

Can't Get Enough

Think of something that's only on the grocery store shelves at Christmas time--which these days begins the day after Halloween, doesn't it? Everyone has their favorite flavor. Seth's is peppermint chocolate chip--mine is pumpkin! Pumpkin creamer, pumpkin bread, pumpkin spice, pumpkin pie... I could go on forever!

Sometimes, rare and precious things are only widely available in the deep and the dark and the cold months of this world. We can think of our favorite flavors at Christmas time.... I know some of you will be fruitcake fans.... But there's something else that we just can't get enough of that is widespread in the deep and dark and cold times and places of this world.

The sacred story of salvation interestingly is something that many cultures reserve for the dark and cold of winter. The Hopi Indians are one such culture that only allows the telling of their most sacred stories in the darkest part of the year. God Almighty somehow knew that to make it through the cold and dark, we would need something we could just not get enough of. Something so memorable that it would last the rest of the year, and throughout the rest of our lives. Something so palatable that our hunger for it could not be assuaged until we tasted it again!

For we who are Christians, that season is Advent, and no matter how deep or how dark or how cold we find the place we inhabit, our physical, our spiritual, God's promise to us is this: the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness does not overcome it. Think of the strength that affirmation brings to those who are in the darkest of places this Christmas--those who are in Ukraine or Israel or Gaza, those who are in grief or illness or mourning, those who are hungry or insecure or feeling lost. The Christmas story reaffirms to all, but especially to those who know darkness that comes very close, the light of salvation, the light of Christ always shines... but it shines most brightly my friends, in the darkness.

I remember a watercolor painting my son Wesley made for me in Sunday School when he was just a little boy. The message written upon it in crayon has never left my mind: "Stars shine the brightest in the darkest part of the night." And by faith, you and I know the brightest star of all!

To people who wait in great darkness, upon them my friends, upon us my friends, light has shined in Jesus Christ!
Thanks be to God and a blessed Christmas to you and your families.

Pastor Lisa



*...the people who sat in
darkness*

*have seen a great light,
and for those who sat in the
region and shadow of death
light has dawned.'*

Matthew 4:16

**Christmas Eve is on a Sunday.
There will only be one service at 4:00 pm.
No morning service.***

Christmas Talent Show

The Christmas program is December 10, 2023 at 5:30. It will be a catered dinner and a Christmas skit / talent show / Santa Claus. I have a list of people at the service on 11/19 who will be attending but realize there will probably be others coming also.

**Tickets will be sold December 3 after the morning service.
They are \$12.00 for adults and \$6.00 for children.**

Anyone with a talent who would like to perform in the show please text Nancy Taylor at 804-387-7610.

Preschool News

The preschool families donated Thanksgiving "sides" to the Belmont food pantry. We had some great helpers to load up the van! What generous families we have!



Merry Christmas
from the St Luke's Staff:

Shirley Gary, office administrator

Michele Hart, preschool director

Scottie Kyle, treasurer

Margaret Anderson, financial secretary

Laurel Jones, director of music

Blessings, Pastor Lisa



**The Season
of Advent
is Here!**

The word "Advent" is derived from the Latin word "adventus" meaning "coming". For us, Advent is a period of spiritual preparation in anticipation of Christ's birth.

May we all experience the hope, peace, joy, and love the Christ child brings.

Important dates to remember:

DECEMBER 3 - 10:30 am -First Sunday of Advent & Communion

DECEMBER 10 -10:30 am - Brown Bag Nativity, every child gets a part!

11:30 am - Staff Parish Committee Meeting - In Person

5:30 pm - **Christmas Talent Show and Dinner**

DECEMBER 17 - 10:30 am - Christmas Cantata by Choir

DECEMBER 24 - 9:30 am - No Sunday School

10:30 am. - No Morning Worship Service

4:00 pm - Christmas Worship Service - Lessons & Carols

DECEMBER 31 - 9:30 am - Last Advent Study for Adult Sunday School Class

10:30 am - Wesleyan Covenant Service for the New Year

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/>

BE INFORMED

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

<http://www.vaumc.org>

Birthday Visit to Opal



Sunday, November 19, 2023, Pastor Lisa, Ibbie, Katie, Bobbie and Rhea went after church to visit with our oldest member Opal Holshouser who turned 99 years young on November 19. The birthday greeting group extended well wishes and blessings and then they sang "Happy Birthday". Congratulations to Opal on this milestone.

