



ST. LUKE IN THE FIELDS
487 HUDSON ST. NYC 10014

Candidate Statements for Warden & Vestry Elections 2025

About Warden & Vestry Elections

For the warden elections for 2025,
parishioners will be asked to elect one candidate for a 2 year term.

For the vestry elections,
parishioners will be asked to elect 3 candidates
to fulfill 3 year terms.

Candidates' statements and videos will also be posted
on St. Luke's website.

There will be a special opportunity to meet and greet candidates at
coffee hours on Sundays January 5 and 12, 2025.
The Annual Parish Meeting and announcement of election results
will be on Sunday, February 2, 2025.

Elections this year will once again be held online.
Election packets will be sent to parishioners in good standing via
email and snail mail.

Please look for your ballot on or around January 7.
If you have any questions about the elections, please contact the
Parish Office (asyedullah@stlukeinthefields.org | 212.924.0562).



Theresa Goldsborough (*current incumbent*)

Hi, my name is Theresa Goldsborough. I have been a parishioner at St. Luke's for over 34 years. I am currently a warden, and sit on the Rector Advisory Committee, and I am an usher.

I would describe myself as both an idealist and a pragmatist.

I understand that these may seem to some as opposing positions yet as a Gemini it makes perfect sense to me. Geminis are blessed with the capacity to see things from at least two sides.

I am always striving for the ideal yet understand that the plane which we inhabit, as Spiritual beings having a human experience, requires compromise.

As a Received observant Christian in the Episcopal tradition my faith in God as expressed in Christ is what I strive to live by in all aspects of my life. I choose these words carefully and deliberately.

While The Church of St. Luke in the Fields is my Spiritual Home it also exists in a world that demands pragmatism. We believe in God and still have to pay our priests, diocesan assessment, our water and heating bills to remain open.

We have been blessed to have come to a place where we can focus on both our Spiritual mission and our solvency as a church in the world and not of the world.

I have spoken in my addresses to this congregation of a time where St. Luke's like many churches in our tradition and others have tittered on the edge of going under. Many have succumbed and its doors closed.

It is the work of the vestry and its committees particularly Strategic Planning and Finance committees at St. Luke's that we can stand here today and plan for a brighter future.

We cannot support the mission we have embraced in response to needs identified both internally and in the community that we inhabit if we stand still.

If elected to a third and final term of service as warden I pledge my time, talents and treasure to ensuring that we as a church remain viable and expansive in our spiritual and missional journey forward.

This Church is very special to me. Vestry service or being a Warden were not on my list of things I imagined for myself. What drives me is ensuring that the light that St. Luke's has shone in my life continues to burn strong. I am committed to St. Luke's flourishing and serving generations to come. We are on the cusp of building a Community Center where this light can shine more brightly. This is what draws me to stand for a third term as Warden at this time.

Anyone who knows me knows that there are two places on earth where I experience a sense of peace that cannot be broken – Provincetown, Massachusetts (Herring Cove Beach, all day and especially at sunset watching the sun sink into the ocean) and The Church of St. Luke in the Fields, NYC.

Finally, if not for my wife Monica I would have spent all 34 years quietly worshiping and leaving each Sunday. This was the case from 1989 until we became a couple in 1997. Now she complains about being a vestry widow.



Celina Khury-Morejon (*vestry incumbent*)

I've been calling St. Luke's home for over 12 years, and have served as an acolyte and usher. In that time my wife and I married, started a family and we are blessed to have two wonderful children Eva, 10, and Mateo, 7. My transformation here continues as I was confirmed just last year and am watching my two children learn and grow within a supportive and welcoming community. I've felt the support of St Luke's clergy and lay membership throughout my spiritual journey here and have always wanted to find different ways I can help.

I've held various leadership positions in the banking tech industry for nearly 25 years. In those roles I've had to make tough decisions, manage large scale investments, and lead people of diverse backgrounds and talent. If elected, I would bring my professional experience and perspective as a long time parishioner to support the church to continue serving our community for many years to come.

I love spending time with my family in and around Manhattan, rediscovering its rich history and architecture, be it finding hidden caves within Central Park or retracing where our founding fathers gathered around Wall St.



