in and leadership of the monthly liturgies.
3. We need assistance with communication to the Facebook, WhatsApp, and email distribution lists about upcoming liturgies.
4. We would like to have liturgies led by chapters and individuals who have not led one yet.

Respectfully,

Sr. Kimberly Greway  
Chaplain General

Report of the Historian  
Submitted April 23, 2025

Br. Mark W. Stamm, OSL, Director of the Our Story Project and Historian for the Order

1. As I have noted in earlier reports, I have been on research leave this academic year (2024-25), my 25<sup>th</sup> and final year as an active member of the Perkins faculty and my 46<sup>th</sup> consecutive year under the appointment of a United Methodist bishop.
2. Part of my work this year has included the boxing and electronic organization of my various Perkins records-particularly 24+ years oversight of Perkins Community Worship--and conveying those records to Bridwell Library/SMU. There are, of course, matters of historical significance here, both directly for the Order and beyond. Most of that work was completed in mid-winter.
3. At the composition of this report (see above, 4.23.25), all books have been removed from my office and brought to my Richardson, TX home, where further sorting and reorganization awaits. Some sorting of paper files remains and should be completed by Council meeting. Who knew that retiring was so much work? Seriously, I'm doing the sorting/reorganization with an eye toward continued work on the OSL historical project.
4. I have served as a guest editor for *Doxology* (35:3, Ordinary Time 2024). My article, "Presidents, Abbots, and Other General Officers of the Order of Saint Luke" appeared in that issue. That study is the first extended, finished piece of scholarship to appear from my efforts as historian for the Order.
5. A second piece of similar length, "Whatever Happened to the Third Period? A Discussion of Events Within the Order of Saint Luke, 1968-1984" is completed and has been submitted to *Doxology*. It may appear soon. As you may imagine, it addresses the period that is (essentially) missing from Br. Hoyt Hickman's "The Story of the Order of Saint Luke." It was a time of fascinating liturgical developments and Order members and friends played key roles in many of them, especially as they unfolded within the UMC. I'm eager for you to see it, although I hope that future articles emerging from the historical project will shorter. (Famous last words?)
6. I hope to maintain some manner of connection with *Doxology*, using it as an outlet for the historical investigations that I and others write. Depending on the discernment of the new editor, I may do an historical issue a year-somewhat along the lines of my guest edited issue this year-or I may try to write and/or sponsor a shorter historical article for most issues.

7. Along those lines, Br. William (David) Collette has written an excellent article on Saint Gemma Galgani, her connection to the Passionist Order, her presence in many places within the St. Paul of the Cross Retreat House in Pittsburgh (note the statue in the hallway to the chapel), and thereby her connection to us. Sometimes it just takes the right perspective, and the right questions, and Br. William is providing both. When he shared his insights with me last fall, I encouraged him to reflect/research further and to write an article, which I promised to sponsor. I hope that more people will do similarly.
8. Other projects that I'd like to pursue in the months ahead:
  - Further research on the Rev. Dr. George Hedley, a director of the Order during the 1950s and professor/chaplain at Mills College, a women's college in the San Francisco area. As I understand it, *circa* 1960, Episcopal Bishop James Pike gave Hedley, a Methodist presbyter, something along the lines of a supplemental ordination, ostensibly enabling him to better minister to his many Episcopal Church students at Mills. There was some controversy relative to this act, some of it airing in *The Christian Century*. Of course, Pike was no stranger to controversy and to press coverage. Given that numerous members of the Order have spent time on a bridge between the Episcopal Church and Methodism, including (admittedly) yours truly, I want to explore this earlier example of a dynamic that, in some ways, goes back to John Wesley and 1784. Among other things, I want to check records at Grace Cathedral, San Francisco and at Mills College
  - A reprinting and short reflection on OSL friend Laurence Stookey's sermon explaining the phrase "Remember your Baptism" as he delivered it at the August 1975 unveiling of "A Service of Baptism, Confirmation, and Renewal" {UMC Supplemental Worship Resources #2, 1976}. David Bart reported on the service in the *Work/Worship Newsletter* and distributed copies of it to the mailing list. I've also heard Br. Don Saliers, who was liturgist at the service, describe the experience of the service and the responses to it. More need to know this story that there was a time-just fifty years ago-when that phrase "Remember your baptism and be thankful" was not commonly known.
9. As I said in my last report, Brother Scot Bontrager and I hope to undertake efforts to archive materials in and through our website (and Google), and I/we will be needing some help, Indeed a considerable amount of it. I would like to form some manner of permanent (or semi-permanent) working group, perhaps along the lines of what the Daily Office Revision Team (DORT) has done. We might call it the OSL Digital Archives and Research Team. Remember, of course, that I am now retired and expect to act somewhat like a retired person, whatever that means.