

## “As We Near the Finish Line...”

*“For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.”*

1 Cor 13: 12-13

Ever run a marathon? Or bike up a big hill? Or cook a fine meal for 20 guests? Maybe we have. Maybe we haven't, at least not lately, but what we have all surely done is near the finish line! The finish line of a competition more fierce than any marathon, more taxing than any other endeavor we have ever faced. Friends, we have competed with a pandemic, and our endurance is amazing! We have outlasted a dangerous virus, and we give thanks to God!

A year and 3 months ago, we found ourselves in a battle of strength, physical and spiritual, with no chance to do any special training, but still we completed this test of endurance set before us. And now, as things begin to normalize, and we begin to take a few long, deep breaths, the question for all of us is, “What do we keep?”, of this pandemic experience?

Our individual answers to this question will require soul-searching. Our responses are worthy of a long, thoughtful conversation with a wise and trusted friend. Our answers to those questions as a church are also profound, but perhaps easier to name.

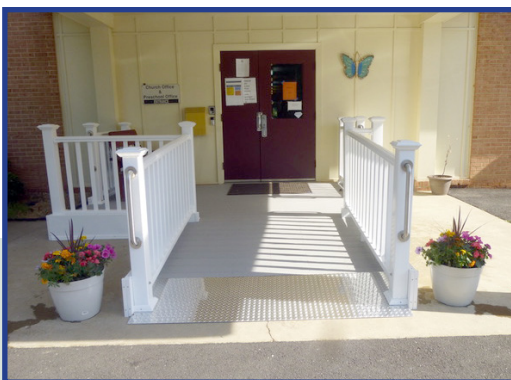
This pandemic has taught us at St. Luke's:

- how precious our genuine fellowship is and the joy it gives to us
- how important it is to be accessible, with the addition of our new “veranda” built by Wilmer and Clinton with help from Bobbie
- how important it is to be accessible, through online worship, to those who are home-bound, ill, travelling, living far away or living close by, but not ready to return to a crowd
- how important prayer and spiritual conversations are; how much we need to slow down.
- how small the globe is, and how very blessed we are!
- how weighty is grief and how much we need one another to help us carry its weight
- how powerful joy is and how much we need one another to share it with us!

All of this reminds me of those wonderful, hopeful verses in I Corinthians. Now we know only in part what will be. In time we will know fully. Now we see a poor reflection. In the working out of the Spirit we will see clearly. Some new things will pass away, like masks. Some new things will stay, like livestreaming services over the internet.

What God is shaping us into, we do not fully know. But trust, whatever may change, Love, our love for each other, and Christ and His Love for us, will abide into the new post-Covid days we are entering. St. Luke's, may you celebrate your faithfulness in nearing the finish line and prayerfully reflect upon all you, and all we, have learned from it!

In Christ, Pastor Lisa



## THANK YOU!

THANK YOU! — Wilmer, Clinton and Bobbie for all your hard work on the amazing new ADA-compliant ramp and access for our carport entrance. It's AWE-SOME and so are you!

**All are invited to the ramp dedication on June 13th.**



Cole Austin Rice

## St. Luke's Celebrates Its First Baptisms Since the Pandemic Began!

It is with great joy that we lift up the RICE and deKRAFFT families!



Lia Faith deKrafft

Cole Austin Rice and Lia Faith deKrafft received the sacrament of Holy Baptism in May. Cole was baptized on Sunday, May 9th (Mother's Day), and Lia Faith deKrafft was baptized on May 23rd (Pentecost). Both were blessed with an abundance of happy friends and family in attendance.

## CONGRATULATIONS!

CONGRATULATIONS to Larry & Cassy Russell on the birth of their son, Larry Robert Russell, born May 17, 2021! Baby Larry is 22 inches long, and weighed 7lbs., 6 ozs. Andrew and Sevda are the proud grandparents.



Larry Robert Russell

## Drive-through Communion Comes to a Close

During the worst of the pandemic, St. Luke's became a model church for our innovative way of sharing the sacraments safely. At the peak of the pandemic, drive-through Communion gave Pastor Lisa a much-wanted chance to see, pray and break bread with the congregation in person.

Now that we can share Communion in the sanctuary, still in pre-sealed packages, demand for drive-through Communion has fallen greatly. We invite everyone to join us for Communion during in-person worship or, if you choose, to call the church office and request that Pastor Lisa or a shepherd deliver it to your home.

