

# THE EPISTLE

The Monthly Newsletter of St. Luke's United Methodist Church

## Praise, Prayer, and Glory

### Psalm 145: 1-5,17-21

*I will extol you, my God and King, and bless your name forever and ever. Every day I will bless you and praise your name forever and ever. Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; his greatness is unsearchable. One generation shall laud your works to another and shall declare your mighty acts. On the glorious splendor of your majesty, and on your wondrous works, I will meditate. The Lord is just in all his ways, and kind in all his doings. The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. He fulfills the desire of all who fear him; he also hears their cry and saves them. The Lord watches over all who love him, but all the wicked he will destroy. My mouth will speak the praise of the Lord, and all flesh will bless his holy name forever and ever.*

### Are you blessing God?

- In what ways are you doing this?
- David, in this psalm of praise, recognizes the fullness of God's love and the magnificence of His greatness.
- In response, he promises to bless God for eternity.
- If God is the source of all blessings, how are you, in turn, to bless God?
- Are you to reflect God's love to the world?
- Are you to let His light shine through so others can see His greatness?
- Do you bless God by recognizing His glory and by expressing your gratefulness through songs of praise and thanksgiving?
- Are you being the blessing God intends you to be?
- Or, are you a sponge, simply absorbing His many gifts?

### Do you pray with meaning and truth?

- In vs. 18 David says that God hears every true prayer.
- When you pray, do you pray as though God is listening?
- Are you telling Him your deepest and truest feelings?
- Or, are you simply going through the motions, reciting words you have developed by rehearsal and rote?
- Or, perhaps, you have never given true prayer more than a cursory look.

- Maybe you know you should pray but rarely get around to it.
- Do you see how critical a life of prayer is to your journey of faith?
- Do you accept the promise that God draws close and listens to every word of prayer you utter when you truly believe He is there and when your words are true and filled with your love for God?

### Is your mouth filled with praise for God?

- If so, is it at all times or only on Sunday mornings when you're with other worshippers?
- When your mouth is truly filled with praise, is there room for anything else?
- Can every word you utter be a word of praise to God?
- What if you begin looking at each thing you say prior to speaking with a filtering perspective that says, 'how will this next word I say be a word of praise to God?'
- Will this perspective change your life?
- Will those around you begin seeing a clearer picture of God and how He is using you to be a blessing to the world?

St. Luke's, when we stop and take a moment in our busy lives to look around at the blessings that God has provided us, we can only respond, as David responded, with words of praise. In all things God is blessing us, listening to our heartfelt prayers, and working miracles into our lives in amazing ways. In response, we are to be a blessing to God and to the world, we are to fill our mouths with words of praise, and we are to live our lives knowing that God is intimately close, listening to every prayer we utter, and guiding us to the glory of His kingdom, here on earth as it is in heaven.

Faithfully,



# **LENTEN WORSHIP SERVICES AT NOON**

**Each Tuesday during Lent  
in the Chapel**

**Begins March 11**

**Complimentary Soup &  
Sandwich Lunch**

**Immediately After the Service  
in the Lounge**

**Guest Preachers:**

**March 11- Mark Matheny**

**March 18- Jolinne Downey**

**March 25- Rob Martin**

**April 1- B. French**

**April 8- Michael Pence**

# Lenten Bible Study

***“Following after Righteousness  
in the Face of Temptation”***

**Come join us in a Bible Study for ALL ages of  
St. Luke’s community in this season of Lent.**

**Dinner included!**

**Wednesday Nights**

**March 19- April 16**

**6pm-7:15pm**



**Please make reservations at the front desk  
or at [stlukesumc.org](http://stlukesumc.org)**

You Are Invited To:

# Leadership Sunday & Training



*Sunday*

**February 23, 2025**



**10:30am Worship**

**11:30 am Training**



**Lounge**



**Lunch will be provided. Clergy,  
Staff, Program Planning and  
Interested Church Council  
Members.**



The Church Council met on December 22 to discuss and make a decision on a proposal to limit meetings to Tuesday and Wednesday evenings to be better stewards of our building, and to decrease our security and utility expenses. This proposal would decrease our security expenses by about \$60,000 plus the decrease in usage of utilities. All groups meeting at the church were notified of the changes beginning January 1, 2025. Motion passed unanimously.

**Church Office Hours:**  
Monday-Thursday 8:30am-3:00pm  
Friday Closed

**Church Alarms will be set once all activities  
are over at the end of the day by Jabarey or CLC.**

**Mondays & Thursdays**

Maurice hours 7:00am - 8:00am. Opens for parents of Day School.  
Sarah hours 8:00am - 3:00pm.  
Double doors at Hospitality Areas will be locked at 3:00pm.