Melissa Cocco-Fernandez

My husband Bruno and I have been members of the St. Luke's community for the past 3 years. I have served as an usher, intercessor and reader. I am lending my support to the music and arts guild by organizing the concert season ushers. I have been involved in community outreach through participation in the Community Closet. While I have been a member of Episcopal Church communities for the past 25 years, most recently as a parishioner at St. Mark's, Berkeley, CA, I felt called to formalize my commitment to this faith community through the confirmation process at St. Luke's in 2023. Bruno and I have been welcomed by this community, and I am inspired to continue to find ways that I can translate faith and words into action with positive impact. I am particularly interested in contributing to the vision and implementation of St. Luke's strategic plan and building project.

After earning degrees in music performance and literature/creative writing, I moved onto a path in enrollment management within higher education. This path brought me to San Francisco, to China, and eventually to New York City in 2021, as VP for Enrollment Management at Manhattan School of Music. My work is mission-driven, creative, strategic, and collaborative; I balance big-picture visionary planning against the challenges of limited resources. This professional skill set, strengthened by a deep respect for and familiarity with the Episcopal/Anglican tradition, will guide me if given the honor to serve you on Vestry.

I was born in Italy and grew up on an island in the Salish Sea, WA. The island community was defined by intergenerational social connections and support networks. I found this same rare intergenerational community dynamic in my church community in Berkeley, and I find it again at St. Luke's. We care for each other, and we meet each other respectfully with the unique perspective of where we stand on life's path. If serving in this role, I would nurture that community in-reach as well as community outreach.

My life pleasures include walking in Central Park with our shaggy Schnauzer-Poodle mix, Luca, who brings us great joy through his love, trust, and enthusiasm for my cooking. I am an avid home cook, inspired by my resourceful Neapolitan nonna, by Julia Child, by my world travels, by reading cookbooks, and by what is local and seasonal at the farmers markets. I am dedicated to ministries that are food-based; when food is shared, there is fellowship and a better community.



Michael Hudson

Hello, friends! I am Michael Hudson. Many of you may recognize me from the altar, where I have had the blessing to serve as a master acolyte for many years. I have been part of St. Luke's for 35 joyful years, and along the way, I have been an usher, former treasurer and served on the Anti-Racism Change Team, and now I have stepped into the role of co-leading our Capital Campaign committee.

I am excited to be running for my second 3-year term on the Vestry. Serving in this way has brought me so much joy, especially as I witness how each ministry at St. Luke's works together like a tapestry of faith. This community truly feels like home, and taking on these responsibilities gives me peace and purpose, allowing me to give back to the parish that feels like family.

Thank you for the chance to serve our cherished home. It is an honor and a blessing for me.



Abby McConnell

Activities at St. Luke's: Altar Guild, 20s/30s group, Benedictine Group

The gifts that I am hoping to bring to the vestry are community building and curiosity. Through the 20s/30s group, I've helped build programming that meets people where they are and creates a welcoming environment. I hope my curiosity about life, the church, and God will aid the vestry in exploring all available solutions to challenges. In the two years that I have been blessed to have St. Luke's as my spiritual home, the impact this community has had on me has been immeasurable and I want to see it grow for other people.

I especially want to grow and expand the 20s/30s group at St. Luke's. This parish has been a critical part of my life and the lives of so many other parishioners. I want to make sure that in 20, 30, 40 years, St. Luke's still exists as a spiritual home and refuge as it has been to me. I want to explore collaboration with other young groups in the diocese and encouraging collaboration between parishes. I also want to explore programming specific to the needs and concerns of the 20s/30s group.

I also want to explore how to make the outreach programs even better. I think that the outreach at St. Luke's is a beautiful way of living out the Gospel and caring for our city and community. With the mission building taking shape and the need in the city growing, this is a special time to help shape the direction of outreach. I hope to bring my social work background to the vestry to serve God's creation.

