

New Directions March

St Luke Union Church

Thank You!

There is no way possible to thank all of you St Luke Union folks and friends to adequately thank you for all the prayer cards, cards, texts, notes and phone calls! One never knows just how awesome they truly are until you happen to be the recipient!

What a lift and day brightener!
Thank you all so very much!!
You are wonderful!!!!

Joyce Pomrenke

New Opportunity for Fellowship and Spiritual Growth

Are you interested in getting to know your church family friends better? We are considering starting small fellowship groups of 5-8 people made up of singles, couples, friends, casual acquaintances. I'm thinking of calling it Agape Small Groups, but that can be determined later. Once the random groups have been established, each group can decide how they want to proceed. We suggest meeting 3-4 times over the next few months, then we can regroup so you can get to know more people. Your group might decide to meet at someone's home or church for a potluck or go to a restaurant or park to talk. Please contact Marsha Hinthorn if you're interested in joining a group. Phone 309-310-5483.

St. Patrick's Day Trivia Fact

St Patrick He wasn't Irish, he was Scottish and was captured by Irish raiders when he was about 16 and taken to Ireland as a slave. He eventually escaped and returned to his family, eventually returning as a missionary to spread Christianity. He didn't drive out the snakes and is thought to be only metaphoric with snakes being a symbol of paganism. He did use the shamrock, a three-leafed plant, to explain the Christian doctrine of the Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) to the Irish people, which is why it's so closely tied to him today.

- Pastor Andy Jokes:
- 1) Why don't you iron four-leaf clovers?
 - 2) What's Irish and stays out all night?



MARCH 2025

SUN MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT

01

DAR Good Citizens
Celebration 1:30p

02

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

03

Adult Bible Study
12p
Boy Scouts 7p

04

05

Spiritual Growth
Team Mtg 5p
Ash Wednesday
Service 6p
Choir Practice 7p

06

07

Men's Breakfast
7a
Pack 33 – Pack Art
Night 6p

08

09

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

10

Adult Bible Study
12p
Boy Scouts 7p

11

Resource Team
2p
SAR Mtg 3p
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

Adult Bible Study
12p
Boy Scouts 7p

18

VMC Meeting
5:30p

19

Church Chat 6p
Choir Practice 7p

20

Faith Brews 5p
@Flingers
PEO Meeting 6p

21

22

Women's
Fellowship
Spring Tea 9a
Troop 19 Eagle
Court of Honor
3p

23

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

24

Adult Bible Study
12p
Boy Scouts 7p

25

Lamplighters 7p

26

Choir Practice 7p

27

28

29

Troop 19-
Wilderness First
Aid Training
8:30a

30

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

31

Adult Bible Study
12p
Boy Scouts 7p

Happy Birthday! Sandi Gifford 3/2; Zachary Staver 3/4; Tarynn Gifford 3/8;
Kerry Modendricker 3/12; Patricia Parmenter 3/17; Beth Louck, Carla Staver 3/20;
Logan Moret 3/21; Rick Isaacson 3/25; Nancy Proctor

What Makes Our Hearts Sing 2026 Sabbatical Update

Dear St. Luke Union Family,

For the past 15 years, Pastor Andy has faithfully walked with us through life's celebrations, challenges, and everyday moments of ministry. In late 2024, we introduced the idea of seeking a grant to support a planned sabbatical in 2026—a time of renewal not just for him, but for our entire congregation.

Pastor Andy's sabbatical is centered around the theme *"What Makes My Heart Sing."* Through time spent sailing, hiking, and reconnecting with God in the beauty of the natural world, he will find rest, reflection, and spiritual renewal—preparing to return refreshed and re-energized for the journey ahead.

This March we will submit a grant proposal for the 2025 Lilly Endowment National Clergy Renewal Program. Our Vision & Ministry Council has reviewed and wholeheartedly approved this opportunity for renewal.

We will continue to provide updates throughout the application process and welcome any questions you may have.

St. Augustine wrote, *"Our hearts are restless until they rest in You."* This sabbatical will be a time for both Pastor Andy and St. Luke Union Church to rest in God's presence, renew our faith, and embrace the future with fresh energy.

May we all discover what makes our hearts sing!

In faith and fellowship,

Doug Ferrier
Sally Parry
Dan Staver

Spring College Student Care Packages

The Mission Ministry team will be sending our college students boxes of treats and stress relief items during spring finals. We will be asking for donations from the congregation to help us offset the costs. Suggestions for what the students like will be published in the April New Directions.

Thank-you for your continuing support!

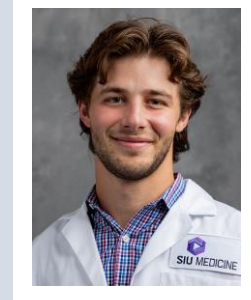
Pastor Andy Joke Answers:

- 1) Because you don't want to press your luck!
- 2) Paddy O'Furniture

Medical Student Assists at Accident Scene

SIU School of Medicine

Published Date: February 14, 2025



On Saturday morning, Feb. 1, **Carson Schaefer** and his girlfriend, **Julia DeMotte**, were driving north on I-57 near Whittington in Franklin County when a car ahead of them drifted into the median and flipped several times. The couple and a semi pulled off the road. Schaefer and the truck driver rushed to the wreckage, and together removed the driver from the car.

Schaefer then used the physical exam skills he'd learned as a first-year medical student at Southern Illinois University School of Medicine to check the driver's heart rate and conduct a brief neurological assessment.

