

Worship at Home – Sunday 18 October 2026

Today's worship thinks about Saint Luke. 18 October is his feast day.

We give thanks for Luke, physician and evangelist, whose praise is in the Gospel and whose pen proclaimed the healing love of Christ.

With joy, we gather to hear the Good News that brings peace, restoration, and light to the world.

Hymn:

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord!

Unnumbered blessings, give my spirit voice;

tender to me the promise of his word;

in God my Saviour shall my heart rejoice.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his Name!

Make known his might, the deeds his arm has done;

his mercy sure, from age to age the same;

his holy Name, the Lord, the Mighty One.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his might!

Powers and dominions lay their glory by.

Proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight,

the hungry fed, the humble lifted high.

Tell out, my soul, the glories of his word!

Firm is his promise, and his mercy sure.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord

to children's children and for evermore!

Prayer:

Collect for the festival of Luke the Evangelist

Almighty God,

you called Luke the physician,

whose praise is in the gospel,

to be an evangelist and physician of the soul:

by the grace of the Spirit

and through the wholesome medicine of the gospel,

give your Church the same love and power to heal;

through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,

who is alive and reigns with you,

in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

one God, now and for ever.

Reading: Isaiah 35: 3 – 7

3 Strengthen the feeble hands, steady the knees that give way;

4 say to those with fearful hearts, "Be strong, do not fear;

your God will come, he will come with vengeance;

with divine retribution he will come to save you."

5 Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped.

6 Then will the lame leap like a deer and the mute tongue shout for joy.

Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert.

7 The burning sand will become a pool, the thirsty ground bubbling springs.

8 In the haunts where jackals once lay, grass and reeds and papyrus will grow.

ABOUT ST LUKE

Luke, whose name means "bringer of light", is best known as the author of the third Gospel and of the Acts of the Apostles.

A Greek-speaking Gentile and an early convert from paganism, Luke is believed to have been a medical doctor from Antioch in Syria: He was referred to as a physician by Sts. Paul, Jerome and Irenaeus,

Luke was not an apostle, and he never met Jesus in person. But he accompanied Paul to Macedonia after Jesus' resurrection, on a many of his missionary journeys, and while he was in prison in Rome. So his descriptions of these events given in the book of Acts, is firsthand. According to St. Jerome, Luke died in Greece aged 84, and the church venerates him as a martyr.

Luke's Gospel emphasises mercy and Christ as the salvation of all people, especially of the lowly and the repentant sinner. Because he was a doctor, it also provides a degree of insight into the health issues which affected Jesus and those who he came into contact with, as well as details of Jesus' childhood.

Tradition believes that he was an artist as well as a writer, and that he painted the Blessed Virgin's portrait as well as some of the most beautiful word-pictures of her.

He is the patron saint of artists; bachelors; bookbinders; brewers; butchers; glassworkers; goldsmiths; lacemakers; notaries; painters; physicians; sculptors; stained glass workers; and surgeons.

Benedictus

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel;

he has come to his people and set them free.

He has raised up for us a mighty saviour,

born of the house of his servant David.

Through his holy prophets he promised of old, that he would save us from our enemies, from the hands of all who hate us.

He promised to show mercy to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant.

This was the oath he swore to our father Abraham, to set us free from the hands of our enemies, Free to worship him without fear, holy and righteous in his sight all the days of our life.

You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High, for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way, to give his people knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins.

In the tender compassion of our God the dawn from on high shall break upon us, to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

Hymn For St Luke

You healed the sick O Lord,
those ill in body, mind,
gave them the health they craved,
freed lives to pain resigned.

As Luke, the doctor, learned from you,
help those who heal, their faith renew.

As Luke with courage went
to heal, restore and teach,
obedient to his Lord
in spirit, action, speech,
give doctors, nurses, clergy too
the healing power that comes from you.

Give wisdom that accepts
whatever life may bring –
the disappointments, hurts,
the cost of suffering;
teach us to trust in all we do
that to our calling we stay true.

Hold those within your care
with minds depressed, confused,
the lost, abandoned, old
that none may be refused
relief from loneliness and pain.
Uphold them Lord, their hope sustain.

We follow in Luke's steps,
physician, writer, saint,
to bring Christ's health to all
the sick, the frail, the faint;
throughout the world the broken heal;
to humankind your love reveal.

Luke, known as 'the Beloved Physician' (Colossians 4.14) is believed to be also the author of both the Gospel of Luke and also Acts of the Apostles. Traditionally many have surmised that Luke could have been a medical doctor shown by the great concern the Gospel has for the sick and its use of medical language. It is believed Luke was a Gentile by birth (Colossians 4.11-14) a Christian by conversion and a Companion of Paul, accompanying him on his missionary journeys.

But we really learn most about the character of Luke by the books he wrote. He is as one ancient writer put it 'the scribe of the gentleness of Christ'.

Luke shows us how Jesus the Son of Man came to seek and save the lost. At every step of his life, Jesus in Luke's Gospel addresses the lost, the poor and lowly: Jesus' birth, his witnesses, his miracles; his teaching; his parables; his relationships all focus on those in need. It is only Luke's Gospel that tells us the story of the Lost Sons and the Good Samaritan. It is Luke's Gospel that recognises the foundational role of woman as models of discipleship: Luke gives a very special place in his Gospel to women. The story of Christ's birth is told from Mary's point of view. He shows how she becomes the model for all believers in her readiness to obey the will of God. It is in Luke that we read of Elizabeth, of Anna, of the widow at Nain, of the woman who anointed Jesus' feet in the house of Simon the Pharisee and he gives us portraits of Martha, Mary and Mary Magdalene.

