

JULY

St Luke Union Church

Youth Mission Trip 2025

Our youth and two adult chaperones spent the week of June 15-21st in Westfield, Indiana. They spent the week doing home repair and service to others. It was a wonderful week of spiritual growth. Their morale was bolstered by a mid-week delivery of care packages. Thank you to our youth and leaders for spending this time in service. Thank you to the members of St. Luke Union Church for your prayers and support.

Please pray for Pastor Andy June 29-July 5 as he heads to Hagerstown, Maryland to serve as a Group Mission Trips MC.



Pastor Andy Joke: What does the Statue of Liberty stand for?



JULY 2025

SUN MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT

		01	02 Spiritual Growth Team 5p	03 Church Office Closed	04 Independence Day	05
06 Communion Choir Prac 10:00a Worship 10:30a	07 Boy Scouts 7p	08 Resource Team 2p Finance Mtg 5p	09	10 Crossroads Board 9a	11	12
13 Choir Prac.10:00a Worship 10:30a	14 Boy Scouts 7p	15 VMC Meeting 5:30p	16 Worship on the Labyrinth 5p	17 Faith Brews 5p	18	19
20 RaiseRight Choir Prac.10:00a Worship 10:30a	** CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED July 21-24, 2025 **					26
27 Choir Prac.10:00a Worship 10:30a	28 Boy Scouts 7p	29	30	31		

Happy Birthday! Jennifer Belletete 7/2; Yvonne Harrison 7/3; Paul Dehner 7/5; Diann Kamp 7/7; Ed Desmond, Debbie Lopez 7/8; Glenn Stille 7/9; Amanda O'Rourke, Wayne Warner 7/15; Tammy Desmond 7/18; Jacob Blankenship 7/19; Mindy Stille 7/20; Sheila Wells 7/21; Olivia Cheung, Norm Lopez 7/25; Marilyn Maffett, Adam Southwick 7/26; Anna DeBruine 7/27, Chuck Parlette 7/29

Happy Anniversary! Denny & Bonnie Redick 7/6; Marc & Stacy Herren 7/7; Rhett & Renee Stolte 7/13; Wayne & Lynn Warner 7/14

PLEASE NOTE:

** The church office will be closed on Thursday, July 3 for the Independence Day Holiday.

** The church office will also be closed July 21-24, 2025 for staff vacations.

**YOU'RE INVITED
JULY 16, 2025
5 - 7 PM**



**BURGERS,
BUBBLES, &
BLESSINGS**

**Join Us for a CornBelters Game
and Fellowship!**

Monday July 7, 2025 at 6:30 pm

We will once again have tickets for a CornBelters game this summer courtesy of LS Mechanical. There is a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall.



THANK YOU!

A big thank you to all who knitted or crocheted prayer shawls and lap throws!

8 prayer shawls and 8 lap throws were taken to the Illinois CancerCare center on East Empire Street. They were very much appreciated!

We still have some prayer shawls at the church if you have someone that could use prayer and comfort.

Keep those knitting needles and crochet hooks going, prayer shawls and lap throws are always needed!

How Time Flies

This was clipped from The Pantagraph on Monday, June 16, 2025.

50 YEARS AGO

June 16, 1975: Merger of St. Luke United Church of Christ and Union Presbyterian Church was approved Sunday (June 15) by overwhelming majorities in both Bloomington congregations. The "union church" will begin worship services next Sunday, June 22, at Union Presbyterian Church, 2101 E. Washington St.

★ **Join Us for Burgers, Bubbles, and Blessings!** ★

You're invited to the 2nd Annual Worship on the St. Luke Union Church Labyrinth! Bring a friend or two and join us on **Wednesday, July 16th, 2025**, from **5 to 7 PM** for an evening filled with fellowship, food, and worship.

We'll provide delicious burgers, buns, and bubbles for both kids and adults! While not required, feel free to bring a dessert or side dish to share—though we just want to see you there!

Come for the burgers and connection anytime between **5 and 6 PM**. At **6 PM**, we'll head upstairs to the Labyrinth for a unique worship experience featuring music and reflection.

*We will also celebrate 50 years of St. Luke Union Church!

Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to gather with friends and experience blessings together. We can't wait to see you there!

Lamplighters - Bible Study

The new study guides are here. They are on the counter in the outer office. Cost is \$15. The new study will begin July 22.

**Daily Devotional –
July/Aug/Sept 2025**

New copies of the quarterly devotional, *These Days: Daily Devotions for Living by Faith* are available in Fellowship Hall at the Welcome Table.