Day School Parents will pick up after 3:00pm on Highland Street entrance Every Day

Amy's options for opening doors at this time:  
option 1 push button on remote  
option 2 push button on video remote

**Challengers**

Jabarey's option for opening doors  
option 1 push button on remote to open doors for parents  
option 2 station a staff person at Hospitality entrance doors after 3:00pm  
Winter or bad weather Challengers will be in the Lounge or Gym;  
Summer or nice weather they will be outside.

**Fridays**

Maurice hours	7:00am - 8:00am	Opens for parents of Day School.
Sarah or Volunteer hours	8:00am - 10:00am	Opens for parents of Day School
Noon to closing	Day School will use Highland Street entrance for pick-ups.	
Afternoon to closing	Challengers will be same as Mondays/Thursdays	

Church Office Closed all day

**Tuesdays & Wednesdays**

Maurice hours 7:00am - 8:00am Opens for parents of Day School.  
Sarah hours 8:00am - 3:00pm  
Security: 3:00pm - End of church activities around 9pm.

**Building Walk Thru at end of day**

Mon & Thur	Eddie	4:00pm
Tue & Wed	Security	9:00pm
Fri	Jabarey	6:30pm





Kick off the Lenten season

**MARDI GRAS**

**celebration**

Celebrate the vibrant spirit of Mardi  
Gras with joy and cheer after  
service in the church CLC.

March 2, 2025

All ages welcome

Please RSVP at the front desk

Friday Night

# YOUTH OPEN GYM

St. Luke's United Methodist Church  
Gym

February 21st

5:30-8:30 pm

Bring \$5 for pizza and drink.

Contact Sheridan Harris Athletic Director 731-612-1396.



## **JANUARY 2025 HONORIUMS AND MEMORIALS:**

### **Honoriums:**

**In Honor of Ruth and Warren Morrison, Stan and Carol Craig, and Mary Lou Cushing from Larry Kaler**

### **Memorials:**

**In Memory of Lourenda McKinney from Phyllis Massey and Linda Sue Fong**

**In Memory of James Crum from Harry and Bette Colter**



## *Join Us for Sweet Sunday on February 23rd, 2025*

*The fourth Sunday of each month, we have a time of sweet treats and sweet fellowship between Sunday School and Church. Join us for our next Sweet Sunday in Hospitality Hall on February 23rd, from 10 a.m. to 10:25 a.m. Treats and Coffee will be there. We just need you to come share a little sweetness.*

## **Preschool Age Open Gym**

**ST. LUKE'S GYM**

**3:30-5:30**

**THURSDAY, FEB. 6TH**

Need to run off some energy?  
Join us for open play & games.  
All preschool aged kids welcome

Contact Athletics Director Sheridan  
Harris for more information  
[sheridan.harris@stlukesumc.org](mailto:sheridan.harris@stlukesumc.org)



Who's a good human?

**\$10 GIFT CARD**  
for all donors



## Be Good. Give Blood.

Who's a good human? **Donate Feb. 15-28**, and you'll get a **\$10 Rewards gift card** for having a PAWS-itive impact on patients in need! Schedule today.  
*Donor Rewards program opt-in required.*

Details at [vitalant.org/LoveDonorGift](https://vitalant.org/LoveDonorGift) | Schedule at [vitalant.org](https://vitalant.org)

## St. Luke United Methodist Church

**Bloodmobile**  
**480 S. Highland Street**  
**February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025**  
**9am-12pm**



Scan QR code to schedule an appointment!

Bring Photo ID/ Student ID- Drink plenty of water! Eat a hearty meal before donation.

