

THE EPISTLE

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

All In: Heart, Hands, Hope

This September, join us as we go All In: Heart, Hands, Hope—a call to offer our whole selves to God.

This September, St. Luke's family, we're launching our annual stewardship campaign and going All In: Heart, Hands, Hope. For three Sundays—September 14, 21, and 28—we'll reflect together on what it means to offer our whole selves to God, not just our finances, but our love, our service, and our trust in God's promises.

Stewardship is more than a pledge card; it is a way of living faithfully. Jesus reminds us in Matthew 6:21, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." On September 14, we will begin by considering how our giving reveals where our heart truly lies.

On September 21, our focus shifts to our hands, guided by James 2:17: "Faith by itself, if not accompanied by action, is dead." We will reflect on how our hands—through serving, helping, and giving—become instruments of God's grace.

Finally, on September 28, Commitment Sunday, we turn to hope, drawing from Hebrews 11:1: "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for..." Our gifts, financial and otherwise, express our hope in God's future and our trust that He is at work among us.

As you prepare for this season, we invite you to prayerfully consider your 2026 financial pledge.

But just as importantly, we encourage you to reflect on how your heart, your hands, and your hope can be given fully to God. Together, let's go "All In" as a church family—trusting that when we give ourselves completely, God does immeasurably more than we can imagine.

Phyllis Gay
Stewardship Chair



CARE TALKS

The immeasurable riches of Gods grace

On October 19, the third Sunday in October, we will be holding our second Care Talk Sunday. As our first, there will be a Sunday School opportunity to attend, a worship service on the theme of the Care Talk which will be followed with lunch and a the third care talk. The days events will end around 1 o'clock.

The days emphasis are on three invitations to experience more and more :

- The immeasurable or surpassing riches of Gods grace
- Ephesians 2:7
- The hymn Draw Me Nearer plainly share

“There are depths of love that we can not know till we cross the narrow sea” but until that day the offer is ours to seek and find Gods wealth of inexhaustible kindness to ever a greater degree.

In the weeks ahead, the three invitations to let us enjoy abundant life in much richer ways will be posted.

It is not an invitation to come to church because you will already be there but it is an invitation for the opportunity to go home in a new way never thought imaginable the rest of our days.

See you there.

Sincerely,
Pastor Neenan



BOUNDLESS RICHES
OF HIS GRACE

EPHESIANS 2:6-7

A vibrant Halloween-themed illustration for a 'Trunk or Treat' event. At the top, a string of orange and purple triangular bunting flags hangs against a dark purple night sky with stars. The main title 'JOIN US FOR TRUNK OR TREAT' is prominently displayed in large, bold, orange and green letters. Below the title, the scene is set on a green grassy hill. In the background, there are silhouettes of trees and a large, pale moon. Several cartoonish ghosts are floating around. A boy in a red devil costume with horns and a pitchfork stands on the left. In the center, a mummy is wrapped in white bandages and sits inside a wooden coffin. To the right, a girl in a black and white skeleton costume holds a jack-o'-lantern. A large orange balloon with skull patterns and a purple balloon are also present. A starburst graphic on the right says 'FREE CANDY'. At the bottom, an orange banner contains the event details: 'OCT 24TH', '5:30-7:30 PM', and 'ST. LUKE'S UMC 480 S. HIGHLAND ST'. Below the banner, it says 'BRING A FRIEND & YOUR CAR!'.

JOIN US FOR TRUNK OR TREAT

FREE
CANDY

JOIN THE COSTUME PARTY

OCT 24TH

5:30-7:30 PM

ST. LUKE'S UMC 480 S. HIGHLAND ST

BRING A FRIEND & YOUR CAR!

