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St. Luke's United Methodist Church Newsletter July/August 2026



"So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.."

John 8:36

Free Indeed

"And just like that, another Virginia Annual Conference has come to a close!" It was a wonderful time of worship, learning, fellowship, and reconnecting with friends and colleagues in ministry. Every year I leave Annual Conference encouraged by what God is doing through the churches of the Virginia Conference and inspired to return home with renewed purpose.

One of the highlights for me was the Juneteenth Celebration. It was a joyful and moving service as we remembered June 19, 1865—the day the final enslaved African Americans in Texas learned they were free. Juneteenth, often called Freedom Day, reminds us that freedom is precious, hard-won, and worth celebrating. Through inspiring music, heartfelt worship, and powerful testimonies, we praised our awesome God, who is always at work bringing hope and liberation to His people.

One phrase echoed throughout the celebration like a clarion call: "Free Indeed!" Those words captured both the joy of emancipation and the promise of a brighter future.

This month our nation also celebrates another important milestone. On July 4, 2026, America marks 250 years of independence, commemorating the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776. For two and a half centuries, we have celebrated the freedoms and opportunities that come with being an independent nation. As we gather with family and friends for parades, fireworks, cookouts, and community celebrations, we give thanks for the many blessings we enjoy and remember those who sacrificed to secure them.

Yet, as Christians, we know there is an even greater freedom than political liberty. Jesus reminds us in John 8:36: *"So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."*

The freedom Christ offers reaches far beyond governments, nations, or earthly circumstances. It is freedom from the bondage of sin, freedom from guilt and shame, freedom from fear, and freedom from the power of death. Through His life, death, and resurrection, Jesus broke the chains that once held us captive and invited us into a new life filled with grace, hope, and purpose.

As we celebrate freedom this July, may we remember both the blessings of our nation's history and the greater gift of spiritual freedom found in Jesus Christ. Let us live as people who have been set free—not to serve ourselves, but to love God, serve our neighbors, seek justice, extend mercy, and share the good news of Christ with the world.

May your July be filled with joy, gratitude, and peace as you celebrate the One who has made us Free Indeed!

Grace and Peace,
Rev. Tracey B. Lyons

From Our Director of Music

Recently water was pouring down through my ceiling, thanks to a broken 2nd floor washing machine. This disaster has led to a lot of chaos and upheaval in my home. We currently have large holes in the ceiling, and a lot of carpet ripped out. We had many very noisy fans on for days, and now we are starting the process of restoration. Restoring what was broken to make it whole again. But not just restored to the original state- better than before! This is what Jesus Christ does for me and for all of us. He can make us whole through great His atoning sacrifice. While I am broken now, in the end I can be made whole, because Christ has offered a precious gift for all to receive. I cannot wait for the day that my house is repaired and made better than new, and I look forward to the day when Christ will make me whole and complete because of His grace and love for me. —Laurel Jones



Upheld in our Prayers

Prayers for peace in Iran, Israel, Gaza, and Ukraine
Prayers for our Military and for those listed below.

Scottie & Ray Kyle
John & Joan Crawford
Doris Jenkins
Wilmer & Phyllis Downs
Deannie Reynolds
Bobbie Strum
Chris Bowen
Zeb & Hazel Saunders
Bonnie Urbansky
Shirley and Ronnie Weade
Chad Ray Kyle
Diana Lee

Our Military

Robbie Bowen, Aaron Frankey

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

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://www.facebook.com/share/162y11mMZw/?mibextid=wwXlfr

Congratulations - to Brandon & Jennifer Powell on the birth of their son, Weston Miller Powell, born June 13, 2026. He was born at 5:55 am, weighed 9 lbs, 6 ozs. and was 21.5 inches long. Donna & Keith Miller are the proud grandparents.

Debbie and Woody Smart are excited to announce that their Seventh Grandchild is on the way. Due in late October! Prayers for their daughter Krystle and for a health and happy baby.

Young At Heart- June meeting for Young At Heart was a road trip to the old Chesterfield County Courthouse to visit the 214 year old Nunnally Tree and then across Rt. 10 for a tour of Magnolia Grande Museum and of course out to lunch. No meeting in July. August we are planning an indoor picnic. We welcome everyone, you do not have to be a senior.

Mark Your Calendar – July 19, 2026, Kim Graves, Manager of Aging & Disability Resources for Chesterfield Community Engagement and Resources will be our community speaker for July. In the Worship Service, she will present a short message outlining all the activities available for seniors in Chesterfield.

2026 Flower Calendar- is on the bulletin board going into the church sanctuary. If you would like to put flowers on the altar for a particular Sunday in honor or memory of a loved one, please sign up on the flower calendar. The cost is $35.00. Make your check payable to St. Luke's United Methodist Check and designate in lower left-hand corner of check "Altar Flowers".

