

“And this is the boldness we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.”

John 5:14

“It’s VIRTUALLY like talking to God!”

From Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary:

vir·tu·al·ly | \ vər-çə-lē; \

Definition of virtually

1: almost entirely : NEARLY

2: for all practical purposes



Addison praying while watching virtual church from home.

If you think about it, all prayer is virtual—it brings us, a la the dictionary, a definition “for all practical purposes” into God’s presence. We are not quite to heaven, but we get close. Our connection to God is not dependent on being in the sanctuary or in-person in the fellowship of the congregation, though these things are comforting and strengthening.

Due to the pandemic, we have learned we can have church virtually anywhere: in our living room, in the garden, on Zoom. And we have had to consider, to think anew, about our connection, not just to the internet, but to our God. Because the Spirit dwells within and amidst us, we can encounter God virtually anywhere, computer or no computer.

Just look at this picture of the first baby in our recent church baby boom. First, we realize how much time has passed and how big she’s gotten. She’s old enough now to pray with me virtually, in worship and during the children’s chapel lessons. Says her mom: “We attend virtual church on Sundays and every time Addison hears Pastor Lisa K. Sykes, she folds her hands and closes her eyes tight and prays and says ‘amen.’ It’s so sweet and pure and I can’t wait until she can go back to church and wear her dresses.”

And we can’t wait either! But thanks to our virtual worship and fellowship, and our virtual and inseverable connection to God, even in a pandemic we continue to grow and grow in faith! Our progress in faith is not dependent on the internet, and yet we’ve found it can be broadened by it. Let us continue to practice our faith, disciple the children with the help of their families, and reach out to each other and our community, in ministry, love and mission.

Though many consider 2020 a cross we have borne, let us remember that virtually any crisis can be a time for strengthening our ties and deepening our faith in the God whose connection never fails.

Thanks be to God!

Blessings,
Pastor Lisa

SOUP FOR BELMONT FOOD PANTRY

When you come to drive-thru Communion on February 7, our mission stop will be for cans of soup.

Soup is a warm and substantial meal in cold weather. Please bring a can or more than one to share with those in need through the Belmont Food Pantry.

Mallet—Percussion Choir Performs

Thanks to all the members of the Mallet—Percussion Choir:

Carson Barefoot	Elijah Barefoot
Jean Catherine Cassada	Mabel Rose Cassada
Cameron Jones	Sadie Jones
Jack Moyer	Richard Moyer
Mary Wise	

They performed “Away in a Manger” and “Joy to the World” on Sunday, December 13th, under the direction of Bob Ford! Their performance was wonderful praise offered to the King of Kings by our youngest disciples.

Virtually, yet Concretely in Mission

Drive-through Communion began in August. Because it went well, the Mission Committee quickly saw the possibility of using this monthly point of contact as a connection to Mission. Since that time, just consider the results:

27 Boxes of Cereal
47 Jars of Peanut Butter
19 Turkeys and 280 dollars
665 dollars for the Christmas Mother
610 dollars to CCHASM
(Food items went to the Belmont Food Pantry.)

Virtually, look what you made possible, just in the last quarter of this year! We will continue to reach out in love and care, in these tangible ways to our local community, and through apportionments, in ministry to all the world! THANK YOU!



A BIG thank you to all our Sunday morning volunteer greeters. We would be unable to worship in person without the efforts of our greeters. They include Jane Barto, Colleen & Paul Cassada, Katie Haley, Becky & Ray Jenkins, Heather & Ronnie Jones, Barbara & Leann Nunnally; Leanne Rohlk, Andrew Russell, Brenda Staehle, Bobbie & Rhea Strum and Ruth Wickstrom. Greeters are responsible for taking temperatures; recording attendance; asking the four health questions; dismissing the congregation by row to maintain social distancing; wiping down the pews after the service; and helping with drive-thru communion. So you can see it's an important, but not difficult job. If you can help any Sunday, please call Marcia Grubbs at 804-873-9653 or the church office. Thanks, Marcia Grubbs

St. Luke's Face Book Page

Make sure you like the St. Luke's Facebook page to keep up with everything going on at church. Also, please like and share the posts and events. The more we share and like, the more others will see what a wonderful place St. Luke's is -- and all the things that we are doing!

Here's a link to our page:

<https://m.facebook.com/St-Lukes-United-Methodist-Church-486188658201339/>

Joys!

Jeremy and Amanda Reed welcomed Charlotte Campbell Reed on December 24th at 12:19 am. Campbell weighed 8 lb., 15 oz. All are well after a very difficult birth. Thanks be to God and His hand with the medical staff at Henrico Doctors Hospital.