Children's Corner

We ended the Summer with a BANG in the Children's Department at St. Luke's. We made a big splash at the "Back to School Bash" with so many families present. The kids enjoyed water slides and bounce houses, a cookout, popsicles, and more! It was truly a blast and the momentum was surely carried on to Sunday morning with a tremendous showing for our "Blessing of the Backpacks." We continued the celebration on our Promotion Sunday where we gathered in the Day School Lobby and enjoyed donuts and juice to celebrate our new Sunday School classes and the start of the school year. We also recognized our rising third graders with a certificate and their very own bibles during the Worship Service. We got to give out 3 bibles to rising third graders this year which is so exciting!

Stay tuned for even more fun this Fall, like a potential family movie night coming in September and our super fun, intergenerational Trunk or Treat event on October 24th! Volunteers will be needed for all of our fun events. We are also looking for more helpers in the Lighthouse! If you would like to get on a once a month rotation to work with our children, or would like to help in any big or small ways with the Children's Department, please do not hesitate to reach out to Mary Page Contreras.



DAY SCHOOL NEWS

We're off to a great start. Amy Martin began music with the students and we all had so much fun. We have also begun Chapel and Story Time for our older classes.

If you are looking for an opportunity to volunteer, classes love to have readers! We will also accept baby wipes and clorox wipes year round!



***Give thanks to the Lord, who is good,
God's steadfast love endures forever. (Psalm 136:1)***

The opening verse from Psalm 136 begins a long recitation of God's saving acts throughout Israel's history. The second half of every verse is the same -- "God's steadfast love endures forever." To me, this statement calls forth our very best in praise and worship. Our Chancel Choir and Handbell Choir are continuing to come together for the Sundays and seasons ahead, and if you are a youth or adult with musical gifts (or even aspirations) to bring to our music ministry, please reach out to me, either in person at church on Sunday mornings or by email at **music@stlukesumc.org**.

The music schedule is:

Chancel Choir rehearsal on Wednesdays 6:30-8:00, lead in worship every Sunday

Handbell Choir rehearsal on Sundays 3:00-4:00, play occasionally for worship

Amy Martin, Minister of Music and Worship



Scout News

Pack 40 has started holding meetings again. We meet starting in the Chapel on Tuesday nights 6:30 - 7:30 pm. We are currently in the process of recruiting at local schools, hoping to expand our Pack. We are looking for boys and girls in Kindergarten through 5th grade who want to learn life skills while having fun.

The Pack, Boy Troop and Girl Troop have started our Popcorn Fundraiser. For the months of September and October we will be busy working our popcorn booths and planning fall camping trips.

Yours in Scouting,
Lisa & Jonathan St.Gelais

Make Sunday Count!

Sunday School Classes

Seekers are reading J Ellsworth Kalas book: A Hop, Skip, and a Jump through the Bible.

Newman Class: Max Lucado's Help is Near- Finding fresh strength and purpose in the power of the Holy Spirit

Amber and Charlotte are reading Randy Alcorn Heaven

Growing Disciples are viewing The Chosen, the life of Jesus.

Christian Homebuilders are deciding on the next study.

Youth: Being a Holy Teenager

Young Adult: Animate a book/DVD about animating seven different spiritual practices in our walk with God.

A Speech Therapy Matter:

Speech therapy session 2 on Taming the tongue-GOSSIP

You may have been surprised about our first speech therapy session on being a casualty of casual conversation. What said in the past in a completely honest setting can make an unwelcome visit.

This session on corrupt speech about gossip is no stranger. It is described as whispered idle talk or rumor and vocal accusations especially about the personal and private affairs of others. The intention of a wagging tongue typically mouthing unkind and damaging unconfirmed details as true and behind their back is to humiliate, diminish, and “finish off” a foe.

Gossip has been the plague of all societies generating both personal and social havoc from the ancient of days. To counter this treacherous wayward talk both civil and religious teachings highly condemns this unfruitful speech of whispered and vocal smear campaigns naming it evil speech.

In fact there are over 259 Bible references addressing this idle talking also known as tale bearing, backbiting, and slandering. The verses consist of warnings to not indulge as it is a sin, the heart ache that befalls the victims, and the fatal outcomes of the busybodies. Matthew 12:36-37.

