

THE EPISTLE

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

The Dark Night of the Soul

"Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb" John 20:1 As I read that, I was taken by the words, "while it was still dark." Mary Magdalene went to visit Jesus' tomb "while it was still dark." While at the tomb she saw Jesus -- but she didn't recognize him. Jesus said, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" Thinking him to be the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away."

Then Jesus called her name --- "Mary" -- and the light suddenly dawned for her. Hearing Jesus say her name caused Mary to recognize him, and suddenly her darkness was dispelled. Suddenly the cares fell from her shoulders, and she knew that Jesus was alive once again. She could not imagine how that had happened, but it was obviously true. Jesus was alive, and the world was once again awash in light.

St. Luke's, Jesus still does that, you know. Jesus still comes to us in our darkness --calling us by name -- dispelling our fears - calling us into the light.

We need to hear that, because we all experience what the poets call "The Dark Night of the Soul" -- periods of loneliness and desolation and despair. None of us is exempt.

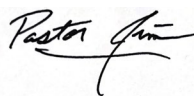
The Easter story is God's assurance that he is with us in the midst of our darkest night.

The Easter story is God's assurance that darkness is not the end. It is his promise that he will bring us through the darkness into the light.

The Easter story is God's assurance that: "neither death, nor life, angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38).

St. Luke's, when we are caught up in our Dark Night of the Soul, we need to remember that.

Happy Easter,
Pastor Jim



Pastor Jim





ST. LUKE'S AT THE REDBIRDS GAME!

Save the Date!

St. Luke's UMC is invited to go out to the
Redbirds game on June 1st, 2024 at
6:30p, fireworks to follow after!
More info to come!



LENTEN WORSHIP SERVICES AT NOON

Each Tuesday during Lent in
the Chapel!

Feb. 20th- Mar. 26th

\$5 Soup & Sandwich Lunch
Immediately After the Service
in the Parlor

*If you would like to help with the food,
please contact Shirley Robinson*



SMORGASBORD PRESENTS

PUTTING ON THE RITZ

Come enjoy our community wide talent show benefitting our Youth Summer programs including Appalachia Service Project. We'll enjoy a spaghetti lunch with desserts donated by our wonderful St. Luke's cooks, followed by a show you will not want to miss for \$10 per person with a family maximum of \$30.

We are signing up performers of all types and ages NOW! Acts may be serious or funny. We welcome musicians, comedians, skits, dancers, singers, magicians. Groups and individual performers are included and both the talented, and of course, the not so talented are welcome!

Text or call Lynne McAlexander at 550-3091 no later than April 11th. Plan now to be a part of the FUN!

April 21 | 11:30am



Day School News

Spring Break is March 11-15. We are all excited about warm weather and sunny days!

Pastry Party and Basket Raffle:

Our teachers and parents are working hard to get ready for our "Pastry Party and Basket Raffle" on Wednesday, March 27. The Pastry Party is "Muffins for Moms, Donuts for Dads and Granola for Grandparents" all wrapped into one! Everyone will enjoy treats and have an opportunity to buy raffle tickets for themed baskets and children's art. Last year was a huge success and we're excited to offer it again.

We will have Easter Egg hunts on Thursday, March 28. The school will be closed for Good Friday, March 29 and Easter Monday, April 1. Happy Easter!

Jeremiah's Italian Ice Night!

Mark your calendars for Thursday, April 4! We will have a fundraiser at Jeremiah's Italian Ice, 3717 Summer Avenue. Join us for a community gathering and YUMMY Italian Ice!





St. Luke's Acolytes: Spring 2024

*Ziggy Goodman
Fitz Harris
Charlie Hinds
Shannon Hinds
Abby Walker*

Women's Spring Retreat

The Deborah Discipleship Band will be hosting a Women's Spring Retreat on Saturday, April 6 from 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. at the home of Amy Pearson. The noise in our lives can often get in the way of hearing, seeing and simply being with God. As nature will be waking up and new life sprouting around us, this will provide intentional space for silence and listening, contemplation, and sharing - with the hope of hearing what new life might be bubbling up within ourselves.