### PROMO DISCLAIMER

\*Terms and conditions apply; visit <https://vitalant.org/LoveDonorGift>

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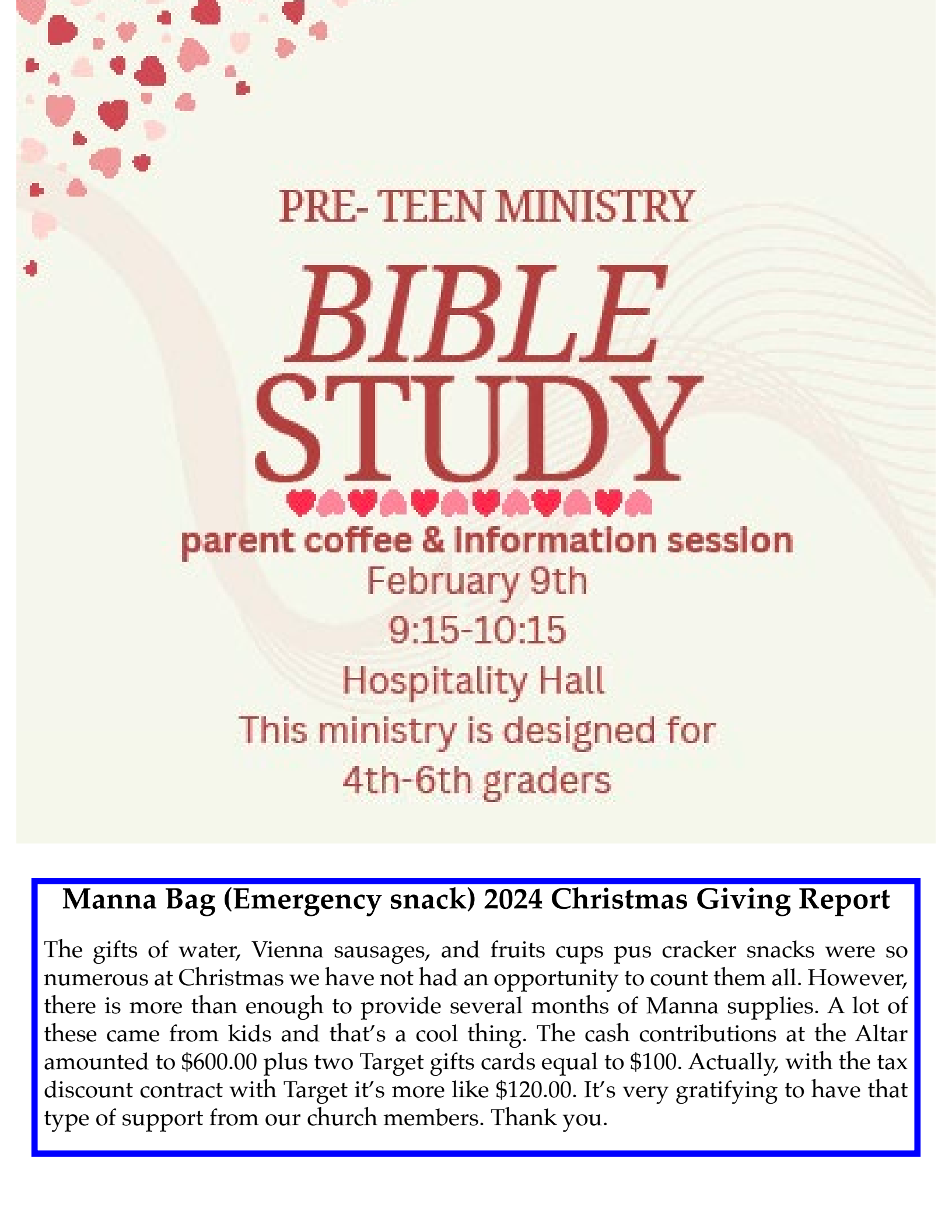
# Children's Ministry

The Children's Department at St. Luke's has been up to some truly special things during the Season of Advent. We had a combined Sunday School class for all ages created and led by our amazing Sunday School teachers, called "Tis the Season for ADVENTure."

This was our second year doing this and it was a great success. Each week the children focused on a different theme in Advent. They got to do very special crafts and every week reflected on what the themes of hope, love, joy, and peace mean to them. The kids even had their own Advent wreath they got to light each week in the Lighthouse and got to interact with other parts of the congregation from making manna bags to doing Sunday School caroling!

The next festivity we had was our fourth annual "Holiday Hope Night" which is an evening for parents to have a night off during a busy season to shop or relax. The kids got to enjoy some fun games, pizza, and got to "shop" for and wrap a gift for their families to help remember the reason for the season. We had a large group of kids and volunteers attend, some of which were new friends brought by our regulars! This event was a great success thanks to the help of our volunteers.

The Children's Choir was back up and running this Holiday Season as well thanks to Mrs. Amy. All of our children got to perform either music or a special reading they worked hard on for the whole congregation in our second annual children's Christmas performance! This year was extra special because we found out about special musical talents a few of our parents have, so we got to enjoy live music as a part of the performance from Ofelia and Lewis Valdes, parents of Olivia! December was such a special time from start to end, and we look forward to so much more fun in 2025!



