



*Praise be to the God and
Father of our Lord Jesus
Christ, who has blessed us
in the heavenly realms with
every spiritual blessing in
Christ.
(Eph. 1:3 NIV)*

**As we wake up each day, let us
remember God's blessings in our
lives. "For the Lord is good and
his mercy endures forever..."
How long? "Forever!"
(Ps.100:5, MEV)**

Humbled by God's Blessings

As I walked from the open parking lot of my hotel, the light of the summer sun beamed so brightly that I could barely see where I was going. I entered the elevator where an older gentleman was guiding his blind wife into the elevator. I made a noise so that she would know that I was there with her. When I woke up that morning, I woke up feeling blessed. And seeing the brightness of the sun following a woman who could not, humbled me because of the goodness of God in my life. I am blessed, I thought to myself. God made this statement apparent throughout the day.

Later, I talked to several clergy who were appointed to different churches and I realized again that I was blessed. I was blessed to say that I have started a new position at an incredible church called Saint Luke's United Methodist. My husband and I were welcomed here by a wonderful staff and leaders with hospitality and grace.

With blessings come growth and promotion. My move to this area away from my former churches has been bittersweet. The members there pushed me forward so that I could be all that God was calling me to be.

Blessed. This is what I call a spiritual blessing. God blesses us each and every day with all the spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus our Lord. Have you been blessed today? Did you wake up this morning? You've been blessed. Are you walking and talking? You have been blessed. I came from the VA Annual Conference where I sat near a young lady in a wheelchair. Can you think pretty clearly? You have been blessed. Do you have family and friends? You have been blessed.

Do you know what it means to be blessed? It is when God fills your life with some measure of love, peace, good situations, protection, and people to uplift your life. If God didn't bless you, your life would be different. Sometimes we have difficult days, and we think that we are not in God's blessings. Please remember that you have had more good days than bad, and the difficulty will not last. Because God's blessings will prevail. Jesus said, "In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." (John 1:33b NIV) There is a Christian Affirmation that I say each day to remind me of God's continued blessings:

"God is blessing me, my family, and my church family. He is blessing me with love, joy, and peace. He is blessing me with good health and tremendous wealth. He is blessing me with protection, direction, and increased favor. I will be everything God has created me to be. I will see God's abundance overtaking me. I believe it and I receive it — Amen."

Rev. Tracey B. Lyons

A Very Fond Farewell

To each of you, members of our church family at St. Luke's:

Seth and I send our heartfelt thanks for a wonderful, worshipful celebration of Pentecost and the beginning of my retirement, which coincided on May 19th. Pentecost is the day that Christians think of as the birthday of the church: it is a time of new beginnings. It is also the time of God giving the profound gift of the Holy Spirit to unite the Christian community.

How appropriate all of this is, this year especially. On Pentecost, you all help me to celebrate a new beginning, led by God's Spirit, into a season of retirement after 34 years in ministry. 13 of those 34 years, I shared with you, and during those years, and on this Pentecost especially, you all gave me the incredible, indelible gift of affirming my ministry in so many joyful ways.

These past 13 years have been the best of my ministry because of you, and it has been my great privilege to abide here so long and to leave on such a joyful note. What a gift of the Spirit given through you! I don't know how to adequately thank you for so many kindnesses, tangible and intangible, particularly on this Pentecost day of celebration:

...a beautiful cross and flame United Methodist necklace, cards, photographs, letters, and a scrapbook, assembled by Suzanne, with such lovely notes from you and photos of our years together, that it made me cry the first time I looked through it! I read every one of your cards, and as I did, I gave thanks for them and you and all we are to each other, through Jesus Christ.

...Pentecost praises, a stunning fellowship lunch, my favorite hymns, words of witness, your smiles and hugs, and extravagant generosity....