Compassion for the sinner and the lost is at the heart of this Gospel. It is the Jesus of Luke's Gospel who weeps over the doomed city, that was soon to crucify him, and who on the cross prays, 'Father, forgive them, they do not know what they are doing', and promises the repentant thief a place in paradise. It is this Gospel which in the words of Mary's Magnificat pulls down the mighty from their thrones and lifts up the lowly. It is in Luke's Acts of the Apostles that those fearful disciples locked in an upper room are empowered by the Holy Spirit at Pentecost to become the witnesses of the crucified but risen Jesus to the ends of the earth.

he was obviously an incredibly important figure both in the development of the New Testament and in the life of the early church and so it is right that today we should think a little more about him and some of his priorities that did shine through his writing.

He is said to be a native of Antioch and must have acquired some considerable skill in contemporary medicine and was referred to as a Physician.

We know nothing about his family background but he was probably a gentile convert possibly first to Judaism and then as a follower of Jesus.

He became attached to St Paul as his diarist and recorder but also his personal doctor.

Luke joined Paul on his second missionary journey, their story beginning about 50AD – and took them to Philippi, Rome, Caesarea and ultimately to Jerusalem.

In 2 Timothy 4 verse 11 we read Paul's rather lonely words: "I have no-one with me but Luke"- and we can assume that Luke was not only his medical advisor but a friend who gave him much needed support and advice.

Luke's gospel was written as a result of his enquiries of those who were eyewitnesses to the events and traditionally, it is thought that it contains the reminiscences of Mary, Jesus' mother.

Bible scholars tell us there is clear Jewish style and flavour about the language of the early episodes – the annunciation, visitation, birth, visit of the Magi, the presentation and Passover pilgrimage to Jerusalem, which may all reflect the influence of Mary.

And in case you think that is mere fanciful piety don't forget that Mary was present at the start of the book of Acts and if that book is a first hand account by Luke then he would have been present too and speaking to the mother of Jesus could well have been a primary source for him.

Imagine, for a moment, this cultured, educated physician and gentile convert speaking to an older Mary about the events of the annunciation and the nativity while he scribbles away with his writing implements, and then perhaps he goes to speak to Simon Peter about how he was first called to be a follower of Jesus, and so on until his orderly account is written.

Now each of the four gospels has their own particular flavour or style and it is clear that Luke emphasised some aspects of the message of Jesus more than the other Evangelists. It seems that Luke has a special concern for the poor.

It opens with Mary's song which talks about filling the hungry with good things, the birth of Jesus takes place in the humblest of circumstances, Joseph and Mary are shown as poor when they present him in the temple, there is the parable of Lazarus and the rich man. There is the suggestion that if we give a party, we should always include some poor people among the guests.

As a gentile convert it is also clear that Luke had a special heart for those who found themselves outside the bounds of mainstream Judaism and it is within Luke that we find many stories of the calling and redemption of Zacchaeus the tax collector, the Roman centurion who had faith, the story of the prodigal son which has so much to say about God's gracious patience for those who have left the fold.

And, as a physician, Luke also has many, many stories of healing – although not of physical healing done by fellow professionals but of a much deeper healing that can only be brought about by God through faith in Jesus.

There is a strong tradition that Luke lived into old age, dying aged 84 years and was buried at Thebes from whence his relics were transferred to Constantinople in the year 357.

So, today we celebrate the Feast of St Luke – physician and evangelist. These roles are inseparable – for an evangelist tells the good news of salvation and salvation means healing. The root of the word salvation is the Latin word *salvere* – to be well, to be in good health, to be whole. Salvation is not just of spirit in the world to come, but salvation is of body and mind as well.

But although we celebrate St Luke, we should also be sensitive to the fact that he was self-effacing, that the stories he wrote down were not about him and his ministry. As an Evangelist he was about the Gospel and the Gospel is all about the good news of Jesus Christ. That because of who Jesus was, God born on Earth, and because of what he did for us in his life, in his death on the cross and in his resurrection, we can be made whole once again. I suspect that if he were here now, St Luke would not want today to be all about him, but he would point beyond himself to the ultimate healer and physician Jesus Christ.

Prayers of Intercession

Holy God, in whom we live and move and have our being, we make our prayer to you, saying,

Lord, hear us, Lord, graciously hear us.

Grant to all who seek you the assurance of your presence, your power and your peace.

Lord, hear us, Lord graciously hear us.

Grant your healing grace to all who are sick that they may be made whole in body, mind and spirit.

Lord, hear us, Lord, graciously hear us.

Grant to all who minister to the suffering wisdom and skill, sympathy and patience.

Lord, hear us, Lord, graciously hear us.

Sustain and support the anxious and fearful and lift up all who are brought low.

Lord, hear us , Lord graciously hear us.

Hear us, Lord of life. Heal us, and make us whole.

Almighty God,
you called Luke the physician,
whose praise is in the gospel,
to be an evangelist and physician of the soul:
by the grace of the Spirit
and through the wholesome medicine of the gospel,
give your Church the same love and power to heal;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Hymn:

We have a gospel to proclaim,
good news for all throughout the earth;
the gospel of a Saviour's name:
we sing his glory, tell his worth.

Tell of his birth at Bethlehem,
not in a royal house or hall
but in a stable dark and dim:
the Word made flesh, a light for all.

Tell of his death at Calvary,
hated by those he came to save;
in lonely suffering on the cross
for all he loved, his life he gave.

Tell of that glorious Easter morn:
empty the tomb, for he was free;
he broke the power of death and hell
that we might share his victory.

Tell of his reign at God's right hand
by all creation glorified;
he sends his Spirit on his church
to live for him, the Lamb who died.

Now we rejoice to name him King:
Jesus is Lord of all the earth;
this gospel-message we proclaim:
we sing his glory, tell his worth.

Benediction:

God give you grace to follow his saints
in faith and hope and love;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.
Amen.