Space is limited and registration is required. There is no cost for this retreat. To register, *please email Denise Hensley at thehensleys421@gmail.com*. **Registration deadline is March 30.**

Breakfast and snacks will be provided. Bring a notebook and pen. Wear comfortable clothes. Walking will be offered for those interested. All are welcome to meet for lunch at the General Store after the retreat.

YOUNG PARENT SUNDAY SCHOOL HOSTING ENNEAGRAM STUDY! ALL ARE WELCOME!

The Enneagram is a unique tool for deepening self-awareness. Unlike other personality tests that focus more on behavior, the Enneagram takes a deeper dive into motivation behind the behavior – where we place our attention and what we most avoid. It can be a map for personal and spiritual growth because it indicates the autonomic patterns of our ego structure thus gets to the core of who we are.

Join us for this 4-week series on the Enneagram. While it will be helpful to know your type, it will not be required as this will be more of an introduction to the Enneagram.

The class will be taught by our own Denise Hensley, certified Spiritual Director through The Haden Institute, and trained in the Enneagram.

The class will meet in the church library, 9- 10 a.m., April 7, 14, 21 and 28.

Sit & Sew

Sit and Sew continues working on Easter dresses for Sherwood and preemie baby clothing for Methodist South's NICU. You can reach me at martystitches@aol.com or by phone 901-324-4943.

Blessings,
Marty Cobb, Seamstress
St Luke's UMC Sewing Ministry

Golden Cross Ministries

The ministry is still in need of Move-In kits. Items for Move-In kits is on the Hospitality Hall bulletin board or you can email me at martystitches@aol.com for needed items. Cleaning supplies are always needed as well as bath and bed linens. Always glad to serve.

Blessings,
Marty Cobb, Key Woman

Children's Ministry NEWS

In our Children's Ministries at St. Luke's we have some fun things on the way for Easter, a most special time of the year! Our Easter Egg Hunt is scheduled for Saturday, March 23rd from 10:00-12:00 pm and we will need volunteers! We will have two Easter Egg hunts for different age groups running at the same time, as well as many other fun activities and games going on the whole morning. In addition to our super fun Easter Egg Hunt, our Children's Choir will be doing a special performance of music they have been working on, Sunday, March 31st as part of the Easter Sunday Worship Service and our children will also get to participate in waving the branches on Palm Sunday too! It will definitely be a day you do not want to miss! Make sure your kids are here for our combined Lenten Series Sunday School class that meets in the lounge each week. Choir rehearsals are immediately after. We are always in need of more volunteers as well and there are so many ways to serve! We will hold an interest meeting in March as well so stay tuned for more information on how you can help our kiddos! We returned Children's Church to the Lighthouse also and the kids have been learning so much. Thank you to all the volunteers who give of their time and pour into these young minds! See below for a lesson on how God can HELP us (Heal, Encourage, Love, and Preach to us about what is right).



ST. LUKE'S CHRISTIAN LIFE CENTER

St. Luke's 3rd grade boys basketball team finished their final game with a bang! The boys moved up in the league this year, which means stricter rules and faster paced games. The team improved their agility, passing, dribbling and communication tremendously.

We've coached a few of these guys since they were 5 years old and they never want the season to end. Be on the lookout for our summer basketball clinics.

Coach Sheridan and Robert Harris



CHALLENGERS

SUMMA 24` SCHEDULE

- WEEK OF MAY 27TH-31ST: 28TH-FIRST DAY OF CAMP!! 31ST-MONSTER MINI GOLF!
- WEEK OF JUNE 3RD-7TH: 4TH-JEREMIAH'S ITALIAN ICE! 5TH-WATER DAY WEDNESDAY! 7TH-BOTANIC GARDENS!
- WEEK OF JUNE 10TH-14TH: 10TH-WINGS GYMNASTICS! 12TH-WATER DAY WEDNESDAY! 14TH-LA MICHOCACANA!
- WEEK OF JUNE 17TH-21ST: 18TH-INSIDE OUT 2 AT MOVIE THEATRE! 19TH-WATER DAY WEDNESDAY! 21ST-901 GOATS!!
- WEEK OF JUNE 24TH-28TH: 25TH-DIXON GARDENS TRIP!! 26TH-WATER DAY WEDNESDAY! 28TH-SEIZE THE CLAY!