BE INFORMED

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

http://www.vaumc.org

St. Luke's Calendar
Important Dates — July/August 2026

July 1 – NO Women in Faith
7:15 – Choir Practice
July 5 – 9:30 am -Sunday School
10:30 am – Worship Service
July 8 – 10:00 am – Young at Heart
7:15 pm – Choir Practice
July 12 – 9:30 am – Sunday School
10:30am – Worship Service
July 14 – NO Finance Committee Meeting
July 15 – 7:15 pm – Choir Practice
July 19 – 9:30 am – Sunday School
10:30 am – Worship Service - Kim Graves, Manager of Aging & Disability Resources for Chesterfield Community Engagement & Resources will be our Community Speaker for July
July 21 – NO Administrative Council Meeting
July 24 – 10:00-12:00 Noon- Quilting Group
July 26 - 9:30 am -Sunday School
10:30 am – Worship Service
July 27 – U.M. Men – 6:30 pm

August:

August 2 – 9:30 – Sunday School
10:30 am – Worship Service
August 3-6 9:30-12:00 Noon – Preschool Summer Camp
August 5- 10:00-12:00 Noon – Meeting -Publisher for Staff – Good Shepherd UMC
7:15 pm – Choir Practice
August 9 – 9:30 am – Sunday School
10:30 am – Worship Service
August 10 –1:00 am – Office Staff Meeting
August 11 – NO Finance Committee Meeting
August 12 – 10:00 am – Young at Heart
7:15 pm – Choir Practice
August 16 – 9:30 am – Sunday School
10:30am – Worship Service
August 18 – NO Administrative Council Meeting
August 19 – 7:15 pm – Choir Practice
August 23 – 9:30 am – Sunday School
10:30 am. – Worship Service
August 24 – 6:30 pm – U. M. Men
August 25 – 12:00 Noon-2:00pm – Preschool Staff Meeting
August 26 – 7:15 pm – Choir Practice
August 28 – 10:00-12:00 Noon – Quilting
August 30 – 9:30 am – Sunday School
10:30 am – Worship Service

Church of the Nazarene Calendar
Important Dates —July/August 2026

July 3 – 7:00 -9:30 pm Disciple Class
July 4 - 8:00-11:30 a.m. Morning Prayer
July 5 – 1:30-5:30 p.m. Install Instruments and Worship Service
July 6 – Report figures to Shirley
July 10 – 7:00-9:30 p.m. Discipleship Class
July 11 – 4:00 to 6:00 Band practice
July 12 – Install Instruments and Worship Service
5:30-7:30 p.m. Board Meeting
July13 – Report Figures to Shirley
July 17 – 7:00-9:30 p.m. Discipleship Class
July 18 – 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.Band Practice
July 19 – 1:30-5:30 p.m. Install Instruments and Worship Service
July 20 – Report Figures to Shirley
July 24 – 7:00-9:30 p.m. Discipleship Class
July 25 – 4:00-6:00 p.m. Band Practice
July 26 – 1:30-5:30 p.m. Install Instruments and Worship Service no church at building, will have Baptism at River
July 27 – Report Figures to Shirley
July 31 – 7:00-10:00 p.m. prayer service at end of month

August:

Aug. 2 – 1:30 to5:30 Install Instruments and Worship Service
Aug. 3 - Report figures to Shirley
Aug. 7 – 7:00-9:30 p.m. Discipleship Class
Aug. 8 – 4:00 to 6:00 Band practice
Aug. 9 – 1:30- 5:30 Install Instruments and Worship Service
Aug. 10 – Report Figures to Shirley
Aug. 14 – 7:00-9:30 p.m. Discipleship Class
Aug. 15 – 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.Band Practice
Aug. 16 – 1:30-5:30 p.m. Install Instruments and Worship Service
5:30-7:30 Board Meeting
Aug.17 – Report Figures to Shirley
Aug. 21 – 7:00-9:30 p.m. Discipleship Class
Aug. 22 – 4:00-6:00 p.m. Band Practice
Aug. 23 – 1:30-5:30 p.m. Install Instruments and Worship Service
Aug. 24 – Report Figures to Shirley
Aug. 28 – 7:00-10:00 p.m. prayer service at end of month
7:00-9:00 p.m. Discipleship Class

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
	Elton & Kathy Gardner
July 18	Ronnie and Shirley Weade
July 20	Jason & Michele Hart

August Birthdays

August 1	Brian Kaeser
	Zach Morris
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

This Father's Day The Special Candle upon the Altar was dedicated by:

Troy & Todd Gary in honor of Clinton Gary

Pastor Tracey B. Lyons in memory of Reverend Robert L. Bullock, Jr.

Pastor Tracey B. Lyons in honor of Joseph L. Lyons, Sr.

Pastor Tracey B. Lyons in honor of Joseph L. Lyons Jr.

Pastor Tracey B. Lyons in honor of Joseph L. Lyons, III

Hazel Barrett Saunders in memory of W. Edward Barrett

Zebulon Vance Saunders, Jr. in memory of Z. Vance Saunders

Debbie & Woody Smart in memory of Perry Smart, Sr.