## Our New Post-Pandemic Look!

Just in case you were wondering, NOW:

- All vaccinated persons can worship unmasked; unvaccinated are requested to continue masking.
- All are requested to continue social distancing, by family groups, a distance of 6 feet. Please do not sit in pews marked off by blue tape.
- Fully immunized preachers (including Pastor Lisa) don't need to wear a mask to lead worship (Hallelujah!).
- You will self-check using health questions at door and sign in.

**THANK YOU FOR OBSERVING THESE PRECAUTIONS!**

## Sunday, June 13th – Save the Day!

We will recognize our 2021 Graduates on Sunday, June 13th! We will also dedicate our new ramp, aka "the veranda," on June 13th. Come for a doubly special Sunday!

## Dates to Remember

**SUNDAY, JUNE 13 -- GRADUATE RECOGNITION SUNDAY RAMP DEDICATION**

**MONDAY, JUNE 14 – FLAG DAY**

**SUNDAY, JUNE 20 – FATHER'S DAY**

## 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/>

## BE INFORMED

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

<http://www.vaumc.org>

## Service With A Smile!

How many young people comfortably fit in a car headed to Busch Gardens? How many bags of chips will 10 young people consume over a weekend retreat? How many games of putt-putt do socially distanced teenagers, who have only zoomed for months, need?

Youth ministry is not for the faint of heart. It takes charisma, planning, practicality, creativity, devotion, faith and love! Find all these gifts in one person and you have found a “keeper,” and gee, St. Luke’s, you sure did! Our church did not know when the Kaeser family joined, that incognito, under that friendly Rachel smile, beat the heart of a youth leader, guide and mentor.

Rachel coordinated with our Lutheran friends at LCOS, welcoming them into our youth program; followed our child protective policy; organized retreats; drafted Chris and Haley into many wonderful chaperoning adventures; led studies with Lori on the youths’ spiritual gifts; opened her home for Sunday youth suppers; organized countless church dinners and talent shows with Carolyn and Nancy; and most of all, has shared her love and faith and humor with a grateful gathering of awesome young people in our church.

Rachel deserves a gold medal for her service, always with a smile! As she steps down, please thank her for the marvelous impact she has had on young people now setting off into the world, stronger for the gifts she has shared with them! Rachel, you are AWESOME!

## Finance Committee Update

On June 13th the new access ramp at the carport entrance will be dedicated. Have you seen it? It is a work of art and will allow easier church access for all ages. Many thanks to Wilmer for his design and to Clinton and Bobbie who assisted Wilmer with construction over the past few months! St. Luke’s Family -- your generosity has raised \$1,810 for the project which will also include a new door lock. Thank you!

## Book Study

Lisa will be conducting a new book study beginning June 8th and going thru July 13th. The classes will be on Zoom on Tuesday nights at 7:00 pm, and will run six weeks.

The book, ***This Flowing Toward Me*** by Marilyn Lacey, contains a lively mix of humor, insight, and compassion. Marilyn Lacey invites those of us living behind locked doors in a world shattered by homeland security to risk engaging unknown neighbors near and far, and there discover, perhaps to our unending surprise, that where we most felt threatened, a wealth of blessings instead, awaits us.

If you are interested in joining this class, please call the office and let Margaret Anderson know as soon as possible so the books can be ordered.

## June Birthdays

JUNE 4	RICHARD SINEATH
JUNE 5	SHANNON BRIDGEMAN DONNA MILLER
JUNE 6	MICHELE HART
JUNE 8	BETSYE RUSSELL BONNIE GOLD
JUNE 9	MARCIA GRUBBS KAREN COURTNEY BONNIE URBANSKI
JUNE 10	JENNIFER MOYER
JUNE 12	ANDREW ROHLK
JUNE 14	JEAN MARTIN
JUNE 16	EMILY ANDERSON ROSE KESSLER ASHLEY WORNER
JUNE 23	JAN HALL
JUNE 25	MITCH GLOVER LIA DEKRAFFT
JUNE 28	MARY MEADOR AMBER GARDNER
JUNE 29	KATHY GARDNER
JUNE 30	DENNIS HALEY DORIS JENKINS

## Anniversaries

JUNE 6	E.W. & LINDA TONEY
JUNE 9	BILL & ANDREA BROWN
JUNE 12	JIM & MARCIA GRUBBS
JUNE 14	BRIAN & RACHEL KAESER PAUL & COLLEEN CASSADA
JUNE 16	ROLAND & SUE FUSSELL
JUNE 18	BOBBY & DEANIE REYNOLDS
JUNE 19	JERRY & MARGARET ANDERSON WAYNE & KATIE HALEY
JUNE 22	KEVIN & TEE LEIGH
JUNE 24	ROGER & BETH BALL
JUNE 28	BOB & JAN HALL

## WORDS OF APPRECIATION

Thank you for all the prayers, cards and phone calls you have blessed me with during my illness. These expressions of love and concern certainly gave me strength in keeping my spirits up during my recovery.

