

So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!

2 Cor:17



“Can We Be NEW, too?”

So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! 2 Cor:17

In the book Give up Something Bad for Lent, James W. Moore says: Observing Lent is more than simply giving up chocolate for 40 days (unless chocolate is the thing that's come between you and God). Lent is intended to be a time of giving up something that hinders your faith and, instead, devoting that time, money, or focus on rebuilding your relationship with God. How will you observe Lent this year?

Though indulgent, chocolate is not necessarily sinful! I know this will be controversial news to some, but welcome news to others. (I will admit to trying to curb my husband's love of jelly beans in this season when drug stores are full of them.) But Lent is about so much more than confectionery. It's about restoring a right relationship to God: our Creator, Sustainer and Redeemer. This, and not our calorie count, is the point of Lent.

So what in your storehouse might you label as “bad”? I appreciate so much the new leadership of our Bishop, Sue Hauptert-Johnson, who arrived in the Virginia Conference and said almost immediately that we are spending too much time worrying about division. The coming General Conference in 2024 will tell us where the global church is heading doctrinally. Until then, no amount of worrying, soothsaying, or fretting is going to change the future, a future I might add, that we can't predict. Bishop Sue says the job of the Virginia Annual Conference and the churches in it, is to bring sinners to the table of God. To paraphrase, “Get the people in the doors,” she says, “and God will take care of the rest.”

I love this instruction, because too much excitement and decision-making has occurred anticipating an outcome we cannot yet know. What we do know is this: We are blessed to belong to a genuine, loving and faithful congregation of the United Methodist Church that welcomes everyone. Our focus right now needs to be on restoring our connections to those we have missed since the start of the pandemic, and to reaching out to those who still are isolated, perhaps because of the pandemic, and perhaps because no one has reached out to them before. Let us spend our energy on the gospel, and let politics work itself out over time.

For Lent, I suggest we give up fretting if we are prone to it. Or perhaps we need to understand better what we can control and what's in God's control. Let us be good stewards of our lives, of our church, and of the gospel, that we might know with newness, the joy of Christ's resurrection on Easter Sunday! Lo, God is making all things new—surely, that includes me and you. Thanks be to God!

Blessings,
Pastor Lisa

Laurel's thoughts of Easter

As we approach Easter Sunday we get to focus on the life of Jesus Christ: the life He led, the miracles He performed, and His ultimate sacrifice which was made for each of us as He gave his life on the cross, and rose again on Easter Sunday — the resurrected Savior of the world. I have spent a lot of time looking at music in hymnals and online to gather some of my favorite Easter pieces. When I was a child my family would go visit my Grandparents in State College, PA every Easter and I have fond memories of singing “Christ the Lord is Risen Today” in the chapel that my Grandfather helped to build in the 1960's. I am looking forward to the music for Palm Sunday and all the hymns we will sing. I have one friend from my church joining the choir in singing for Palm Sunday, but I am always in need of more singers and welcome anyone who wishes to join us in singing for this special time of year! Rehearsals are on Wednesday nights at 7:15 p.m.

This year Easter time holds a special significance for members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, like myself, as we are nearing the dedication of the Richmond, Virginia Temple in May. If you have not driven past the Temple yet the address is 10915 Staples Mill Road, Glen Allen, VA 23060, and it will be open to the public to tour from March 25-April 15 (with no tours on Sundays or April 1). If you are interested go to RichmondTemple.org to reserve tickets, and please feel free to ask me any questions.

Worship Committee Update

Our “ Souper Bowl” lunch held February 12th was a great success. We enjoyed a variety of delicious soups and chilis. THANK YOU to all who prepared a crockpot to share. We also celebrated the 51st wedding anniversary of Ken & Pat Knust with a cake.

Pastor Lisa & Seth will travel to the United Kingdom to celebrate Seth's parent's 60th wedding anniversary. Congratulations! Filling in for Lisa during her absence will be Ray Kyle, March 19th and Bill Brown, March 26th. We look forward to hearing their messages from the pulpit.

St. Luke's 60th Anniversary, September 10th! Plans are underway for this important occasion. If you would like to be a part of the planning committee, please call the church office.

Reminder: Daylight Saving Time begins Sunday March 12th. Remember to “spring forward” one hour.

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-Methodis-Church-486188658201339/>

March Birthdays

March 1	Tommy Driskill
March 6	Steven Grubbs Charlotte deKrafft
March 7	MaryJo Jones
March 10	Beth Ball
March 12	Christopher Hedrick
March 15	Kathy Bowen Elijah Jones Scott Brown
March 18	Eric Jones
March 19	Ronnie Jones
March 21	Elton Gardner Andrew Proffitt
March 24	Steven Hudson
March 26	Deanie Reynolds Cody Russell Ken Knust
March 30	Debbie Smart
March 31	Bobbie Strum

Anniversaries

March 25	Bobbie & Rhea Strum
March 26	Patrick & Carolyn Beeckler
March 29	Andrew & Sevda Russell



BE INFORMED

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

<http://www.vaumc.org>

The Installation of BISHOP SUE HAUPERT-JOHNSON February 11, 2023



Members of the Virginia Annual Conference, including clergy and laity, gathered at Woodlake United Methodist Church on February 11th for the installation of Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson. Pastor Lisa was in attendance and took this photo as the gathering began with hymn singing and celebration. Remember we are blessed to look forward to September 10th when Bishop Sue will preach at St. Luke's during our 10:30 worship service! She is a wonderful and powerful preacher, and a steady leader for the Virginia Conference!

