

# February

*St Luke Union Church*

## Thank You

We would like to thank the congregation of St. Luke's for all of your kind expressions of prayers, sympathy and support for Mom (Chris Bateman) on her recent passing. She loved you all as family and your love for her was so evident at her services and luncheon afterwards. She would have loved the celebration!

The Clara "Chris" Bateman family

## St. Valentine

Valentine was a Christian priest in Rome during the reign of Emperor Claudius II. According to legend, Claudius had banned marriages for young men, believing that unmarried soldiers made better warriors since they wouldn't be distracted by family life. Valentine defied this decree and continued to perform secret marriages for young couples in love. Eventually, he was arrested and brought before Claudius. Despite the emperor's orders, Valentine is said to have continued preaching Christianity and even tried to convert Claudius himself.

The emperor, unimpressed by Valentine's actions, ordered his execution. Before his death, Valentine is said to have healed the blind daughter of his jailer, and some stories suggest that he sent her a letter, signed "From your Valentine," a phrase that is thought to have influenced the tradition of sending love notes on St. Valentine's Day.

**Pastor Andy Jokes: 1) What do you call two birds in love?**

**2) Why did the couple go to the gym on Valentine's Day?**



# FEBRUARY 2025

SUN                  MON                  TUE                  WED                  THU                  FRI                  SAT

01

02

Communion  
 Sunday Sch 9:30a  
 Choir Prac. 9:30a  
 Worship 10:30a  
 Flute Recital  
 1:30p

03

Adult Bible Study  
 12p  
 Boy Scouts 7p

04

Mission Team  
 5:30p

05

Spiritual Growth  
 Team 5p  
 Church Chat 6p  
 Choir Practice 7p

06

07

Men's Breakfast  
 7a

08

DAR Mtg 10a

09

Choir Prac. 9:30a  
 Worship 10:30a

10

Boy Scouts 7p

11

Resource Team  
 2p  
 Finance Meeting  
 5p

12

Worship Team 5p  
 Choir Practice 7p

13

Crossroads Mtg  
 9a

14

15

16

RaiseRight  
 Sunday Sch 9:30a  
 Choir Prac 9:30a  
 Worship 10:30a

17

Presidents Day  
 Office Closed  
 Boy Scouts 7p

18

VMC Meeting  
 5:30p

19

Church Chat 6p  
 Choir Practice 7p

20

Faith Brews 5p

21

Pack 33 Blue &  
 Gold Banquet 4p

22

23

Scout Sunday  
 Choir Prac. 9:30a  
 Worship 10:30a

24

Adult Bible Study  
 12p  
 Boy Scouts 7p

25

Lamplighters 7p

26

Choir Practice 7p

27

28

**Happy Birthday!** Meredith Stevens 2/4; Susan Trower 2/6; Charles McLean 2/9;  
 Michael Verplaetse 2/10; John Otto 2/16; Seth Baker, HelenAnn Gray 2/18; Michael Kolze 2/21;  
 Shauna Allison 2/23; Daniel Austin, Carol AuYeung, Miles Keeton, Marcia Nagy 2/24;  
 Charlie Louck 2/26; Carson Schaefer 2/28

**Low Sodium Food Sunday:  
February 2, 2025**



As many of you know I am a dietitian at Carle BroMenn Medical Center. I counsel many clients who are food insecure that have heart problems. When I suggest they access food pantries, the typical reply is that food pantries do not offer many low sodium food items. I am reaching out to you in honor of Heart Month with a request to support a cause that can make a lasting difference in the health and well-being of our community: the donation of low sodium food.

Many individuals living with chronic conditions like high blood pressure, heart disease and history of a stroke are in need of healthier food options. Low sodium foods are crucial for those who must limit their salt intake to maintain their health.

Your donation of nonperishable, low sodium food items could truly make a difference. By contributing you will be providing nourishing meals that support better health outcomes.

Low sodium food donation ideas: tub oatmeal; bag of dry beans or no salt added canned beans; no salt added canned vegetables; DASH seasonings; low sodium tuna packets; peanut butter; plain brown rice; Hint of Salt Triscuits; Hint of Salt Wheat Thins or Shredded Wheat.