Thank You From Chris Jones

I want to offer my sincerest thanks and gratitude to everyone at Saint Luke's for the kindness and warmth you continue to show my grandmother Annie Davis. Annie is 95 years young, and resides at the Laurels of Willow Creek nursing facility. While her memory and mental acuity may not be what it once was, she understands warmth, compassion, and the well wishes that she continues to receive from you all, I have taken over as guardian for Annie since she is not able to care for herself so well these days - but I live the cross the country in Washington State and cannot get out to visit her but so often. It truly warms each of our hearts that you all continue to keep her in your thoughts and visit with her. She mentioned that she had been a member of your church since the 1960s, and it's wonderful you consider Annie part of your family

Sincerely,
Chris Jones

Upheld in our Prayers

Prayers for peace in Israel, Gaza and Ukraine

Prayers for our Military

The Kyle Family
Gayle McGonigle
John & Joan Crawford
Violet Smith
Vernon King
Wilmer & Phyllis Downs
Deanie Reynolds
Ibbie Smith
Sennie Case
Ronnie & Shirley Weade
Rebecca Morris

The Beeckler Family
Opal Holshouser
The Urbanski Family
Florence Smith
James deKrafft
Annie Davis
Peggy Uglow
Ronnie & Heather Jones
Margaret Anderson
Karla Lacy
Dan & Carol McSpadden

Our Military

Robbie Bowen, Aaron Frankey, Larry Russell

Prayers for all who are expecting

Chris & Haley deKrafft

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

"Sorrow and Love flow mingled down"

The Rev. Mr. Hugh Harris claimed the promise of the resurrection on November 11, 2023. Keep Nancy, his wife, and family in your prayers.

David Lott, former member of St. Luke's, claimed the promise of the resurrection on November 11, 2023. Keep the family of David Lott in your prayers.


Congratulations!!!

Congratulations to Zeb and Hazel Saunders as they are great grandparents again. He was born on October 31, weighed 9 lbs. pounds, 21.5 inches long. His parents are doing well.

Congratulations to Cassy & Larry Russell on the birth of their son on October 24th. Zane Gregory Russell weighed 6 lbs, 13 ozs. and 19.5 Inches long. Sevda and Andrew Russell are the proud grandparents.

We remember the following individuals who claimed the promise of the resurrection,

November 6, 2022—November 5, 2023



Anni Steinkops
Terry Kyle
Warren Blake
Sue Moore
Ronnie Bowman
Curtis Perry
Joe Chandler
Katherine Peterson
Norris Cross
Fred Reynolds
Robert Gary
*Jean Richardson
Alice Louise Gott Glenn
Marvin Saunders
Zachary Griffin
Robert Shockley
Harry Guckert
Harold Smart
*Jan Hall
Sam Taylor
Deana Hines
Glenn Waugh
Sharon Inge
Marion West
Audrey Johnston
Dixie Wrench

December Birthdays

- December 2 Larry Batten
Laura Jarrett
William Warriner
- December 3 Kevin Jenkins
Ricky Moyer
- December 4 Tom Rohlk
Joshua Sykes
- December 6 Suzanne Steinhorst
Jennifer Frankey
- December 8 A. Ray Kyle
Peggy Uglow
(95years young)
- December 9 Chelsea Bowman
Nicholas Bowman
- December 10 Sarah Estes
- December 17 Susan Wertz
- December 18 Annie Davis
(96 years young)
Robert White, III
- December 20 Conner Skeen
- December 22 Austin Morris
Pat Knust
- December 23 Gordon Reed
John Crawford
- December 27 Karla Lacy
- December 28 Michael Pearse
Luke Daniel Boykin
- December 30 Kevin Parrish
Marie Dunlap
- December 31 Reagan Gary

Anniversaries

- December 16 Roger & Jennifer Frankey
- December 20 James & Charlotte deKrafft
- December 31 Gordon and Susan Reed

**Happy 61st Wedding Anniversary
to Zeb and Hazel Saunders**

**Happy 53rd Wedding Anniversary
to David and Bonnie Urbanski**

Home School in November

We kicked off the month of November with a field trip to Taylor's chocolate. The kids learned the process of making chocolate and toured the factory. On our Friday of Friendsgiving we had a special guest (Pastor Lisa) visit who read us a book and discussed giving back to our less fortunate friends. After we all enjoyed a meal together. We are so very thankful to Pastor Lisa for sharing her time to come visit us.



Young at Heart

Young At Heart had a great trip to Jamestown - motoring down Route 5, lunching at The Chickahominy House, riding the ferry to Surry and shopping for peanuts in Wakefield as our November meeting,

Our mission for December is to collect new and or gently used coats for Belmont Clothes Closet. Gloves, hats etc. are also helpful for children and adults. Fun for this summer:

We would like to sponsor a CHRISTMAS IN JULY SALE. As you get out or put away Christmas decorations perhaps you have a couple items you no longer use or want. Let's see if we can make a little CASH for St. Luke's. See Barbara Nunnally, 804-744-2110, 804-852-4136 or bpn11900@gmail.com



Poinsettias for Christmas

Red Poinsettias will be placed in the Sanctuary on Sunday, December 17th and Christmas Eve, December 24th. The cost will be \$15.00 per plant. You may take your plant after the 10:30 am service on Dec.17th or the service on December 24th. Make your check payable to St. Luke's UMC. and designate "Poinsettias:"

The deadline for ordering is December 3, 2023.

Name of individual purchasing Poinsettia:

Number of Poinsettias purchased: _____

In Memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____

stlukesumc@verizon.net



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

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