

August

St Luke Union Church

THANK YOU!

We are truly overwhelmed with the love and support we have received from all of you as we await the arrival of our baby boy in a few weeks! We cannot thank you enough for the outpouring of gift cards, sweet messages, well wishes, and prayers. We are unbelievably grateful to have found such an incredible church family to share the joy of our growing family with. They say it takes a village to raise a child, and we are blessed to know how great of a village we have in you all! We cannot wait for baby boy to arrive and get to meet his loving church family!

- Rhett & Renee Stolte



Burgers, Bubbles & Blessings

The rain did not stop our fun! It was a wonderful evening of food, fellowship and music.



AUGUST 2025

SUN

MON

TUE

WED

THU

FRI

SAT

01

02

Men's Breakfast
7a

03

04

05

06

07

08

09

Communion
Choir Prac 10:00a
Worship 10:30a

Boy Scouts 7p

Mission Team
5:30p

Spiritual Growth
Team 5p

DAR Potluck 10a

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

Choir Prac.10:00a
Worship 10:30a

Boy Scouts 7p

Resource Team
2p
Finance mtg 5p
SAR Dinner
5:30p

Worship Team 5p

Crossroads mtg
9a

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

RaiseRight
Choir Prac.10:00a
Worship 10:30a

Boy Scouts 7p

VMC Mtg 5:30p

Faith Brews 5p
@ Merna Tap

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

Choir Prac.10:00a
Worship 10:30a

Boy Scouts 7p

Lamplighters 7p

31

Choir Prac 10a
Worship 10:30 a

Happy Birthday! Phillip Blankenship, Ed Gottschalk 8/3; Joyce Pomrenke 8/13; Kevin Schaefer, CJ Wahmann 8/17; Marshall Davis 8/20; Mindy Feicke, Laura Hinthorn, Nicole Southwick 8/28; Jerry Turley, Chuck Yurieci 8/29; Sharon Stille 8/30; Dan Staver 8/31

Happy Anniversary! Jim & Judy Ferrier 8/1; Norm & Debbie Lopez 8/10; Dan & Carla Staver 8/18; Richard & Yvonne Harrison 8/27

Women's Fall Retreat at Pilgrim Park

Plan to join the women of St Luke Union Church for our fall retreat at Pilgrim Park, 9/12-9/14. The theme for the weekend is "Share Your Story" and it will be an opportunity for spiritual enrichment, education, fellowship, and just an enjoyable, relaxing time in a beautiful camp setting, with comfortable accommodations and good food. More details will follow, but you can also contact Marsha Hinthorn if you want to know more. Tricia Kelly will be joining us for supper on Friday night and will spend Saturday morning with us, spinning her magical (true) stories. Here is a brief introduction:

The best stories are the ones we share, the ones about real people who have touched us in some positive way. Storyteller and local historian Tricia Kelly would like to bring to life a handful of incredible women who chose not to be common, but instead forged their own paths to success. In addition, Tricia will remind us all that life is a gift we are given, and to cherish every blessed moment.



Chicago to Mackinac 2025: This year marked the 116th running of the Race to Mackinac. This year also marked the 34th time I've participated. After a rainy Saturday start and long period of being becalmed, the wind shifted to the Northeast (The way we needed to go) and stayed that way until the completion of the race. At the race completion, Eagle and her crew found themselves in 3rd place for our section and 29th overall. Eagle did participate in a Challenge Cup, that included teams made up of one boat from each division. Our team (Red, White and Blue) combined for a first place.



Worship at Funk's Grove

This year's Funks Grove worship found itself on a beautiful day to worship outside of the St Luke Union Church building. People invited friends, we enjoyed wonderful music and held our annual church picnic at the Funks Grove pavilion. Welcomed by the portraits of the Funks and Stubblefields, we once again gathered for a fun day of worship, food and fellowship.

Fun Facts:

The tradition of a "summer break" originated because kids were once needed to help on family farms during the summer months. Today, it's more about rest and recharging—but ironically, research shows that many students forget some of what they learned during the break, a phenomenon known as the **"summer slide."**

FOOD PANTRY SUNDAY IS ALWAYS THE FIRST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

Our next Salvation Army food drive is on Aug. 3

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

Your Mission Ministry gifts at work 2025

Thank you notes from our mission partners:

Project Oz: "Thank-you so much for your recent donation"

Home Sweet Home Ministries: "Many blessings to you!" We truly appreciate your support."

Faith in Action: "Thank-you so much for your support. We truly appreciate your donation."

Churches Community Care Fund: "Thank-you for your continued support."

Midwest Mission: "Thank-you for the donation of 10 sleeping mats to Midwest Mission."

The Salvation Army: "We are so grateful for your ongoing support of our food pantry."

****AUGUST UPDATE****

STAND DOWN 2025 DEADLINE APPROACHING!

Just a reminder that the deadline for Stand Down donations is fast approaching. Typically, we deliver donated supplies to Goodwill around the middle of September, which gives them time to sort and package them for distribution.

"Well, what's left? Didn't we nail the sock challenge?" Well, yes; we collected over 750 pairs of socks, but Goodwill will appreciate any more that we can provide.