I also want to thank you for your prayers on behalf of my son, Randy, who is recovering from his heart attack. We both have more healing ahead but will do so with grateful hearts to you.

Thelma Edwards

## Scholarly Accomplishments

**Stephanie Burnett**, a graduate of University of Lynchburg, earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Business Management with an emphasis in Human Resources. She will attend grad school at the University of Lynchburg to obtain her MBA (Masters in Business Administration).

Stephanie received the 2021 ODAC Women's Outdoor Track & Field Scholar Athlete-of-the-Year award; and finishing first in the 5K and 10K events earned for her first team All-ODAC honors as well. She also received the University of Lynchburg College of Business Outstanding Senior Award for 2021, and is graduating with the Highest Honors and Summa cum laude.

**Riley Beeckler**, a graduate of the Class of 2021 at Clover Hill High School, is the honored recipient of the Madison Scholarship for Academic Excellence from JMU.



Stephanie Burnett



Sydney Kaeser left, and Riley Beeckler right

## CONGRATULATIONS, Ladies! ALL THE BEST GRADUATES!

Congratulations to St. Luke's graduates: Stephanie Burnett, a University of Lynchburg graduate; to Riley Beeckler, graduated from Clover Hill High School and furthering her education at James Madison University; and to Sydney Kaeser, also a graduate of Clover Hill High School, furthering her education at James Madison University.

Congratulations as well to graduates of our members: Bob & Jan Hall's granddaughter, Aiden Spence, a graduate of Randolph Macon College, will be furthering her education at the University of Richmond to obtain her master's degree in Elementary Education; and Clinton & Shirley Gary's granddaughter, Meghan Gary, graduating from Westfield High School, Fairfax, VA, will be furthering her education at Virginia Tech.



# PRESCHOOL GRADUATION 2021!



As you can see from our graduation/end-of-year photos, the preschool year has come to a happy conclusion with outdoor graduation! In this tentative year, Ms. Michele and Ms. Vicki had to navigate a host of pandemic regulations. They adapted in so many ways, such as using the church building's many doors to avoid the usual crowds at the carport entrance. They've kept up with every update from the Governor and still provided a wonderful environment in which the children could thrive. Because our preschool is considered an early education site, Ms. Michele and Ms. Vicki were also able to obtain several grants for the preschool. In a crazy year, St. Luke's Preschool has been a source of stability and calm for its families, and a place of learning, friendship and faith for all our students! Thanks be to God!



## Upheld in our Prayers

Prayers for peace, unity and justice across the nation



Scottie & Ray Kyle	Doris Teeter
Florence Smith	Jerry Anderson
Joan Crawford	Debby Pace
Matt Stowers	Vernon King
Wilmer & Phyllis Downs	Dianne Rust
Joyce Arrington	Sennie Case
Bettie Jones	Dean & Ibbie Smith
Jim Brantley	Terry Kyle
Tom Brown	Chuck Fayle
David Higgins	Deannie Reynolds
Opal Holshouser	Alan Huffman
Taylorann Bradon	Bob Gary
Bob & Jan Hall	

See our weekly Tuesday email for a complete listing of all prayer requests.



## Thank You for Your Service!

Having just honored our fallen heroes on Memorial Day, we also hold in highest esteem today's Veterans, past and present. Your selflessness and dedication have kept our beloved country, revered home of the Stars and Stripes, safe from harm these many years. Thank you, for all you've done, for all you continue to do. Our prayers go with you!

### Our Military

**Robbie Bowen    Aaron Frankey    Holden Russell**

## Bring Dad to Church on Father's Day!

We look forward to honoring all fathers and recognizing several special dads on June 20th!



*St. Luke's seeks to be a spiritual community where all God's children experience Christ's love and redemption and where we share this through worship, fellowship, education and mission for the community and the world.*

[www.stlukesumconthehill.org](http://www.stlukesumconthehill.org)

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