Though this is an infringement of privacy, just like that of opening up another’s mail, this planned mischief referred to as wicked scheming involving deceit in Biblical times remains a personal pastime as well as a lucrative business enterprise. As for example Hedda Hoppers Gossip columns from the mid 30’s thru the 40’s and The New York Post Page 6.

Included in gossip rehab is guidance in how to stop by various means. A few of many exercises include:

Ask yourself before you speak about another, “would you say the same small things to them.” If not, it is probably gossip.

Commit yourself to edifying and encouraging speech, Ephesians 4:29

When caught unaware in a gossipy moment walk away or ask the person what do you mean by what you said

If so dare, kindly but firmly call a gossip and their crew out for saying something unkind as a tale bearer who are associated with depraved minds. Romans 1:29

Before speaking ask yourself if you would say the same small things in front of the person that your desiring to talk about. If not, it’s likely it’s not something you should say.

If struggling with gossiping and want to stop seek Godly guidance from wise counsel.

Exercise forgiveness when a victim.

I add another suggestion related to Proverbs 26:20. Without wood the fire goes out:and when there is no whisperer gossip ceases.

Gossip is a two part activity. There is the one who is the “Gos” and then there are those who “Sip up” the treacherous talk. The advice is to stop the sipping with the “Gossers. If no takers then the “Gossers” would be out of business.

God cares about our speech. Weigh what we always say with a great deal of forethought.

Proverbs 18:8 expresses that gossiping is tempting and enjoyable but it can be damaging and harmful. Playing with fire.

Sincerely,

Pastor Neenan





The Fun Bunch Roadtrip

The Fun Bunch will be carpooling to the Sultana Museum in Marion, AR for a special tour. We will be leaving from St. Luke's at 9:45. We will have lunch in Marion before returning home.

Please sign up for this trip!

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



Greetings! With the school year under way, it makes me think that winter will be upon us soon. Which means we have the opportunity to help homeless women/children through having Room In The Inn at our church. We usually pick one Saturday per month, in the months November through March. Currently we have the supplies to help 10 women/children. It is in my heart to try and serve more people, I would love to be able to shelter 13 women/children each month. In order to do that we will need some more supplies. We currently have 7 tall and 8 short air mattresses. My goal is to have 15 tall air mattresses, so we can have a tall one for each guest and overnight shepherd. Since you have been so supportive in the past, I am asking anyone who has the ability to help, to donate, either money or the items listed below.

- **We need 8 tall air mattresses, I would like to have the money donated so that we can purchase the ones we want. I have priced them out and they are \$55.00 each.**
- **We need 4 moving mats/pads**
- **We need 4 gently used (or new) twin sheet sets**
- **We need 5 gently used (or new) blankets**
- **We need 4 gently used (or new) bath towels**
- **We need 4 gently used (or new) wash cloths**
- **We need 4 gently used (or new) pillows**

We NEED your help for this mission project. Questions? Call or text Jonathan St.Gelais 901-508-7207 or Lisa St.Gelais 901-230-9174.



Break Bread Together *Again!*

Beginning September 7, each first Sunday, (Communion Sunday,) we will have seating reserved at Jason's Deli for a time of food and fellowship following worship. Lunch is Dutch treat and no reservations are needed. Just go through the line, sit down at the St. Luke's table, and enjoy a relaxed time with your church family. Everyone is welcome!



United
Women
in Faith

The United Women in Faith will be sponsoring a Lunch for the Wesley Foundation students from the University Of Memphis on Thursday September 25 at noon. Come and join us in welcoming the students.

AUGUST 2025 HONORIUMS AND MEMORIALS:

Memorials:

In Memory of Jack Cushing from Rita Richardson, Janie Hendrix, Hal and Betty Padgett, Sarah Jordan, Barbara Simpson, Newman Sunday School Class