Blessings,  
Sandra Gifford

**SAVE THE DATE!**

The Spring Group Sale will be held Friday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> and Saturday, May 3<sup>rd</sup> 2025. Set-up for the group sale will begin after worship on Sunday, April 27<sup>th</sup>.



**FOOD PANTRY SUNDAY IS ALWAYS THE FIRST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH**

**Our next Salvation Army food drive is on February 2**

In choosing what to donate to the Salvation Army Food Pantry, let's make sure we help stock their shelves with what they need

–  
and avoid what they don't need!

**What they need:**

High priority: Canned Soup (pop-top preferred) and Macaroni and Cheese

Canned fruit - preferably packed in natural juice

Canned meat – chicken, ham, SPAM

Canned fish – tuna and salmon

Soups, Stews, Chili - either canned or packaged

Boxed dinners – Mac & Cheese, Hamburger Helper

Boxed cereals – preferably whole grain, low in sugar

Canned beans – pinto, pork 'n beans, etc.

Applesauce, Peanut Butter, Crackers, Granola Bars

Instant mashed potatoes

Pasta – spaghetti, as well as spaghetti sauce

Rice

Powdered milk

**What they don't need:**

Anything that has to be baked

Junk food

Anything that needs a can opener -- (pop-top cans are best)

Anything in glass containers or cellophane wrapping

**Resource Team Plans for 2025:** In an effort to be stewards of energy and earth resources, the Resource Team continually looks for ways make the church plant be more "Green." The subject of solar panels has been discussed on several occasions with one preliminary thought is always asked, "Rather than putting St Luke Union Church in a position to produce more energy, why don't we first look at what we can do to require less energy?" What has been concluded is that the original church building, built in 1966, has windows that function at 15% efficiency. That means we send a large amount of heat out in the winter and a large amount of air conditioning out in the summer. The Resource Team is putting the final touches on a proposal to begin replacing the almost 60-year old windows with new 85% efficient windows. Each window is being priced out individually and we plan to begin in the office complex. If you would like to sponsor your very own window, please reach out to one of the members of the Resource Team.

**Pastor Andy Joke Answer:**

**1) Tweethearts**

**2) Because they wanted their relationship to work out!**

"Come away by yourselves to a lonely place, and rest awhile. 'For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat.'" (Mark 6:31).

Every winter, since my coming to serve as Pastor of St Luke Union Church, I have taken our youth on a winter retreat at Camp Timber-lee in East Troy WI. The weekend is affectionately known as, Winter Extreme. Timber-lee was the place I first attended one of these winter retreats and was owned and operated by the Evangelical Free Church. It has since changed hands several times yet remains true to its mission: *To create engaging communities where each young person encounters Christ through a dynamic camp experience.* With a vision of: *Timber-lee exists to be a refuge where all who come find their joy in Jesus through activities, education, reflection, and worship.* My first experience at this camp showed me this was a place that filled all expectation of what camp for young people should be. I so much believed this that both my sons spent weeks there in the summer. At Winter Extreme the youth are fed beyond want, can tube, toboggan out onto the camp lake, sing karaoke, ride horses, zip-line, create in the leather shop, play 9-square and ga-ga ball, explore the nature center, struggle with an escape room, compete in a broom ball tournament, make new friends and simply put their phones down. At each retreat there are multiple times of worship, that includes a "rocking" praise band and youth relatable speaker. What more could youth and their leaders hope for in the dark days of winter?

On Winter Extreme I have always enjoyed the speakers, because they remind me of the passion and energy that brought me to become a pastor. They tell funny stories, can relate to the youth, and challenge them in ways they often didn't expect upon leaving Bloomington. The messages they bring are truly evangelical, and hold no political or personal agenda. Their message is Christ centric and typically to the point, exposing them to a style not often heard at home. These messages sometimes hit our youth right where they are and they realize personal change is needed. Other times these messages put a twist in their stomach making them feel uncomfortable. In either case these worship experiences lead to wonderful discussions on faith and its practice. These retreats allow for our youth to be put in a safe fun place, that they can grow in depth and understanding of the God they believe.