The background of the entire page is decorated with several stylized orange slices. Some are at the top, some at the bottom, and some are partially visible behind the central text box. The slices are drawn with thick orange outlines and lighter orange segments.

SUMMA 24` SCHEDULE

-NO CAMP JULY 1ST-5TH!!!

-WEEK OF JULY 8TH-12TH: 9TH-DESPICABLE ME 4 AT MOVIE THEATRE!! 10TH-WATER DAY WEDNESDAY! 12TH-SUGAR GHOST!

-WEEK OF JULY 15TH-19TH: 15TH-WINGS GYMNASTICS! 17TH-WATER DAY WEDNESDAY! 18TH-BOWLING AT BILLY HARDWICKS!!

-WEEK OF JULY 22ND-26TH: 23RD-CORDOVA SKATING RINK!!!

24TH-WATER DAY WEDNESDAY! 26TH- BELLTOWER TRIP!

**-WEEK OF JULY 29TH-AUGUST 2ND: 30TH-GARIBALDIS TRIP!!
31ST-WATER DAY WEDNESDAY! 2ND-BACK TO SCHOOL BASH!!**

A decorative border surrounds the page, featuring various colorful flowers and leaves in shades of pink, orange, yellow, and blue. The word "Spring" is written in a large, elegant, blue cursive font at the top center.

Spring

Spring is coming! Did you know the Spring Equinox is less than one month away? On Tuesday, March 19th at 10:06pm the Earth's axis and its orbit line up so that both hemispheres get an equal amount of sunlight. The word equinox comes from two Latin words meaning equal and night. That's because most of our planet gets the same amount of sunlight and darkness on the day of Spring Equinox. Equinoxes are the only two times yearly that the Sun rises due east and sets due west for all of us on Earth.

What does that mean for us? For those north of the equator, daylight will keep stretching longer— with earlier sunrises and later sunsets — until the summer solstice in June. The new season signals warmer weather, budding plants and migrating animals. All of this new life provides us with a renewed sense of hope. Hope for sunshine, beautiful flowers, birds singing and butterflies fluttering. What if we approached our spring with the same attitude?

Spring also signifies the season of Lent and Easter. In this season of Lent, I challenge you to get outside in the Spring weather and connect with God. Imagine these 40 days as a period of rebirth, renewal, rejuvenation and growth. You're being presented with the opportunity to create something new within yourself. Try shedding all the things that are holding you back. Just like the baby flowers that are emerging around us, we can reach for God's embrace and emerge as something bright and beautiful.

Here are some ideas to celebrate spring passed down throughout the ages:

- Get outside! Look around. Are worms and grubs reappearing? After getting my hands dirty and thinning some summer bulbs, I realized the grub worms are here. Before determining them as a nuisance, look into the important role they play in soil health. (The March Full Moon is called the "Worm Moon" for this very reason!)
- Visit a plant nursery. Trees, shrubs, and flowers are sensitive to temperature and day length, too. Since ancient days, people have used natural events as indicators of when the weather is right for planting. But as my grandpa always said, check the Farmer's Almanac for more certainty.
- Get creative..Butter lambs decorate Easter tables throughout Central and Eastern Europe, particularly in countries such as Russia, Slovenia, and Poland. Butter lambs are exactly what they sound like: mounds of butter that have been carved or molded to look like a lamb. Although many stores now sell butter lambs, hand making these classic centerpieces at home is a beloved tradition for many families. When using the butter lamb, the proper etiquette is to start at the back and leave the head for last.