When the EMTs arrived, he shared the information he'd gathered. The accident victim was transported to an area hospital and is recovering from her injuries. In retrospect, the experience left Schaefer shaken but bolstered. "I'm especially grateful that halfway through the first year of training, I felt confident and calm enough to apply what I've learned in the real world," he said. "I'd definitely attribute that to the patient exposure and opportunities we've had to practice techniques with standardized patients." Schaefer, a native of Downs, Ill., also credits the collective response from the others on the scene. In addition to the trucker who helped extricate the driver, a second truck driver called 911. A teenager turned off the wrecked car's engine, and another man brought a fire extinguisher. DeMotte brought a blanket from her car's survival kit and gathered the driver's scattered belongings.

"It was pretty special to be able to be part of a team coming together without hesitation to help someone in immediate need," Schaefer said. "I didn't get anyone's names in the moment, but I'll never forget their faces and selfless acts."

The spontaneous heroism likely helped ease the trauma for everyone involved. And for Schaefer, the accident reinforced that he has chosen a valuable career path.

STAND DOWN FOR VETERANS WISH LIST

Goodwill Industries of Central Illinois is planning for Stand Down For Veterans 2025. The date is October 18, 2025. I asked what items they would like help with and Johanna Wagner provided this list. Goodwill is not expecting us to provide **all** of these items, but they would like help with these. The Stand Down donation bin is in the upstairs Fellowship Hall, by the staircase.

We will collect NEW, UNUSED:

Socks-typically white , grey, or black crew socks. Goodwill would like to provide three pairs of socks per veteran, so their target is **750** pairs.

Hand and Foot warmers- Goodwill tries to put at least one of each with the socks so they would like to get at least **250** of each.

Diabetic Socks- black or white; Goodwill would like to provide three pairs per veteran, so the target is **300** pair.

XL Gloves-10-15 pair

Pillows- Standard-size; Goodwill has a target of **250**.

Additionally, Johnna said they can always use female undergarments. Usually 25 females or so show up during the event.

If you would prefer to donate money instead of items you can send checks to:

Goodwill Industries
Attn: Johanna Wagner
2319 E War Memorial
Peoria Il. 61614

(write **Stand Down 2025** in the Memo line)

THANK YOU for any help you can provide!

- James Munro

SAVE THE DATE!

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



SALVATION ARMY FOOD PANTRY SUNDAY IS ALWAYS THE FIRST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

Our next Salvation Army food drive is on March 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:

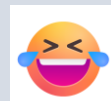
- Anything that has to be baked
- Junk food
- Anything that needs a can opener -- (pop-top cans are best)
- Anything in glass containers or cellophane wrapping

In addition to the list of accepted items for the Salvation Army Food Pantry, current needs include:

- Ramen Noodle Packages
- Coffee
- Sugar
- Creamer
- 16 oz. jars of Peanut Butter
- Cereal
- Individual cereal packets
- Tuna
- Gravy Packets - any flavor
- Corn Muffin Mix

CHURCH BULLETIN BLOOPERS

- Don't let worry kill you – let the church help.
- Thursday night – potluck supper. Prayer and medication to follow.



And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. Ephesians 6:18

The church council or VMC has been reading through a book over the last 9 months titled, *The Sailboat Church*, by Joan Gray. You can guess that the title caught my eye, but I also had the opportunity to hear her speak about her writing. It has been a good exercise for the VMC to discuss some of the suggestions in each chapter, and I'm only a little bothered that she demonstrates her real lack of understanding for sailing. This past month the chapter focused on church conflict and praying. It was quickly discerned that St Luke Union really only has minor conflicts and for the most part we are all on the same boat headed in the direction God wishes to lead. That there is great love for fellow church members and for Jesus our Savior. The prayer subject went a bit deeper with the admission that few of us enjoy praying out loud, while others weren't good at organizing their personal prayers and often became frustrated. I first wish to say that prayer is our primary method for building a positive relationship with God. Prayer when approached as a conversation allows us to speak to God and then take time to listen for a response. This is a good way to understand prayer but the question then came to how best to pray? The simple answer to that question is that the best way to pray is the best way for you to talk to God. No two ways are right or wrong. Personally I pray best when in the woods or on a sailboat, but since I don't spend as much time as I'd like doing either, I've also developed other options. They include setting aside a specific time each day to pray. This can be when you wake up but haven't gotten out of bed yet, in the shower, before a meal, after a meal, on your drive to or from work, during exercise, while cooking or cleaning, mowing the lawn, working in the garden, or even shoveling snow. The point is that we need to set time aside and that time can be while we are in the middle of something else. The second part of our discussion then turned to what shall we pray?

The ACTS acronym for prayer is commonly attributed to theologian J. I. Packer, and it is a helpful guide for structuring prayer. The ACTS acronym stands for:

- **Adoration:** Praising God for who He is.
- **Confession:** Acknowledging and repenting for one's sins.
- **Thanksgiving:** Expressing gratitude for God's blessings.
- **Supplication:** Asking God for help, guidance, or intercession on behalf of others.

I invite you to find a place and a time to pray and have conversation with God, use the acronym if you like, but know that when we pray we always grow closer to God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Blessings
Pastor Andy

CONTACT US!

Rev. Dr. Andrew Gifford, Pastor

agifford@stlukeunion.org

Susan Walter, Office Manager

swalter@stlukeunion.org

Website:

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](http://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