

## *From The Vicar....*

Dear Friends,

In the Christian Calendar, on 18<sup>th</sup> October we are called to give thanks for St Luke the Evangelist. Luke wrote the gospel in the New Testament that bears his name, perhaps forty years or so after the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. He was not one of the original twelve disciples, nor was he Jewish. He never knew Jesus in the flesh. Rather, he was an educated Greek speaker, who was a travelling companion of St Paul the Apostle, the first great Christian missionary and founder of many churches around the eastern Mediterranean.

Luke also wrote the book of the Acts of the Apostles, which is essentially like Luke Part II. Whereas his Gospel was an account of the life, ministry, teaching, death and resurrection of Jesus, Acts is an account of the doings of the first Christian community in Jerusalem, and of some of the early missionary efforts. Luke's writings show an intense interest in the healing miracles of Jesus, and early healing miracles at the hands of the apostles. For this reason many scholars believe that he may have been a physician of some kind. He also shows a great interest in the Nativity of Jesus, - many of our Christian nativity plays depend heavily on his account of the birth of Jesus, especially the parts about the Virgin Mary. Scholars speculate that Luke may have known her (perhaps in a church at Ephesus?) later in her life. It is from Luke's pen that we have Mary's song (Magnificat) and also other canticles like Simeon's song (Nunc Dimittis) that some will recognise from the service of Evensong.

Luke was an intellectual. The whole drift of his writing is a defence of Christian belief of the Gospel to the eastern, Greek-speaking part of the Roman Empire. Both the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles are written in the form of a letter to someone called Theophilus - we shall never know who *he* was!

This is the Church's prayer on St Luke's Day:

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 our Lord. **Amen.**

Congratulations to Len and Lilian Hunter, who celebrated their Diamond Wedding in September. And look out for magicians in Church at the Family Service on 4<sup>th</sup> October - rumour has it that the Vicar will be sawn in half!

My love and prayers,

*Stephen*