

# New Directions March

St Luke Union Church

## Thank You

Thanks to everyone for your kind words and gifts of caring after the passing of my husband and our father, Richard (Dick) Harrison. His service was held on January 24, 2026 at St. Luke Union Church. Dick was a resident of the Loft Rehab and Nursing of Normal from mid-September until his passing. Your gifts, cards, and expressions of sympathy were deeply appreciated by myself and the families of Bill and Todd.

Yvonne Harrison & Family



## Many Thanks

Thank you for bringing in low sodium items to support the compassion cupboard. Your donations helped fill take home bags for food insecure patients with medical conditions that need to follow a low sodium nutrition plan. **Chris Schilling, Coordinator for Faith Community Relations at Carle BroMenn was grateful for the congregation's support. You all are a blessing!**

-Sandra Gifford

## St Patrick's Day Fun Facts:



The Irish shamrock tradition is said to have come from St Patrick by using the three leaves to explain the Christian Trinity. There's no historical proof, but it became a powerful teaching image.

Ireland never had native snakes after the Ice Age. The story of St Patrick driving out the snakes likely symbolizes driving out pagan practices of the Irish.



# MARCH 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<b>01</b> Sunday Sch 9:30a Choir Practice 9:30a Worship 10:30a	<b>02</b> Boy Scouts 7p	<b>03</b>	<b>04</b> Spiritual Growth 5p Church Chat 5p Handbells 6p Choir Practice 7p	<b>05</b>	<b>06</b> Men's Breakfast 7a Pack 33 Art night 6p	<b>07</b> DAR Good Citizens Mtg 1:30p
<b>08</b> Communion Choir Practice 9:30a Worship 10:30a	<b>09</b> Adult Bible Study 12p Boy Scouts 7p	<b>10</b> Resource Team 2p Finance Mtg 5p	<b>11</b> Worship Team 5p Handbells 6p Choir Practice 7p	<b>12</b> Crossroads 9a SAR Dinner 3p	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> RaiseRight Sunday Sch 9:30a Choir Prac. 9:30a Worship 10:30a	<b>16</b> Adult Bible Study 12p Boy Scouts 7p	<b>17</b> General Primary Election Day VMC Meeting 5:30p	<b>18</b> Church Chat 5p Handbells 6p Choir Practice 7p	<b>19</b> Faith Brews 5p @ Caspers Brewing Co. PEO Game Night 6p	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> Eagle Scout Court of Honor 12:30p
<b>22</b> Choir Prac 9:30a Worship 10:30a Stolte Event 11:30a	<b>23</b> Adult Bible Study 12p Boy Scouts 7p	<b>24</b> Lamplighters 7p	<b>25</b> Handbells 6p Choir Practice 7p	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> Palm Sunday One Great Hour of Sharing Collection Sunday Sch 9:30a Choir Prac 9:30a Worship 10:30a	<b>30</b> Adult Bible Study 12p Boy Scouts 7p	<b>31</b>				

## 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; Nancy Proctor 3/29

## Quote:

"If St. Patrick were here today, he'd probably remind us that faith isn't lucky...it's lived."

**ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING (OGHS)  
OFFERING  
TO BE COLLECTED MARCH 29,  
(PALM SUNDAY)**

“What does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” (Micah 6:8). The theme this year is to do justice, which includes helping to support access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education and opportunity. The causes supported by OGHS are disaster, hunger, poverty, climate change, and immigration/migration. OGHS is collected by many denominations for national and international needs. OGHS has been operating for 75 years and often stays beyond the immediate need for help, staying for months, or years from the initial time of need.

Some areas of support include Ukrainian refugees, flooding, earthquakes, tornadoes, wildfires, and violence prevention. As well as economic and environmental decisions as part of our faith & values. Some resources for families in need include giving tools, animals for income & nourishment, emergency life packs with food, water, basic hygiene items etc., and community irrigation pumps.

Special envelopes will be in the pews a few weeks ahead of time, or you can write OGHS in the memo line of your check. A bulletin board will include information about OGHS.

Please prayerfully give what you can to help eliminate injustice in the world. When we all do a little, it adds up to a lot.



**Yarn, Yarn, Yarn!**

While cleaning out my Mom's house, we have accumulated a great deal of yarn. We are hoping that someone can use it. Please text Darlene Trower at 309 531-2223 if you're interested.

**Prayer Chain Ministry Team**

After many faithful years of service, Karen Walters is retiring from the prayer chain team. If you would be interested in learning about this ministry and possibly joining us, please contact us at [prayerchain@stlukeunion.org](mailto:prayerchain@stlukeunion.org) or talk with one of the team members, Judy Ferrier, Margaret Hawkins, or Gwen Yurieci.

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

**Our next Salvation Army food drive is on March 1**

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

**Save the Date!**

The Spring Group Sale will be held Friday, May 1<sup>st</sup> and Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> 2026.

Set up for the group sale will begin after worship on Sunday, April 26.



