

THE EPISTLE

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

Coming into Bristol, Virginia a tourist attraction sign reads "The Virginia Creeper Trail". I hung my head low when I read the sign because of an unpleasant experience with this Creeper.

Some three years ago, I was expressing to the pool guy where we were lodging that there was an abundance of poison Ivy that we had to be careful not to touch. His reply was "that's not poison ivy, its a native plant called Virginia Creeper."

To myself I said, "My goodness!" I chose not to tell him that for ten years, trimming shears was a packed item for The Outer Banks vacation to cut to the ground the "poison ivy" wherever we were staying. For years, I needlessly cut a plant that was not itchy at all. I remember thinking "If I had only asked a lot earlier." It turned out that the Creeper was me.

"If I had only asked?" Now, that is a statement which many a person has quietly whispered to themselves. It visits us in situations after we have caused harm much more serious than the creeper incident. Such moments lands us in a Hood named Regret.

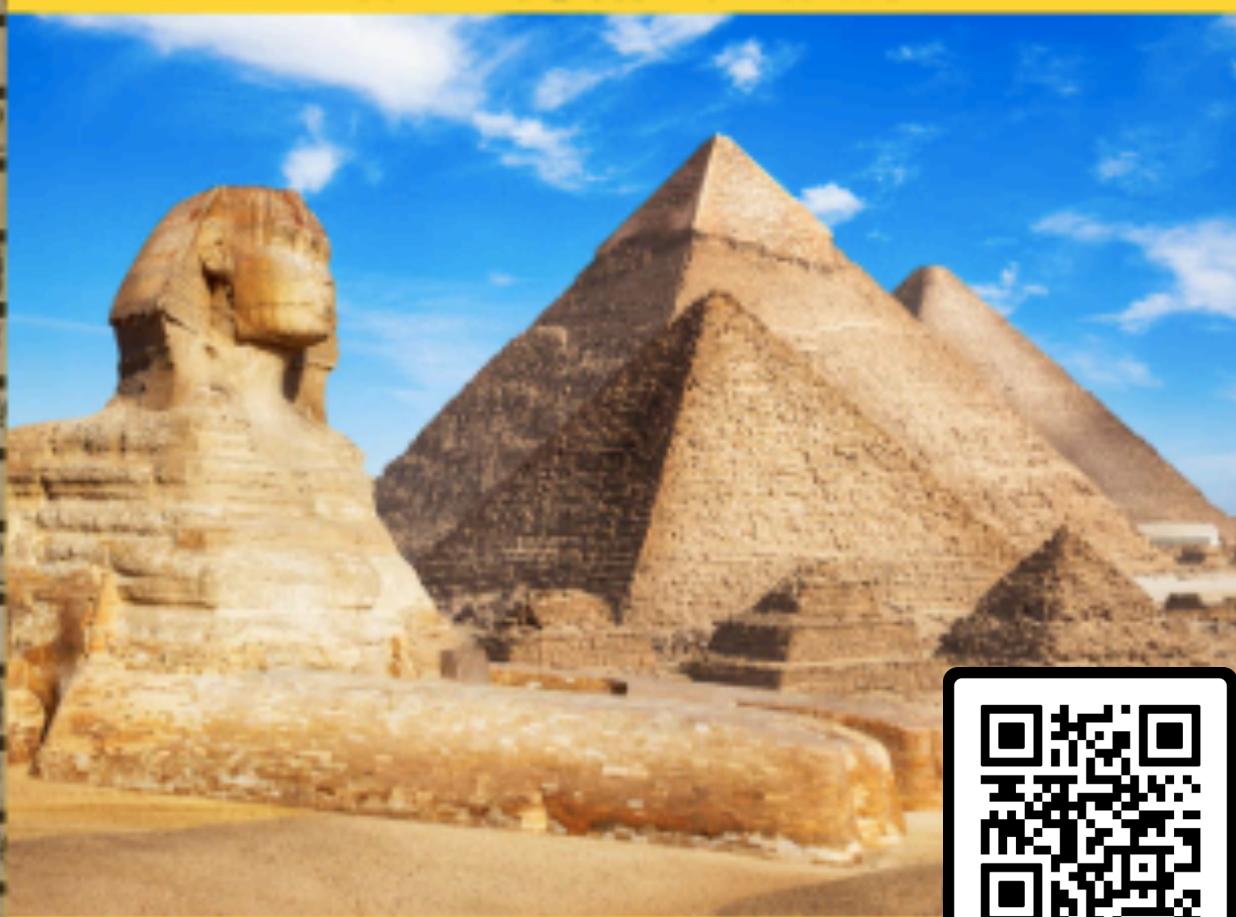
In John 3:1-21, Nicodemus is meeting Jesus at night in a garden. In some circles this "Nick at Night" visit is interpreted sadly as a cowardly act. I read this encounter as an "asking event." Rather than assuming