I'm an avid reader and don't care if it is a paper, e-book, or audiobook. Right now I am reading *The Saint of Bright Doors* and I'm always looking for recommendations. I come from a social work background and bring this perspective to the work I do. Particularly, I try to look at how decisions will affect larger structures, the community, and individual experiences. I am a member of the Gen Z cohort of the "Bible for Normal People" podcast which provides a space for Gen Z to explore everything related to faith and the Bible.



Grady Tarplee

Hi, my name is Grady Tarplee. I've been a parishioner at St. Luke's for 2.5 years and serve as an acolyte, on the vestry, and support many other ministries.

When I was a kid, my younger brother and I would allegedly take off rather quickly to Sunday School. My mom told my dad to "take a good look," because they were unlikely to see that again.

Many years later, I hope to have proved them wrong, and St. Luke's is in part to thank for that. Beyond its opportunities for parish members, St. Luke's fosters a genuine community to "take off to" on Sunday morning and throughout the week. The individuals I have met here highlight just how present Christ is when two or more are gathered in His name. This

is especially true with the support I received from St. Luke's during my recent stint overseas, where I never felt isolated from the community.

In many ways, serving as a Vestry member for almost the last two years has meant carrying forward the current vision of St. Luke's as a community in Christ. So much already works well here, and part of the role of Vestry member is to continue ensuring that success. St. Luke's also includes wider engagement with the surrounding community and families. During my time on the Vestry at my previous parish in California, we instituted a new program connecting our parish to the university across the street and the wider campus community. Learning about that community's needs and the unexpected ways to reach it spoke to that Vestry's growth by expanding its vision in a different direction. My experience there showed just how essential the Vestry is for identifying and addressing the needs of its parish and non-parish community members – chiefly, by making every person's voice, both on and off the Vestry, worthy of consideration and being heard. This is especially true as St. Luke's enters a new and hopeful phase of mission growth, one where we can provide a lasting area of community interaction.

Furthermore, St. Luke's has an incredible number of gifts at its disposal, found in each of its members, and already does a fantastic job in discerning those gifts. My hope for the Vestry is that it continues in its work identifying, developing, and ensuring the personal and communal success of those gifts to the greater glory of God.

I am thankful to be considered as a Vestry candidate for 2025, and I pray for the continued success of St. Luke's, its Vestry, and all its members for 2025 and beyond.

Some additional things to know about me: I love foreign languages, hiking, urban walking/exploring, reading, and history (especially Christian history, shocking). I am always looking for restaurant/food recommendations as well.



Naveen Thacker

Years at St. Luke's: 20+

Activities at St. Luke's: Served as Usher, Head Usher, volunteer at St. Vincent's Hospital, Acolyte, Vestry (Clerk) Anti Racism Change Team (ARCT). Also volunteer for community closet once a month with ARCT.

Statement:

I work as an electrical engineer at STV Inc., a private architectural, engineering and construction services company in NYC. I have been employed with STV for over 26 years and have worked on several interesting and challenging projects for various clients.

As an electrical engineer I ascertain the scope of design, coordinate with architects, other engineering disciplines like mechanical, plumbing, fire protection etc. to complete the project design successfully and meet deadlines. I also coordinate with contractors during construction, attend meetings to resolve discrepancies and provide solutions. I work on multiple projects with different clients requiring me to prioritize different deadlines. I am very grateful to the USA for giving me this opportunity.

As St. Luke's is in the process of an exciting and new development for building our new mission building, I hope to apply my skills as an electrical engineer for the planning and building of the new mission building. I hope to offer solutions to problems, working collaboratively with others, listening, and respecting different viewpoints to help St. Luke's meet the challenges ahead.

What draws you to lay leadership at St. Luke's?

My faith draws me to lay leadership. I hope to serve humbly in strengthening relationships among parish members as we all worship under Christ.

I have served three years on the Vestry as Clerk of the Vestry. Prior to that I served as the recording secretary for one year. I would welcome another term on the Vestry to continue the successful continuation of this work and offer my talents and vision shown in the past.

I have two sisters and a brother who live in New York and New Jersey. I enjoy travelling and experiencing different cultures.

The Church of St. Luke in the Fields

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Doug Houston, *Recording Secretary*

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