Tribe 4K For Cancer

On June 9, St. Luke Union Church hosted seven bicyclists on a trek across the country. They are seven friends biking 4,000 miles across America to fundraise for the Ulman Foundation, which supports young adults with cancer. They started their journey in Virginia and will end in San Francisco, California later this summer.

Since they were here on a Monday evening, they spent some time with our Troop 19 Scouts. Then, they enjoyed a hearty breakfast before heading out Tuesday morning on the next leg of their journey. You can find more information about their trek at their website Triberideforcancer.com.



Green Team

Pastor Andy Joke Answer:

Everything, it can't sit down

Members of the Green Team spent a hot and humid morning packing up TerraCycle material to be mailed out for recycling. Thank you for your efforts to keep these items out of the landfill. Just look at that pile of boxes!

Fun Facts:

1. **Only two people signed the Declaration on July 4th, 1776.** Despite popular belief, most delegates didn't sign until August 2nd, 1776, when the official parchment copy was ready.
2. **The Liberty Bell didn't ring on July 4th, 1776.** The famous story of the Liberty Bell ringing to announce independence is a myth—the bell was actually cracked and couldn't ring at that time.

Recently, the Green Team accepted an Excellence in Community Service Award from the local chapter of the DAR. Congratulations on your achievement. Well deserved!

If you would like to get involved, please contact Amie Keeton.



FOOD PANTRY SUNDAY IS ALWAYS THE FIRST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

Our next Salvation Army food drive is on July 6

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

Just for Laughs – Church Bulletin Bloopers

Next Sunday a special collection will be taken to defray the cost of the new carpet. All those wishing to do something on the new carpet will come forward and do so.

This being Easter Sunday, we will ask Mrs. Lewis to come forward and lay an egg on the alter.

The ladies of the church have cast off clothing of every kind. They can be seen in the church basement Saturday.



STAND DOWN FOR VETERANS WISH LIST

St Luke Union collected **796** pairs of Men's socks and **114** pairs of Women's Socks as of April 20 (Easter Sunday)! Goodwill of Central Illinois had set a goal of 750 pairs of men's and 75 pairs of women's and YOU CRUSHED IT!

Those totals do not include diabetic socks, but we have collected those as well. Additionally, we have collected 20 pillows so far.

So, what's next? We are still collecting:

Diabetic Socks- black or white;

Goodwill would like to provide three pairs per veteran, so the target is **300** pair.

XL Gloves-at least 10-15 pair

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.

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

Stand Down can always use female undergarments. Usually 25 females or so show up during the event. And of course, we'll still take men's and women's socks.

The Stand Down donation bin is in the upstairs Fellowship Hall, bear the staircase.

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 all your help! YOU GUYS ROCK!!

- James Munro

“Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I give them will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life.” John 4:14

A few months into this year I began meeting regularly with a Spiritual Director. The reason is that upon some personal examination, and my desire to perpetuate my pastoral skills and practice, I’ve realized that I need a bit of coaching on deeper spiritual practice. The process has pushed me into new areas or a fresh edge of life and practice. What my Spiritual Director has been doing is to push me to use different and perhaps uncomfortable parts of my brain. She has begun to break down my linear approach to life and problem solving, while being open to the larger voice of God. I can say that in some cases it’s been refreshing while others times have made me uncomfortable. I love to approach life situations with logic, while collecting data of the variables, then I can make practical choices for the best outcome or understanding. It was my hope that my Spiritual Director would give me a formula and a practice schedule, therefore allowing my success to rest squarely on my own efforts. Much to my chagrin this is not the way things work with God, and this approach hampers one’s ability to surrender to God’s love.

In David Benner’s book, *Desiring God’s Will*, he makes a point that a person’s spiritual disciplines should always be a means to an end and never an end in themselves. That we should never approach spiritual practice as a ritual because it then becomes external, self-energized and legalistic.

Quoting Benner, *“Genuine Christian spirituality places the priority on inner transformation, not outward routines. Changed behavior should flow out of a changed heart, not simply a strong will.”* The practice of spirituality should have a goal of creating a synergy between the divine and the human initiative. That through the grace of God our spiritual practice should have a goal of bringing oneself to a more intimate relationship with God.

As a child I once knew a person who was, I thought, the object of perfect faith. They came to church each week, prayed at specific times each day, gave 10%, volunteered, and served on church boards. Good to see, but I eventually found their faith stale and predictable, seeking God at appointed times and places. I saw him drink the water but I never saw the water as living.

The scripture from John redirects the practice of faith by the women at the well, in that it’s not the practice of drinking the water, (or the ritual of faith) that brings about salvation. Its rather understanding the source of the living God whom we are called to be in relationship with. Spiritual depth is not found in ritual it’s found when we experience the living God.

Peace
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

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.
- **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