or camping in the party line, he asked right away "Who are you Jesus? He may be one of the few out of billions of people in this world over all time who did not whisper "If I had only asked." The straight out asking Nicodemus practiced can be our road out of the Hood too. We have only to ask and often what we believed to be so out of line becomes strangely dim.

Blessings,
Dennis Neenan

ASK.

**JOIN US FOR VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL
AS WE TRAVEL TO
ANCIENT EGYPT
TO LEARN ABOUT JOSEPH'S JOURNEY
FROM PRISON TO PALACE**



**VBS IS JUNE 9-12, 2025
FROM 5:30-7:30 PM
DINNER IS SERVED NIGHTLY
& VBS IS FREE!
SCAN THE QR CODE TO REGISTER NOW!**

901-452-6262

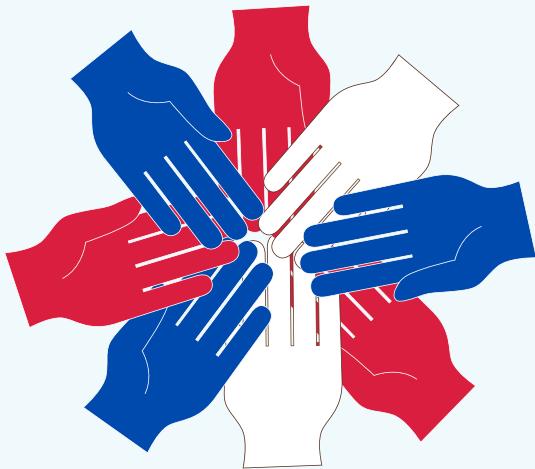
MARYPAGE CONTRERAS@STLUKESUMC.ORG

480 S. HIGHLAND, MEMPHIS, TN 38111

Asp MISSION TRIP

This year ASP will be from June 14 - 21, in Magoffin County, KY, staying at Herald Whitaker Middle School. They are in need of monetary donations for gas and individually packed snacks like chips, Little Debbie's, granola bars, fruit snacks, as well as pre-packaged water bottles and Gatorade. If anyone has any questions, they can email Carson Blount at **ceblount1@gmail.com**





HELPING HANDS CELEBRATION

Join us Sunday, June 22 at 5 p.m. as we welcome home our Appalachia Service Project volunteers and celebrate the American spirit of service at St. Luke's.

Hamburger or Hotdog with all the fixings,
chips, s, drink and Frozen Treat
\$8.00 - family maximum of \$25.00.

Make your reservations by Wednesday, June 18 in Worship or by calling 452-6262.

Wear your red, white, and blue.
We're sure to have some patriotic fun too!

**PIRATES & PRINCESSES
BACK TO SCHOOL BASH
FRIDAY, AUGUST 1, 2025
5:30 TO 7:30 P.M.**

**WATER SLIDES,
BOUNCE HOUSE,
TONS OF WATER FUN!**

**PLAY FOR FREE
HAMBURGER OR HOTDOG DINNER WITH CHIPS,
DRINK AND DESSERT
\$8.00 WITH A \$25 FAMILY MAXIMUM**

EVERYONE'S WELCOME - BRING A FRIEND!



Children's Ministry

As we finish out the school year, the excitement of Summer and sunshine are all around us. Vacation Bible School is just around the corner, but there is still time to volunteer, or register a child! VBS is open to all and will take place June 9-12th in the evenings from 5:30-7:30 pm with dinner served nightly. Registration is open on the St. Luke's website or you can scan the QR code on our flyer! The best part of VBS is everything is completely FREE! Your kids definitely will not want to miss the fun as we travel back to Ancient Egypt to learn all about Joseph's journey from the prison to the palace. Reach out to Mary Page Contreras for more information on how you can help or to ask questions.