### Psalm 63:1

*O God, you are my God; I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you.*

Each Sunday morning, we are called by God to rise, prepare for the day, and dress in a manner we deem appropriate for attending church. Yet this movement toward worship is not entirely our own doing. It is the Holy Spirit dwelling in our hearts that draws us together as a community of faith. Sunday worship is deeply important for believers. It is a place where we receive encouragement and forgiveness, where we offer praise, and where we bring the emotions of our hearts before God. It is a place where we surround ourselves with people who care for one another and share in the trials of life. Worship on Sunday morning is our corporate gathering that helps bring perspective to our lives and to how Christ calls us to live.

We are now in the heart of Lent—forty days of preparation as we walk with Christ to the cross. Yet our journey does not end there. We continue to Easter morning, when the tomb is found empty and we proclaim that Christ is risen and alive. Building a relationship with Christ and cultivating a spirit of “living worship” is something that must take place every day.

One way this can happen is through a daily rhythm of prayer. Consider these four simple steps:

1. Find a quiet, distraction-free place where you can focus and be at peace.
2. Determine the best time for you—perhaps when you wake up, over coffee, after lunch, or before bed.
3. Come to stillness: put away your phone, turn off the television, and resist the urge to hurry.
4. Open your heart to God.

There is no single correct way to pray, but we must begin somewhere. Read a Psalm, reflect on meaningful poetry, walk the church labyrinth, or simply be present with God.

After Lent, I encourage you to continue this practice of prayer and conversation with God. I also suggest including regular Scripture reading. This practice allows each of us to deepen our relationship with Christ beyond Sunday worship. If you need guidance on what to read each day, consider subscribing to a daily lectionary website or app.

Worship of our Lord happens at many times beyond Sunday morning. I encourage you to seek ways to participate daily.

Peace,  
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](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!



## **St Luke Union Church**

2101 E Washington St Bloomington, IL 61701

(Corner of Regency Drive and Washington St – open 24 hrs/7 days a week)

### **TerraCycle Programs & Other Collections**

Collection is in the garage behind the church where collection containers are labeled;  
**if you do not see a container, please DO NOT leave it.**

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- **ARM & HAMMER™ and OxiClean™:** Recycle ARM & HAMMER and OxiClean brand only plastic pouches
  - **Contact Lens:** Accepts all brands of contact lenses, plus foil and blister packaging.
  - **Brita® or PUR:** Accepts Brita or PUR brand only pitchers, individual filtration bottles, filters, foil filter packaging, and faucet filtration systems.
  - **Burt's Bee:** Accepts Burt's Bee product packaging (must be this brand only).
  - **Cigarette Waste: NO DROP OFF– PLEASE EMAIL AMIE, joelamiekeeton@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: 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:** Accepts only Entenmann's brand Little Bites plastic pouches and clear Entenmann's Minis packaging.
  - **eos:** Packaging from eos brand only.
  - **Febreze Air Care:** 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).
  - **Gillette Razor: All brands** of blades, razors, and plastic packaging.
  - **GoGo squeeZ® Food Pouch: Accepts all brands** of 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.
  - **GOLDTOE Socks:** Accepts GOLDTOE brand socks. Please launder.
  - **Hasbro:** Recycle Hasbro brand toys and games.
  - **Kroger® Brands:** Recycle flexible plastic packaging from Kroger® brands through this program.
  - **Stanley Black & Decker Tools:** Recycle DEWALT®, CRAFTSMAN®, BLACK+DECKER®, STANLEY®, IRWIN®, LENOX®, MAC Tools®, PORTER-CABLE® and Bostitch® branded tools.
  - **Swiffer®:** Recycle Swiffer refills (must be Swiffer).
  - **Takis® Snacks Recycling Program:** Recycle Takis Snack packaging (must be Takis)
  - **Tide Free:** Recycle Tide, Gain, Downy, Bounce, NBD., and Dreft fabric care packaging.
  - **Tom's of Maine:** Recycle all Tom's of Maine packaging (must be Tom's of Maine)
  - **VTech® & LeapFrog®:** Recycle VTech and LeapFrog electronic learning devices and electronic toys.

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**Additional Recycling Collections at the St Luke:**

**Aluminum Can Recycling:** Please put cans in the Large labeled wooden box in the front and center of the garage. Please consider recycling your ALUMINUM cans with us instead of just putting them in city recycling. We recycle locally to get money for charity.

**Holiday-Type Light Strands & Cords/Wire/Cable Recycling:** Twinkle light bulbs ok to leave on; larger light bulbs should be removed and can be recycled at the lighting section of our local Menards, Lowes or Home Depot. Please remove any other plastic or metal decor before donating light strands.

**Lion's Club box:** Cell phones; small printer cartridges (**from home use only**); eyeglasses; hearing aids; keys. Lion's Club volunteers manage this for charity.

**\*Please - ONLY leave the items listed above.**

**TerraCycle Volunteers:**

Amie Keeton [joelamiekeeton@gmail.com](mailto:joelamiekeeton@gmail.com), Janet Guaderrama [jquader@gmail.com](mailto:jquader@gmail.com),  
Melanie Ziomek [mziomek@my.heartland.edu](mailto:mziomek@my.heartland.edu) Marcia Nagy [trek2ak@frontiernet.net](mailto:trek2ak@frontiernet.net)