Rhea Strum in honor of Bobbie Strum

Rhea Strum in memory of Ray Mahan

Rhea Strum in memory of Woodrow Strum

Bobbie & Rhea Strum in memory of Clarke H. Hale

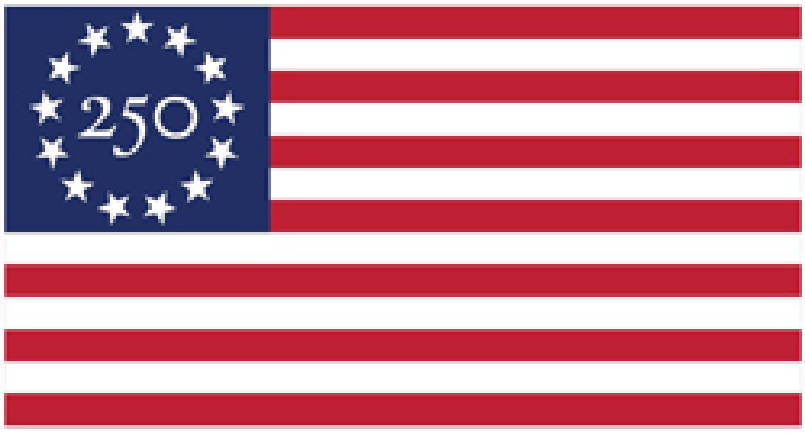
Bonnie Urbanski in honor of Captain Merlin Kehrer

Bonnie Urbanski in honor of Noah Fishburn

Bonnie Urbanski in memory of David Urbanski

Ruth Wickstrom in memory of Charles Wickstrom

Ruth Wickstrom in memory of Paul Jepson



Freedom 250



"Every Day is a Holy-Day!"

Vacation Bible School

July 27th-30th, 2026

Dear St. Luke's family and Friends,

It's time for VBS 2026! And St. Luke's UMC will be partnering with St. Mark's UMC, 11551 Lucks Lane, Mid., for an incredible time. It may be summer, but "Every Day is a Holy-Day!"

All children ages 4 (3 if potty trained)- to Rising 5th grade are invited to join us July 27th-30th as we celebrate a different holiday each evening with music, games, crafts, Bible lessons, and most importantly...FUN!

We will begin each evening at 6 pm and end at 8 pm. We will be providing a snack each night, so please be sure to check out the allergy section on the registration form. If your child would like to be placed with someone specific in their age group, please make a note of that on the registration form. We can't guarantee everyone will be placed where they want, but we will do our best to make it happen.

We will end our week with a Family Fun Night on Friday, July 31st, from 5:30 pm-7:30 pm. We will have the grill going with hamburgers and hot dogs, farm animals to love on, and games for everyone to have fun. Kona Ice will also be here if you would like to purchase a treat to cool off with.

It does take many hands and hearts to make VBS a success each year. We need adults to lead each of our groups along with youth who would like to be assistants. If you are a youth volunteer and you need volunteer hours, we are more than happy to sign off on your forms for you.

Please spread the word to your friends and neighbors. We would love to have everyone join us!

Children's Registration: https://stmarksmidlo.breezechms.com/form/VBS2026

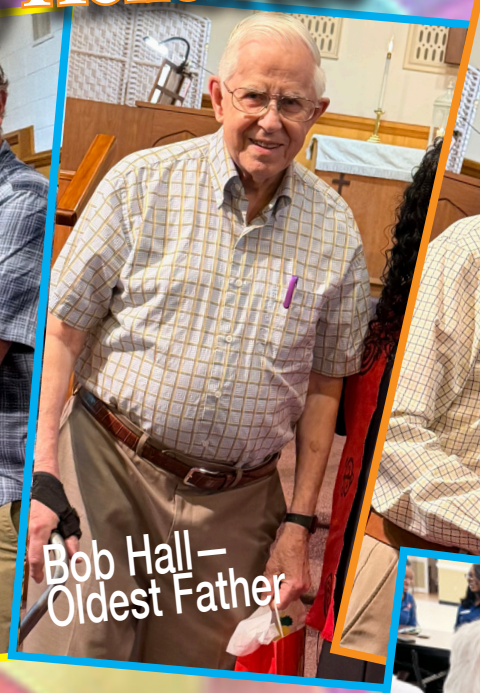
Volunteer Registration: https://stmarksmidlo.breezechms.com/form/volreg2026

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me, Pastor Tracey, at 804-276-7000 or cell 804-835-1668.
We can't wait to see everyone for a week full of FUN!

Pastor Tracey- St. Luke's United Methodist Church, stlukespastor@stlukesrva.org
Katie West-Children's Ministry Director, St. Mark's United Methodist Church, kidmin@stmarksmidlo.com

Father's Day Honorees


C.W. Rice—
Youngest Father


Bob Hall—
Oldest Father


Matt Strum—
Visiting Father

Kids Again at St. Luke's Game Day

On June 25 St. Luke's hosted Senior Game Day. Game show Host was Joe Lyon's. He brought four young ladies from VSU and his parents. We had seven church members in attendance. We played Scrbble, UNO, Dominos, Tenzi and LCR. Great fellowship and fun was had by all. Everybody is looking forward to next time and you don't have to be a Senior, we hope anyone who loves fellowship and fun will join us!!!





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