Thank you so much for the wonderful farewell reception on Sunday, May 25. We are sad to be leaving St Luke's, but very excited to start our new life in retirement together as a couple in Michigan. You all have been our Church Family for the past 2.5 years and we are so grateful for your love and support. It has been fun working with you and getting to know you all.

With much love, Eddie and Tracy

We are excited that Larry Blanks and Carolyn Joiner have joined the staff as their replacements. Please stop by the offices to meet and greet them!



Eddie proposed to Tracy on Wednesday, April 30 while on a mission trip in Pawnee, IL at the Midwest Mission Distribution Center. They will be retiring and looking forward to traveling. He is selling his house and they will be living in MI.

Congratulations and warm wishes were shared with Tracy Farnsworth and Eddie Anderson at a reception in their honor on May 25. As you probably know, Tracy and Eddie met and fell in love while working on our church staff. They are engaged and will be moving to Michigan in June. We appreciate their service and commitment to St. Luke's. They will both be greatly missed.





The Fun Bunch Roadtrip!

When: Thursday June 19, at 9:45am

We will be carpooling to the Sultana Disaster Museum in Marion, Ark. We will be departing from St Luke's at 9:45 for a tour of the museum with lunch after. We will be returning home around 2pm.

Please sign up at the front desk so we will know how to plan.

Call Jim or Jeanne Debo for any questions: 413-3341

MAY 2025 HONORIUMS AND MEMORIALS:

Honorums:

In Honor of Brady St Gelais from Barbara Simpson

In Honor of Jacob Allen from Carole Feisal, Shirley Robinson, Miller Delgadilo, Phyllis Gay, Mozell Starks, Ruth Morrison, Harry and Bette Colter

Memorials:

In Memory of Nita Barlow from Rex Hinkle, Joel and Kiersten Dube

In Memory of Tom Burkett from Carole Feisal

In Memory of Joanne Williams from Rorie Read, David and Virginia Wages, Karen Kinney

In Memory of Mike Smith from Carolyn Galloway and Allen Bolen, Carole Feisal

In Memory of Frankie from Rorie Read

In Memory of Jerry Buckaloo from Carole Feisal

In Memory of Kay Hawes from Mary Lou Cushing

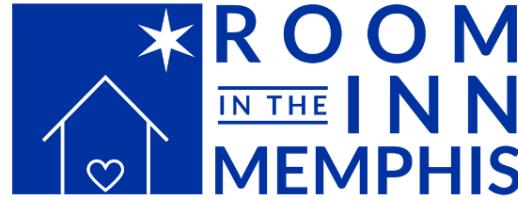
Manna Bag (Emergency snack) Giving Report

Manna bags are emergency snacks in brown bags one may see any Sunday inside a clutched hand leaving after Sunday service. Possibly, one might notice during the week as many as fifteen to twenty "walk by" individuals being handed a Manna bag near the hospitality door. This year \$1,216, unbudgeted contributions paid for supplies providing these 850 bags.

Thank you to all who contribute through giving or service to another St. Luke's Wesleyan effort serving others. Any amount made out to the Manna Account and placed in the offering plate is much appreciated. Remember the needy that use all of our food ministries in your prayers. Thank you! You may also view the contents of one of these bags in the UMM's display case on the wall near the choir room.

Project 20/20 Eyeglasses

End of Year eyeglass contributions from St. Luke's: 110 glasses Thank you!