We are still collecting NEW, UNUSED (still in the packaging):

- **Diabetic Socks-** black or white; Goodwill would like to provide three pairs per veteran, so the target is **300** pairs.
- **XL Gloves-**at least 10-15 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.
- **Pillows-** Standard size Goodwill has a target of 250.
- **Men's and Women's undergarments**
 - Men's sizes L, XI and XXL/2XL
 - Women's underwear sizes 7 to 11
 - Sports bras sizes Large to 3XL (sports bras)
- **Women's hygiene products**
- **Toiletries** (soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, razors, etc)
- And of course, we'll still take men's and women's socks.

The Stand Down donation bin is in the 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, and you can include a note that you are from St Luke Union Church (because why not?)

THANK YOU for all your help!
- James Munro

Committed to Adventure and Service

This past month has been an inspiring time for Troop 19, sponsored by our church, as our scouts embodied the spirit of advancement, adventure, and service. With a heart for helping our community and embracing the great outdoors, the troop engaged in various activities that highlight their dedication to our greater mission at St. Luke Union Church.

Service: Serving others is part of what our Troop 19 scouts (and families) do. Some of the selfless service over the past month included: **Road Safety Crews** Clearing roads from debris, keeping athletes safe and hydrated and setup/tear down at the Tri-Shark Triathlon in June and the Park to Park Run on the Fourth of July. **Clearing honeysuckle** on the walking trail at Luther Oaks This vital conservation effort to clear invasive plants helped the preservation of local ecosystems and helped scouts take an active role in being good stewards of Creation.

Troop 19 witnessed the completion of two remarkable Eagle Projects this month. **Byron Gaddy** constructed five picnic tables for the Covell Community Church, creating an inviting space for fellowship and communal activities. Additionally, **Brendan Hall** revitalized the Northpoint Elementary School outdoor basketball court, which included resurfacing and leveling the asphalt court, removing old basketball standards, and purchasing new hoops. Brendan's hard work resulted in a beautifully restored space that will be enjoyed by the local youth for years to come.

In conjunction with service, Troop 19 embarked on a thrilling adventure with a week-long summer camp at **Canyon Camp** in Stockton, Illinois, near Galena. Something the troop has done since 1990. Scouts experienced a variety of activities, from swimming and climbing to honing their scout skills in a fun, yet challenging outdoor environment.

Just a week later, over 16 scouts and scouters set sail on a catamaran in the **Abacos, Bahamas** at one of the High Adventure Sea Bases Scouting America provides. This sailing adventure offered scouts a unique opportunity to explore new waters, learn vital sailing skills, and bond with each other through shared experiences.

This fall, two of our scouts will begin work on their Eagle Scout Projects. **Jack Legner**, a student at University High School, plans to enhance the entrance of his school with an erosion control beautification and landscaping project. **Eli Moore**, also a U-High Student, will be creating signage and establishing a 125-square-foot gravel area for a new training facility at the Danvers Fire Department, which will be named in honor of his father.

If you would like to learn more about Troop 19 or contribute to these meaningful projects, please reach out to John Boerner, Pastor Andy, or Doug Ferrier, and we'll connect you with our scouts. Troop 19 exemplifies the values of service to others and we are so grateful they are a part of our greater St. Luke Union Community.



*As a doe longs for running streams, so longs my soul for you,
my God. My soul thirsts for God, the God of life. Psalm 42:1-2*

There seems to be a whole lot of turmoil in our streets today, I mean the news is full of footage in big cities across the country. I assume this to be true, although the demonstrations here in Bloomington seem to be pretty peaceful. It is my practice to avoid areas of unrest, by using the simple rule of, do not put yourself in a place of potential harm. A better known term may be, "Situational Awareness." So why would someone go to a place that violence was likely to occur? Wouldn't it make more sense to just stay away?

With these questions in my mind I started to examine what draws people into troubled situations. What draws people into areas where they can build up, rather than tear down or to care for rather than harm. What I have begun to understand is that people typically move toward where their hearts default. So if the heart is selfish and angry, then the person will go to a place that allows for them to take and harm. If the heart is Christ centered and would rather love and help others, then the person will look for ways to build up and empower. In the words of Thomas Merton "*Life is shaped by the end you live for. You are made in the image of what you desire.*" The way I understand this point is that God wants surrender as the choice of the heart, not a personal obedience to the desire of our will.

As the Psalm states, "*As a doe longs for running streams, so longs my soul for you.*" There is a wonderful poem about the longing for the soul of God written in the 13th century by Mechthild of Magdeburg.

The soul speaks: "God, you are my lover, My longing, My flowing stream, My sun, and I am your reflection.

God answers: "It is my nature that makes me love you often, For I am love itself. It is my longing that makes me love you intensely, For I yearn to be loved from the heart. It is my eternity that makes me love you forever, For I have no end."

So where then does the desire of our heart lie and how can we get our hearts to a place God desires for each of us? Well we need to know the process is more than a self-improvement project. David Benner explains, "*We can't fall into the trap of simply taking on a spiritual self-improvement project. Instead we need to lift ourselves to God in the midst of our disordered state and then allow God to undertake the necessary transformation.*"

Dear God,

"Lord, I surrender my plans, my fears, and my desires to You. Help me to trust in Your wisdom and follow where You lead. Not my will, but Yours be done. Amen."

May the world find peace in Christ Jesus,
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.
- **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