A Word From Our New Finance Committee Chair

I am pleased to introduce myself as your new finance committee chair. I'm looking forward to serving you and St. Luke's in that role.

It's the Finance Committee's job to raise funds to meet the needs of the church and to administer those funds as directed by the Administrative Council.

Thanks to your generosity we are meeting our ongoing, monthly expenses such as utilities, staff salaries, and other routine expenses. However, when unusual or one-time expenses come along, we sometimes lack the resources to pay those bills in a timely manner. Now is one of those times.

We have three once-a-year payments due, and we do not have the extra money to pay them. These include the annual service contract for our HVAC system, Cokesbury for various supplies, including last year's giving envelopes, and the service contract and systems upgrade for our online presence on Sunday mornings. These are equally important, and all are crucial to our ability to meet our mission as a church.

You, our congregation, have been generous before when we have faced similar circumstances and I am asking you to be generous, as you are able, again. Those three bills total just under \$3,300. If you're able, make a separate check (or other payment) indicating that it's for the "3 bills" and put it in the collection plate or send it to the church as soon as you can.

Thank you in advance for all you do for St. Luke's and those we serve.

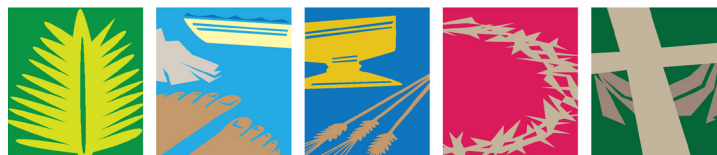
Yours in Christ. Bill Brown

"Sorrow and Love flow mingled down"

We extend our sympathy, love and prayers to Bob Hall and Family at the passing of Bob's wife Jan. A devoted mother and grandmother, Jan claimed the promise of the resurrection on February 3rd, 2023.

We extend our sympathy, love and prayers to the family of Bettie Jones. Bettie claimed the promise of the resurrection on February 16, 2023. Please continue to keep her sons, Mark and Adam, in your prayers.

We extend our sympathy, love and prayers to Ray and Becky Jenkins and Richard Jenkins. Ray and Richard's sister Ann and husband Harry Guckert, were prayerfully remembered at a memorial service held on February 25th, 2023.



From Education and Children's Ministries

Second Sundays are Family Sundays! On the second Sunday of each month, the worship service focuses on including our youngest attendees and their families in all parts of worship. Children are encouraged to participate in song, prayer, and worship, followed by a meaningful and fun activity that allows families to share in fellowship. We welcome any and all to take part and celebrate in these upcoming special services! Sunday, March 12th at 10:30 a.m., join us as we learn about the Lenten Season.

Sunday, April 9th at 10:30 a.m. - Easter Sunday Service and Easter Egg Hunt! We invite you to join us for our annual Easter Egg hunt immediately after service. We will gather in the fellowship hall before heading out to hunt for eggs! All ages are welcome!

Sunday, May 14th at 10:30 a.m. - Mother's Day - let's celebrate the amazing women in our lives!

Please contact Colleen Cassada by email at cbbcassada@gmail.com or by phone at (804) 894-0298 if you have any questions or would like more information about how to get involved!



Pancake Supper

The United Methodist men are helping us get back some wonderful traditions, including our pancake Shrove Tuesday supper on Wednesday before the Ash Wednesday service. Dinner included pancakes, apples, and sausage, and the fellowship filled up our souls! Thanks to all these chefs caught in the kitchen fixing dinner for a hungry congregation.

Sweeter than the apples served by the Methodist men was Lucy, the newest grandchild of Debbie and Woody, and daughter of Bret and Krystle. Pastor Lisa had to get in some oohs and aaahs!



SOME BELATED MEMORIES of CHRISTMAS



Lisa and Hazel chat at the UMM Christmas Dinner



UMM Christmas Dinner



UMY Christmas play



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.stlukesrva.org

UMCOR News

United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) partnered with International Blue Crescent (IBC) to provide shelters and much-needed assistance for people who experienced displacement in Turkey and Syria. Churches of the Virginia Conference are asked to join in prayer for the people experiencing despair and to join collective giving through our connectional system. Join in group to UMCOR International Disaster Response and Recovery fund online or by sending your donations to the Virginia Conference Business Office (P. O. Box 5606 Glen Allen, VA. 23058).

Upheld in our Prayers

Prayers for peace, unity and justice across the nation

Ronnie & Dixie Bowman
Ruth Wickstrom
Opal Holshouser
Wilmer & Phyllis Downs
Rose Marie Adkins
Ronnie & Shirley Weade
John & Joan Crawford
Gayle McGonigle
Deannie Reynolds
Annie Davis
Suzanne Hall
Terry & Louise Kyle & Family

Peggy Uglow
Margaret Anderson
Florence & Marion
Rose Hudson
Joan Varner
Sennie Case
Ken Knust
The Beeckler Family
Vernon King
Katherine Peterson
Rhea Strum

Our Military

Robbie Bowen, Aaron Frankey, Larry Russell

Pastor
The Rev. Lisa Sykes
stlukespastor@stlukesrva.org

Scottie Kyle
Treasurer
stlukesreas@stlukesrva.org

Shirley Gary
Office Manager
stlukesoffice@stlukesrva.org

Michele Hart
Preschool Director
director@stlukespreschoolva.com

Margaret Anderson
Financial Secretary
stlukesfinsec@stlukesrva.org

Ray Jenkins
Superintendent of
Sunday Schools