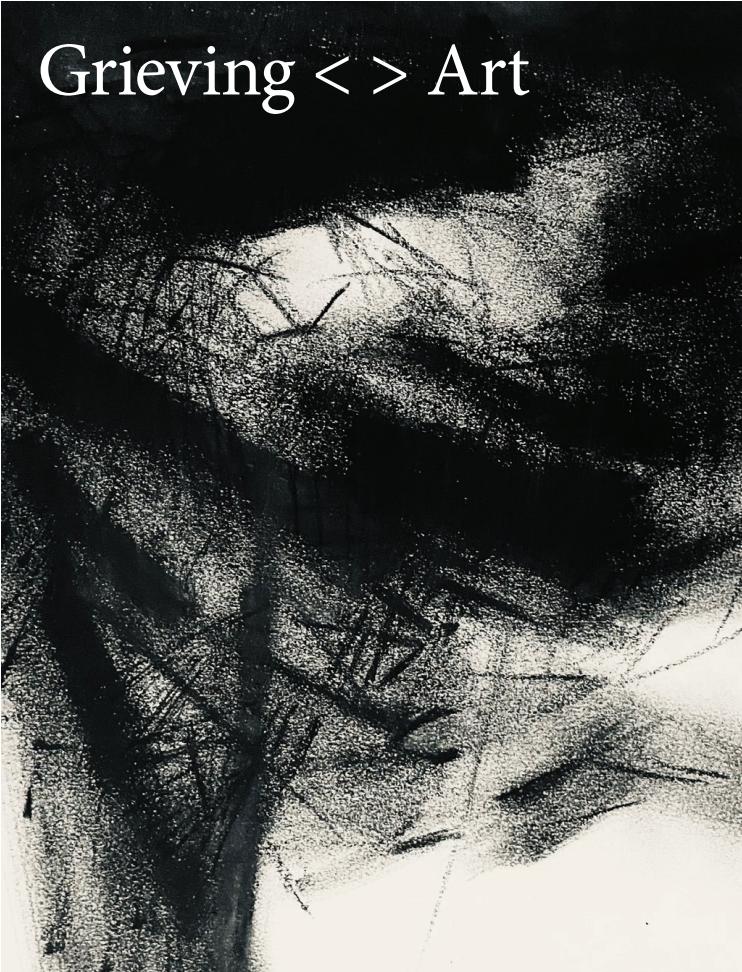
Over the last four years, RITI has sheltered 3,042 individuals through the Congregational Shelter, Recuperative Care, and Family Inn programs. 972 of those sheltered on our campus were children under the age of 18.

With support from the RITI community, 181 households have exited homelessness since April 2021. At Room In The Inn - Memphis, each guest and family brings a story of their own. As we walk alongside those stories, which are often tragic and challenging, they become stories of hope and healing in time. With your help and support, brighter days are made possible through a caring staff and volunteers.

Every winter season St. Luke's in cooperation with Room In The Inn – Memphis, we provide warm safe shelter for our Memphis homeless. This past winter season we provided shelter, transportation from a downtown site to our church, a warm meal, hot showers, a safe clean bed for the night, breakfast and a snack bag and return transportation back downtown for 36 women and 10 children. We had 70 volunteers that helped with driving, setting up, providing supper, snack bags, overnight Shepards and cleaning up on Sunday mornings.

Thank you to all of those who supported us in this endeavor. --Lisa and Jonathan St. Gelais

Grieving < > Art



Learn how to express
the inexpressible through art.

Sometimes the emotions are too
profound to express in any other way.

This six-week course is taught by John Rutkauskas,
a life-long artist and instructor for Creative Aging.
No skill or previous art experience needed.

Grieving < > Art @ St. Luke's United Methodist Church
480 S. Highland St, Memphis, TN 38111
Meets Saturdays from 1:00 - 2:30 pm. Cost - \$150
Dates: July 12, 19, 26, August 2, 9, 16
Registration opens June 9, 2025. Class size is limited to 12.



Use this QR code to register, or to
contact John for more information.

Scout News

Pack 40 had their Blue and Gold Advancement / Awards Ceremony on May 9th. We had 13 hardworking scouts who earned 63 adventure loops, 35 adventure pins, and 8 new ranks, including Prince Hobson who earned the prestigious award Arrow of Light Rank and crossed over into Troop 40.

Pack 40 has 8 scouts planning to attend Cub Scout Resident Camp at Kia Kima Scout Reservation in Hardy, AR May 31 - June 3rd.

Troop 40B & Troop 40G will have 9 scouts attending week 1 of Kia Kima Scout camp June 8th - 14th, where they will be working on various merit badges.

Troop 40B would like to congratulate Ramsey Hall for graduating from Overton High School. We will be wishing him all the best as he plans to attend MTSU in the fall.