How blessed am I(!) that God brought me to a church and congregation so full of the Spirit, that you would receive me as family and let our individual journeys, by love and prayer and trust, become one. I don't know how to thank you really, for all that you each mean to me. And for all you have done to support not only me but also my family. Seth and I will both miss seeing you each Sunday (and the days in between), and we thank you for helping us raise our boys, especially Wesley, in your midst.

As we depart from St. Luke's, our gift to you will be faithful prayers that you will receive Pastor Tracey and her husband, Joe with the same warmth, faith and openness with which you received me, and that you will experience the newness and excitement and energy that comes with a new beginning and a new pastor: new ideas, new directions, a new relationship, but the same faithful Lord. May you support Pastor Tracey and her family as you have supported me and mine, my friends, for the midst of such faithfulness, our God can work wonders through those he calls to be the Church.

Again, our deep thanks, appreciation, love and gratitude, For the wonderful celebration and for 13 wonderful years!

God bless you always!
Seth and Lisa

JOYS:

Congratulations to Kevin and Danielle on the birth of their daughter born May 22, 2024, at 10:07,am, 5 lbs., 7 oz., 19 inches long. Judy Parish is the proud grandmother and Holly is the proud aunt.

Becky Heath's daughter, Kate, is expecting twin girls in August. Congratulations!!!

Important Dates — Mark Your Calendar:

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| July 7 | First Sunday of new minister, Rev. Tracey Lyons. |
| July 9 | 7 pm by zoom – Finance Committee |
| July 14 | Reception for Pastor Tracey Lyons and Family after Worship Service |
| July 16 | 7 pm by zoom – Administrative Council |
| July 17 | NO Zoomba Meeting, 11 am United Women in Faith |
| August 4 | Preschool Summer Camp Week 3, 9:30-12:30 pm |
| August 14 | 7 pm by zoom – Finance Committee |
| August 20 | 7 pm by zoom – Administrative Council |
| August 20 | Preschool Staff Meeting Fellowship Hall- 12:00 Noon |
| August 21 | NO Zoomba Meeting, 11 am United Women in Faith |
| August 27 | Preschool Teacher Workday 9:00-1:00 pm |
| August 28 | Preschool Teacher Workday – 9:00-1:00 pm |
| August 28 | Preschool Back to School Night 7 pm, Sanctuary |
| August 29 | Preschool Open House 9:00-1:00 pm |

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>

Upheld in our Prayers

Prayers for peace in Israel, Gaza and Ukraine

Prayers for our Military

Scottie & Ray Kyle

Gayle Rouse

John & Joan Crawford

Vernon King

Wilmer & Phyllis Downs

Deannie Reynolds

The Jones Family

Sennie Case

Ronnie & Shirley Weade

Isabella Jones

Seth Sykes

Carolyn Beeckler

The Beeckler Family

Opal Holshouser

David & Bonnie Urbanski

James & Charlotte deKrafft

Annie Davis

Peggy Uglow

Mitch Glover & Family

Roger Ball

Dan & Carol McSpadden

Kate Sykes

Leanne Rohlk's daughter

Brenda Burch (Clinton's sister)

Our Military

Robbie Bowen, Aaron Frankey, Larry Russell

Prayers for our incoming pastor, The Reverend Tracey

Lyons, her husband, Joseph L. Lyons, Jr. and her two

sons, Joseph L. Lyons, III and Seth E. Lyons. Her first

Sunday will be July 7, 2024.