PRE- TEEN MINISTRY

# *BIBLE* STUDY



**parent coffee & information session**

February 9th

9:15-10:15

Hospitality Hall

This ministry is designed for  
4th-6th graders

## **Manna Bag (Emergency snack) 2024 Christmas Giving Report**

The gifts of water, Vienna sausages, and fruits cups pus cracker snacks were so numerous at Christmas we have not had an opportunity to count them all. However, there is more than enough to provide several months of Manna supplies. A lot of these came from kids and that's a cool thing. The cash contributions at the Altar amounted to \$600.00 plus two Target gifts cards equal to \$100. Actually, with the tax discount contract with Target it's more like \$120.00. It's very gratifying to have that type of support from our church members. Thank you.



*Calling all  
bakers*



*Would you be willing to  
donate a baked good for  
ASP Bake Sale on Sunday,  
February 23?*

*Sign up with Sheridan in  
hospitality hall after church today!*



United  
Women  
in Faith

**United Women in Faith is on Winter  
break but we will be back Mar 11  
at 6 pm in the Lounge. Mark your  
calendar to join us. ALL are invited to  
join us.**



## Echoes of the Divine: The Enduring Power of Sacred Organ Music

Few musical traditions evoke as much awe and reverence as sacred organ music. Its deep, resonant tones have filled the world's great cathedrals and churches for centuries, transcending cultural and temporal boundaries. Whether accompanying a solemn liturgy or a jubilant celebration, the organ has a unique ability to touch the soul, creating an atmosphere where the divine feels near.

### A Symphony of Innovation and Devotion

The organ's association with sacred music dates back to the early Christian Church. By the Middle Ages, the organ was firmly established as the "king of instruments," its capacity for dynamic range and tonal variety making it an ideal medium for worship. In the Gothic cathedrals of Europe, the organ was not just an instrument; it was a technological marvel and a symbol of divine grandeur.

The 17th and 18th centuries brought an explosion of creativity, with composers like Johann Sebastian Bach elevating sacred organ music to unparalleled heights. Bach's works, such as the Toccata and Fugue in D Minor and the Prelude and Fugue in C Major, remain benchmarks of the repertoire, showcasing the organ's capacity for both technical brilliance and spiritual depth.

### The Sonic Architecture of Faith

The power of sacred organ music lies in its ability to transform space and time. The organ's rich overtones resonate within the stone walls of sacred spaces, creating an auditory experience that envelops the listener. This "sonic architecture" mirrors the physical architecture of the cathedrals themselves, with their soaring arches and intricate designs, inviting contemplation and awe.

Modern organ builders and composers continue to innovate, blending traditional craftsmanship with cutting-edge technology. Digital and hybrid organs have brought the sound of the grand cathedral to smaller venues, ensuring the accessibility of sacred music to new audiences.

### The Role of Organists: Custodians of a Sacred Tradition

The artistry of the organist is central to the enduring appeal of sacred organ music. These musicians are not merely performers but interpreters of a living tradition. They navigate the instrument's complexities—often managing multiple keyboards, pedals, and stops—while simultaneously interpreting the music's spiritual and emotional dimensions.

Organists often serve as custodians of a church's musical heritage, preserving and sharing a repertoire that spans centuries. Many also compose new works, ensuring that sacred organ music remains a vibrant and evolving art form.

## Sacred Organ Music in Contemporary Worship

While the golden age of sacred organ music may have peaked during the Baroque period, its role in modern worship remains vital. From the majestic processional hymns of high liturgical traditions to contemporary compositions that blend classical and modern influences, organ music continues to inspire and uplift congregations worldwide.

In a time when much of the world moves at a rapid pace, the organ offers something profoundly countercultural: a moment of stillness, reflection, and connection to something greater than oneself. It is a bridge between the temporal and the eternal, a reminder of the transcendent beauty that lies at the heart of faith.

### A Timeless Gift

Sacred organ music is more than just a historical relic; it is a living testament to humanity's enduring quest to express the ineffable. As long as there are spaces where the sacred and the musical meet, the organ will continue to resonate, its powerful tones echoing through time and into the hearts of those who listen. We are blessed to have both a priceless instrument in the form of St. Luke's magnificent organ, but also a talented musician and steward of said instrument in our organist – Wes Kirkpatrick.

So, next Sunday I invite you to experience the transformative power of sacred organ music, the invitation is open. Find a seat in our beautiful sanctuary, listen to the first chords swell, and let the echoes of the divine wash over you.

- Jacob Allen, Director of Music



# HOLY WEEK SERVICES



**Palm  
Sunday  
April 13  
10:30am**



**Maundy  
Thursday  
April 17  
6pm**



**Good  
Friday  
April 18  
3pm**



**Easter  
Sunday  
April 20  
7am  
10:30am**

## Day School News

We are in the middle of enrollment for 25-26! How can this year be flying by so quickly? Enrollment for our current families will last until the end of January. The first week of February, we open enrollment to new families. In mid-March, our current families will have the opportunity to register for summer camp.