Wishing you a season of bright growth this lenten season,
Sheridan Harris
Challengers Director

BASKETBALL

CAMP



JK, K, 1ST CO-ED TEAM

JUNE 10TH-13TH 4:00-6:00

\$40 PER PLAYER

**SKILLS:
DRIBBLING-SHOOTING-
PASSING-DEFENSE-AGILITY-
SPEED**

SHERIDANHARRIS@STLUKESUMC.ORG

● LIVE

FLAG FOOTBALL CAMP

JULY 15TH-18TH

4-6PM

ST. LUKE'S UMC

CO-ED RISING 3RD+4TH GRADERS \$40 PER PLAYER
SHERIDANHARRIS@STLUKESUMC.ORG



Scouts

For both the Pack and the Troop, scouts have been busy the last month, with 11 scouts participating in Scout Sunday Service on February 11th. Cub Scouts with help from the BSA Scouts spent the last month designing and building their pinewood derby cars for the Annual Pinewood Derby Race, which was held on Friday February 16th. After all their hard work the top three winners were: Dominick Freedman, Niraj Ramachandran and Will Wyatt. Also, Cub Scouts took a field trip to Fire Station #18 (located on Southern near Highland) to learn about protecting and serving the community.

The Troop helped with Room in the Inn on February 17th. They set up 12 air mattresses in preparation for the 10 guests and 2 shepherds to spend the night. Also, the troop prepared and served dinner to the guests.



A decorative border of colorful Easter eggs surrounds the text. The eggs are in various colors including teal, orange, blue, green, light blue, purple, pink, and yellow, and are arranged in a circular pattern around the central text.

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

March

- Tuesday's Midday Lenten Service at 12:00 in Chapel through March, Soup & Sandwich Lunch after.
- Wednesday Lenten Bible Study at 12 in Lounge
- Easter Egg Hunt on March 23 from 10a–12p in Fellowship Hall
- Palm Sunday Service March 24
- Fun Bunch to Theatre Memphis on March 27 at 1:30pm show
- Maundy Thursday Service 6p on March 28
- Love-In-Action Neighborhood Cleanup, 9a– 11a on March 29
- Good Friday Service at 12p on March 29
- Easter Sunrise Service at 7:30a on March 31
- Sweet Sunday in Hospitality Hall at 10a on March 31
- Easter Sunday Service at 10:30 am on March 31

April

- New Member Reception in Parlor at 11:30a on April 7
- Churchwide Talent Show (Youth Summer Programs including ASP Fundraiser) in Fellowship Hall, 11:30a – 1p on April 21
- Sweet Sunday in Hospitality Hall at 10a on April 28

May

- Mini-Golf/Barbeque (CLC Repairs Fund Raiser) 11:30a on May 19
- Sweet Sunday in Hospitality Hall at 10a on May 26

Honoriums:

In Honor of Jim McKinney, Jacob Allen, Wes Kirkpatrick, and Rorie Read from Jeffrey Williams

Memorials:

**In Memory of Candy Williams from Rorie Read, Barbara Caldwell, Jim and Linda McKinley,
Jeffrey Williams**

In Memory of Alice Roberts from Rorie Read, Shirley Robinson, Janie Hendrix, David and Virginia Wages, Mary Lou Cushing

United Women in Faith will resume their meetings Tuesday March 12 with fellowship and refreshments at 6:00pm in the Lounge. Program begins at 6:30 pm. Everyone welcome. Our program material for 2024 is Food, Faith and Fellowship. The first program will be on “Living Water”. Please come and check us out.

Easter Lilies

If you would like to help provide Easter Lilies for Easter Sunday, please complete this form and return to the church office. The deadline will be March 25th. The cost is \$16. A list of honorariums and memorials will be published on Easter Sunday, March 31st. You are welcome to take home your lilies after church on Easter Sunday.

Name _____ Phone _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Email _____

In Honor of _____

In Memory of _____

Amount enclosed: \$ _____