Andi and Eric Sorenson, Steve and Nancy Taylor's daughter and son-in-law, had a baby boy named Elliott, 8 lbs. 6 oz., and 21 inches long, at 3:15 am on December 27th! (Andi sings in the choir . . . or did till baby got too close to its due date.) This means Nancy and Steve have become grandparents after much anticipation! Congratulations to the new parents and grandparents! The baby boom continues! We celebrate this good news with thanksgiving!!

Belated Christmas Thanks!

As a congregation, we send our love and thanks to John and Betsy Russell and Ray Kyle for a great gift of service.

Together with their family, the Russell's always attend St. Luke's for Christmas Eve. This year, in addition to attending, John and Betsy shared in reading scripture for Lessons and Carols. The simple service, livestreamed to all but a few in the sanctuary, was made complete by Ray Kyle's marvelous power point slides which accompanied each hymn. There was no shortage of appreciation for this simple but very lovely celebration of our Lord's birth.

Thanks to John and Betsy for their readings and presence and Ray for his talent with graphics that made Christmas Eve joy-filled and sacred.

Thank You!

Thank you to everyone who sent me cards and for all the phone calls on the death of my nephew, Jimmy Sanford. They each meant a lot to me. Thank You, Margaret Anderson

BE INFORMED

Keep up with all that's going on within the Virginia United Methodist Conference by visiting —

<http://www.vaumc.org>

“Sorrow and Love flow mingled down”

We extend our love, prayers and sympathy to Andrew & Sevda Russell and family. Sevda's grandmother, Miyase Topcu, claimed the promise of the resurrection on November 14th at the age of 84, in Turkey, from complications related to COVID-19.

We extend our love, prayers and sympathy to Carlton Hudson. His uncle, Walter Satterwhite, claimed the promise of the resurrection in December of 2020. Walter's wife, Jeanette has been recovering from major surgery.

We extend our love, prayers and sympathy to Margaret Anderson and her family. Margaret's nephew, Jimmy Sanford, claimed the promise of the resurrection on December 25th, 2020 from complications related to cancer.

We extend our love, prayers and sympathy to Peggy Uglow. Peggy's niece, Bonnie Cassetty, claimed the promise of the resurrection on Monday, January 11, 2021.

We extend our love, prayers and sympathy to Doris Teeter. Her nephew, Lloyd Smith, Jr., recently claimed the promise of the resurrection due to COVID-19.

Upheld in our Prayers

Prayers for peace, unity and justice across the nation

Sharon Edwards

Wayne Johnson

Barbara Armstrong

Jim Brantley

Doris Teeter

Tom Brown

David Higgins

Taylorann Bradon

Deannie Reynolds

Opal Holshouser

Gayle McGonigle

Andrew Russell & Family

Sennie Case

Florence Smith

Kevin Updike

Matt Stowers

Wilmer & Phyllis Downs

Joyce Arrington

Bettie Jones

Chuck Fayle

Bob & Jan Hall

Dean & Ibbie Smith

Bob Gary

Our Military

Robbie Bowen

Aaron Frankey

Holden Russell

February Birthdays

February 1	Becky Jenkins C.W. Rice Jason Williams
February 2	Randi Hayes
February 5	Kevin Russell Stephanie Burnett
February 6	Gayle McGonigle Ashley Driskill Nikki Driskill
February 8	Sean Wythe
February 10	Katie Haley Katherine Stefi Harris
February 12	Carolyn Beeckler
February 15	Ruth Russell Tom Proffitt
February 17	Robert Hall Rebecca Heath Tee Leigh
February 19	Andrea Brown Betty Hubble Justin Burnett
February 20	Maria Proffitt Wayne Johnson
February 22	Scottie Kyle
February 24	Mary Nell Kloss
February 25	Thelma Edwards Rachel Jenkins Cook Sofia Lorenzo Bruce Anderson Stewart Ball
February 26	George Moore
February 27	David Urbanski
February 28	Pam Coleman

50th Wedding Anniversary Congratulations!

and best wishes to Ray and Scottie Kyle who will celebrate their 50th on January 31, 2021!

Dates to Remember:

FEBRUARY 14 - VALENTINE'S DAY

FEBRUARY 15 - PRESIDENTS' DAY

FEBRUARY 17 - ASH WEDNESDAY

Hidden Talents

HUGE Thanks to those in training to solo in the AV Booth: Ray Jenkins, Ray Kyle, Ronnie Jones, Bobbie Strum, and Paul Cassada!