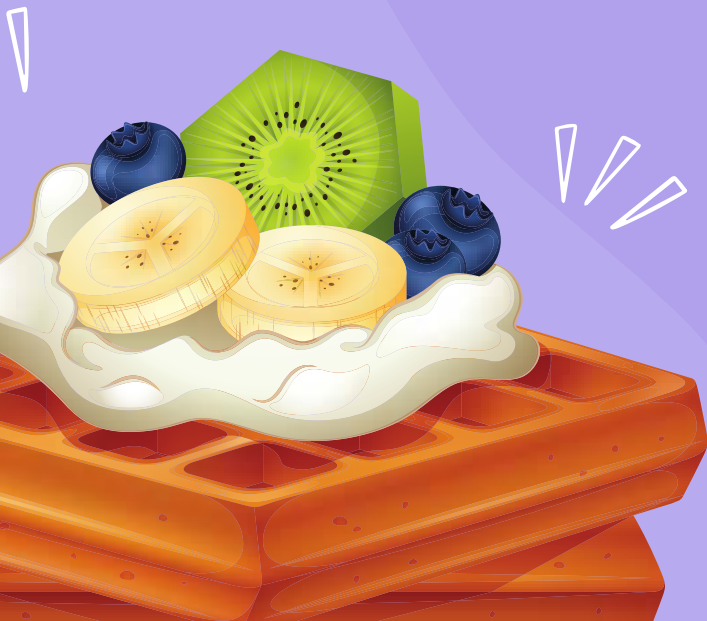
The Day School is always in need of Baby Wipes, Clorox wipes and Lysol spray (our teachers love the purple can!). If you would like to make a donation, simply leave it at the front desk and we will pick it up! We are grateful for the many ways St. Luke's supports our school!



## The Fun Bunch Activities

- **Thursday, February 13th at 11:30:** Lunch at the Women's Exchange. We will meet at the Women's Exchange for lunch and fellowship. Please sign up at the Hospitality Hall desk so we can make reservations. The address is 88 Racine St, Memphis, TN 38111
- **Thursday, March 20th:** We will be going to Calvary Episcopal for their Waffle Luncheon. The speaker will be Nabil Bayakly. We will be taking the church bus and will be leaving at 10:15am. Please sign at the Hospitality Hall desk by Sunday, March 16th so we can make reservations.

**Questions ? Call Jim or Jeanne Debo 413-3341**



The Waffle Shop at Calvary Episcopal Church is right around the corner. It will be open Thursday, March 6 through Friday April 11th, and is open Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 11am-1:30pm. If you would like to volunteer, please let Doey know what days you would like to work. There are several volunteer positions available besides servers! Thanks! Doey- 901-351-7942



# Advent Collection

Thank-you to everyone for contributing to St Luke's Advent collection. Items were delivered to St Luke's Food Pantry, St Luke's Day School, Golden Cross, Manna Bags, and Dorothy Day House. Some totals were: 24 cake mixes, 64 cans of soup, 30 cans of vegetables, 20 packs of diapers, 30 packages of baby wipes, 62 cans of vienna sausages, 20 boxes of kleenex, toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, shampoo.







**1st Floor Renovations have been completed! Thank you for your patience. Huge thanks to Mark Wofford for his assistance in this major project!**



# *OUR MISSION STATEMENT*

**We are becoming a faithful community of disciples striving to share the heart,  
mind and hands of Jesus Christ with all people.**

## **Staff Directory**

**Jim McKinney**  
**Senior Pastor**

jim.mckinney@stlukesumc.org  
901-361-5726 (Cell)

**Dennis Neenan**, Utility Pastor  
901-378-7505 (Cell)  
dpneenan@comcast.net

**Harry Colter**, Pastoral Assistant  
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**Jacob Allen**  
Director of Music  
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**Wes Kirkpatrick**, Organist

**Mary Page Contreras**  
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**Amy Pearson**  
Day School Director  
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**Alexa Velasco**

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**Eddie Anderson**

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**Tracy Farnsworth**

Church Administrator  
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901-452-6262, ext 105

**Sheridan Harris**

Youth Ministry Director  
sheridan.harris@stlukesumc.org  
901-452-6262, ext. 119

**Jabarey Luster**

Challengers After School Director  
jabarey.luster@stlukesumc.org  
901-407-7301

Sunday School: 9:00 a.m.

Worship: 10:30 a.m.

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