My personal mission and desire for any of the church's youth is for them to graduate and head off into life with a depth of faith. I want them to be able to explain their faith, and feel the twist in their gut when Christ calls them to serve. Timber-lee, though not the same approach to evangelism we use at St Luke Union, is one that is true to placing Christ at the center of our youths lives. Thank you all for your continued support of our youth and making it possible for them to go on retreat and grow in faith.

This year's Winter Extreme Retreat will take place February 18 - March 2nd. Please pray for each of our youth and their leaders.

Blessings  
Pastor Andy

## CONTACT US!

Rev. Dr. Andrew Gifford, Pastor

agifford@stlukeunion.org

Susan Walter, Office Manager

swalter@stlukeunion.org

### Website:

[www.stlukeunion.org](http://www.stlukeunion.org)

### Facebook

Like our Facebook page for updates on church news, events & Reginald's whereabouts! Sunday Worship will go Facebook LIVE at 10:30am!

[www.facebook.com/  
stlukeunionchurch](https://www.facebook.com/stlukeunionchurch)

### YouTube

Search: [St Luke Union Church](#)

### Church Office Hours:

Monday: 9a – 3p

Tuesday: 9a – 3p

Wednesday: 9a – 3p

Thursday: 9a – 3p

Friday & Saturday: Closed

### Phone:

309-663-7437

### Worship

Online + In-Person

Sunday 10:30am!



# TerraCycle with St. Luke Union Church

TerraCycle collection is in the garage in the back of the parking lot  
2101 E Washington St, Bloomington, IL 61701  
Collection containers are labeled - please sort all items.  
Open 24 hours

## ITEMS ACCEPTED

- **ARM & HAMMER™ and OxiClean™:** Plastic Pouches
- **Contact Lens Brigade:** Accepts all brands of contact lenses, plus foil and blister packaging.
- **Baby Food Pouch Brigade:** Accepts all baby and toddler food plastic pouches and caps (such as Go-Go Squeeze, Ella's, Earth's Best, etc.). Please leave the cap on to reduce smell and leaking.
- **Brita® or PUR Brigade®:** Accepts all brands of pitchers, individual filtration bottles, filters, foil filter packaging, and faucet filtration systems.
- **Burt's Bee Brigade:** Accepts any Burt's Bee products packaging (must be this brand only).
- **Cigarette Waste: NO DROP OFF– PLEASE EMAIL AMIE, joelamikeeton@gmail.com FOR MORE INSTRUCTIONS.** Accepts cold extinguished cigarettes, cigarette filters, loose tobacco pouches, outer plastic packaging, inner foil packaging, rolling paper and ash.
- **Colgate® Oral Care Free Recycling Program: Accepts all brands** toothpaste tubes and caps, toothbrushes, floss containers, mouthwash bottles and caps.
- **Drink Pouch:** Recycle all brands of drink pouches.
- **Entenmann's Little Bites Pouches Program:** Accepts only Entenmann's brand Little Bites plastic pouches and clear Entenmann's Minis packaging.
- **eos Brigade:** Packaging from eos brand only.
- **Febreze Air Care Program:** Accepts all brands of air freshener cartridges and plus, packaging and flexible film packaging, and trigger heads (plastic bottles/cans go in regular curbside recycling).
- **Garnier® Program:** Accepts all Garnier brand packaging.
- **GOLDTOE Sock Program:** Accepts all brands of LAUNDERED socks for recycling.
- **Late July® Snacks:** Late July® Snacks packaging and chip bags (must be Late July brand)
- **Kroger® Brands Program:** Recycle flexible plastic packaging from Kroger® brands through this program.
- **Gillette Razor Brigade:** All brands of blades, razors, and plastic packaging.
- **Garnier Skin & Hair Care Brigade:** Garnier® skin care and hair care packaging.
- **Swiffer® Recycling Program:** Recycle Swiffer refills (must be Swiffer)
- **Takis® Snacks Recycling Program:** Recycle Takis Snack packaging (must be Takis)
- **Tom's of Maine Recycling Program:** Recycle all Tom's of Maine packaging (must be Tom's of Maine)

## Additional items collected (not TerraCycle):

- **Lion's Club collection:** Cell phones; home computer printer cartridges (no business-size cartridges); eyeglasses; hearing aids; keys.
- Christmas/Holiday light strands
- Aluminum