Thanks to Alex who installed our system and will be part of the rotation, and to BRIAN KAESER who has pulled this team together and oversees this ongoing worship ministry!! KUDOS!! Also, an Emmy to Ray Kyle for his wonderful contribution of creating and providing our worship power point slides! (Did you know all these talents were just waiting in our pews to meet and exceed the challenge of the pandemic with livestreamed worship and praise??)

Giving Envelopes

If you have not picked up your Giving Envelopes and want to do so please contact the office. If we don't hear from you, they will be on a table on Communion Sunday (February 7th and March 7th) where you leave your offering. If you need them before those dates, please contact the church office.

Those choosing to place offerings in the church box must advise the church office to make sure they are aware.

If you have not filled out an estimate of giving card and still want to do so, you can fill it out and send to the office or call the office and we will fill it out for you.

Filling out the card and using your envelopes helps the counting and reporting that have to be done each week. Should you choose to give through your bank, check with the financial institution as to what the requirements are.

Sincerely,
Margaret Anderson
St. Luke's United Methodist Church Financial Secretary
Phone: (804) 276-7000
Email: stlukesfinsec@stlukesrva.org

Handy Tips To Enhance Attendee Experiences

Sincere thanks to Leann Nunnally for sharing the following ZOOM information with us.

With the option to attend worship services by ZOOM, we'd like to offer some handy tips to enhance attendee experiences:

Zoom Tips for Meeting Attendees

- Mute your microphone. To help keep background noise to a minimum, make sure you mute your microphone when you are not speaking.
- If your microphone is not muted, any noises picked up by your microphone will shift the speaker focus to your screen and any attendees viewing shared materials (like hymns, prayers, devotionals) will no longer be able to see them.
- Be mindful of background noise. When your microphone is not muted, avoid activities that could create additional noise, such as shuffling papers.
- Position your camera properly. If you choose to use a web camera, be sure it is in a stable position and focused at eye level, if possible. Doing so helps create a more direct sense of engagement with other participants.
- Limit distractions. You can make it easier to focus on the service by turning off notifications, closing or minimizing running apps, and muting your smartphone.

50th Wedding Anniversary Celebration

Valentine's Day is fast approaching and we would like to recognize those individuals who will celebrate a 50th anniversary this year, or who have not celebrated their 50th anniversary here at St. Luke's. Please advise the office by February 1, 2021, if you will be celebrating a 50th anniversary this year!

Reply to: Shirley Gary
St Luke's United Methodist Church
Office Administrator
Phone: (804) 276-7000
stlukesoffice@stlukesrva.org

ST. LUKE'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
2021 GIVING CARD



I/We thank God for the opportunity to support the ministries of this congregation through our presence, prayers, gifts, service and witness.

As I have received new life through God's promises in Christ, I commit to share it with others inside and outside this church family.

My/our commitment is \$ _____ per week, month, year(circle one)

I understand that I can adjust this estimate of giving at any time by contacting the financial secretary.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

_____ Please contact me/us regarding how to include St. Luke's in my/our will or estate planning.



Thanks, Rhea, Bobbie and Ruth!

Congregational Care assumed the happy task of keeping up morale among the preschool staff and teachers in this crazy COVID school year! So handmade Christmas ornaments highlighting the preschool's Style Weekly Award were both tokens of appreciation and affirmation.

Kudos to Ruth, Rhea and Bobbie for their creative ideas and efforts!

Giving Card Opportunity

If you have not filled out an estimate of giving card and you want to, please fill it out and send it to the church office as soon as possible.

Thank You, Margaret Anderson, Financial Secretary



Santa, The Grinch, Two Angels and a Shepherd visit St. Luke's.

Huge thanks to all who made the Holy Season a little more magical for the children with this Santa event!



"Hey Kelly and CW, we hear you have an 'in' with Santa. Could you have him stop by St. Luke's after his Falling Creek Farms drive-by? You could? Great! We'll invite the preschool and church kids and see you there December 6th! Oh? Really? The Grinch wants to come too? Ok, just so long as his heart has grown bigger!"



On December 20th, 2020, two angels arrived in worship to proclaim the Lord's birth in dance. Mabel and Jean Kathryn brought us Christmas joy and spirit as they awoke the surprised shepherd boy, played by Josh. Huge thanks to all three for warming our hearts!

A slumbering shepherd did not expect to be woken by angels dancing! Thanks to Josh for being part of our Christmas drama on Dec. 20th.