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

The Candle on the Altar on Father's Day was in Honor & Memory of—

Bill and Andrea Brown in memory of Paul Brown

Bill and Andrea Brown in memory of Leighton Plummer

Ibbie Smith & family in memory of Dean Smith

Rhea and Bobbie Strum in memory of Woodrow Strum

Rhea and Bobbie Strum in memory of Ray Mahan

Rhea and Bobbie Strum in memory of Clarke Hale

Ruth Wickstrom in memory of Paul Jepson

Troy and Todd Gary in honor of Clinton Gary

Rhea Strum in honor of Bobbie Strum



July Birthdays

- July 2 Rick Beeckler
July 4 Reinah Morris
July 6 Woody Smart
July 8 Jim Grubbs
Autumn Papczynski
July 10 Kay Callis
Brian Smart
July 11 Rachel Kaeser
July 12 Mandy Wellman
Jeremy Reed
July 13 Matthew Wertz
July 14 Jordan Calfee
Sara Wertz
July 16 Kevin Johnson
July 18 John Richardson
Amanda Nolen
July 20 Jim Brown
July 24 Shane Halloran
Amelia Marie Russell
Annabelle Louise Russell
July 26 Margaret Anderson
July 28 Karen Miller
July 29 Robbie Bowen
July 30 Joel Calfee
LeAnn Nunnally

Anniversaries

- July 7 Kent and Rhea Calfee
Bruce & Robin Anderson
Elton & Kathy Gardner
July 18 Ronnie and Shirley Weade
July 20 Jason & Michele Hart



Helpers are needed!

If you would like to help with the repairing of the shed , please let Wilmer, Clinton or Bobbie know. Hours - 9:00 to mid- afternoon. All extra hands will be appreciated.

Wilmer and Clinton building a new ark.



Dancing Little Stars had a fantastic season and performance this year! Looking forward to another great year in 2025.

The Belmont Food Pantry gave out 37 Birthday cake kits! Thank you to the church and preschool families for working together to make someone's day a little more special!

The Preschool kicked off summer with two summer camps, Little Scientists and Pirates and Princesses.

For the upcoming 2024-25 school year, we still have spaces in our toddlers (15 months in Sept.), 3's, and Junior Kindergarten. Spread the word!



WELCOME RECEPTION! JULY 14th

A reception will be held after worship July 14th to officially welcome Pastor Tracey and her family to St. Luke's UMC. Enjoy light refreshments as you meet and greet our new pastor.



August Birthdays

- August 1 Brian Kaeser
Zach Morris
- August 3 Pastor Lisa Sykes
- August 6 Chris deKrafft
- August 9 Tammy Morris
- August 14 John Russell
- August 15 Zeb Saunders
- August 18 Cindy Burnett
- August 21 Rhea Strum
Riley Beeckler
- August 22 Campbell Eden Moore
- August 23 Cameron Callis
- August 26 Wilmer Downs
- August 28 Bobby Reynolds
- August 30 Jo McDowell
Bob Armstrong

Anniversaries

- August 5 Ken & Pat Knust
Clay & Rebecca Morris
- August 14 John and Betsye Russell
- August 16 George & Melissa Moore
Bill & Pam Coleman

*One Nation
under **GOD**
indivisible
with Liberty
and Justice
for **ALL**.*

Welcome Pastor Tracey!

We also give a warm welcome to your husband, Joseph L. Lyons, Jr. and your two sons, Joseph L. Lyons, III and Seth E. Lyons.

May Our Prayers To You, O God
Begin From A Place Of Thanksgiving,
Recognizing Your Countless Gifts.



SAVE THE DATE!
Fall Festival – October 5, 2024

We will have a busy day on October 5, 2024. There will be “Christmas in October” Please donate any Christmas item that you no longer use or no longer want. Also, we will have the Brunswick Stew Sale and a Bake sale . If you wish to donate a baked item or would prefer to donate money, please let Barbara or Leann Nunnally know. Brunswick Stew may be pre-ordered and cost of stew will be forthcoming. Mark the date on your calendar and join us for a fun day!!!



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

Pastor
The Rev. Tracey Lyons
stlukespastor@stlukesrva.org

Shirley Gary
Office Manager
stlukesoffice@stlukesrva.org

Margaret Anderson
Financial Secretary
stlukesfinsec@stlukesrva.org

Scottie Kyle
Treasurer
stlukestreas@stlukesrva.org

Michele Hart
Preschool Director
director@stlukespreschoolva.com

Ray Jenkins
**Superintendent of
Sunday Schools**