

New Directions

September

St Luke Union Church

Kick-Off Sunday September 20, 2026

A potluck meal will follow the worship service. Please bring a dish to share. There is a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall.

Contact Information

As Pastor Andy continues his Clergy Renewal time, please do not hesitate to contact Reverend Susan Baller-Shepard for pastoral care.

Her contact info is as follows:

Email: pastorsusan@stlukeunion.org

Or susanballershepard@gmail.com

CALLING ALL KIDS

Sunday school is starting again on September 13th at 9:30 in the downstairs Sunday school room for kids in kindergarten through 5th grade. We'll meet every other Sunday after that, so come join the fun!

THANK YOU

I am a member of this church. Last year, I had a rather serious surgery. It went well. Since then there have been some serious issues & I have not made it back to church. All of the beautiful prayer cards and cards have been appreciated. They have helped me so much. So many people have sent cards to me, including Eli. Your kindness has touched my heart, all of you. Hoping to be back before long. Hoping to start playing my flute before services on Sundays in the stairwell. Thought it might be a good way to welcome people into church.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart,
Mary Beth Godfrey



SEPTEMBER 2026

SUN

MON

TUE

WED

THU

FRI

SAT

01

02

Spiritual Growth
Team 5p

03

04

Men's Breakfast 7a

05

06

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

07

Labor Day
Church Office
Closed
Boy Scouts 7p

08

Resource Team
2p
Finance Mtg 5p

09

Worship Team 5p
Handbells 6p
Choir 7p

10

11

12

Women's Fall Retreat 9/11-9/13

13

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

14

Boy Scouts 7p

15

VMC Meeting
5:30p

16

Handbells 6p
Choir 7p

17

Faith Brews 5p
PEO Event 5:30p

18

19

DAR Mtg. 11a

20

Kick-Off Sunday
RaiseRight
Choir Prac 9:30a
Worship 10:30a

21

Crossroads Mtg
9a
Boy Scouts 7p

22

Women's
Fellowship
Fall Rally 7p

23

Handbells 6p
Choir 7p

24

25

26

27

Choir Prac 9:30a
Worship 10:30a

28

29

30

Handbells 6p
Choir 7p

Set-up for Fall Group Sale

Looking Ahead – Save the Date:

Budgets Due.....Oct. 1

Fall Group Sale.....Oct 2nd & 3rd

World Communion Sunday.....Oct 4

Happy Birthday! Rebecca Hepner 9/5; Karin Hunt 9/7; David Ferrier 9/9; David Colee 9/10; Denny Redick, Lucas Trower 9/12; Jim Ferrier 9/13; Alex Herren 9/19; Priscilla Harper 9/20; Sydney Allison 9/27; Jack Murphy 9/28; Sandra Colee, Debra Grant 9/29

Happy Anniversary! Seth & Alli Gifford, Colleen & Thomas Zerebny 9/2; Laura & Matthew Brunton 9/6; Mick & Caroline Fleming 9/8; Laurie Vial & Mike Ball 9/13; Larry & Becky Blum 9/14; Chuck & Martha Maney 9/18; Susan Trower & Dennis Rasmus 9/20; Kevin & Rebecca Schaefer 9/24; Mike & Dede Verplaetse 9/26; Joel & Amie Keeton 9/28

2026 FALL GROUP SALE & BAKE SALE
Friday, October 2nd - 9 am - 5 pm & Saturday, October 3rd - 9 am – Noon

Ready, Set, Get Going!!! It is time to look through your Fall/Winter clothing, kitchen items, children's toys, books, linens, jewelry, knick knacks, Christmas decorations and decide what gently used items you would like to pass on to someone else. There are so many in our community, now more than ever, who need affordable items. St. Luke Union Church group sale allows us to help the community by providing affordable items. The remaining items will be donated to local organizations.

We will begin set up after worship on Sunday, September 27th

Bring your items:

Monday, September 28th & Tuesday, September 29th - 9 am to 7 pm

Wednesday, September 30th - 9 am to NOON *Please no items after noon*

Called to Serve - WE NEED YOUR HELP - Consider sharing your talents for a few hours, a day, or a few days. We also have "sit down" jobs. When you come to volunteer and are not sure where to start please see Karlene Bledsoe, Charlene Munro, or any of the ladies on the lower level, we will be happy to direct you where help is needed.

Workers are needed

- Sunday to help set up tables, move furniture and bring items from the garage.
- Monday - Thursday during the day starting at 9 am, and evenings 5 to 7 pm to help unpack, arrange and price items.
- Friday and Saturday to check-out, bag, help our customers and help keep everything organized.
- Saturday, at noon to help pack up items left, take down tables, move things back to the garage and load the Goodwill truck.

Sign-up sheets for workers will be available Sunday, September 6th in Fellowship Hall.

LASTLY, DON'T FORGET THE BAKE SALE!!! - Bake goods accepted Thursday, October 1st until 6:30 pm and no later than 8 am on Friday, October 2nd, Saturday, October 3rd to give the ladies time to package the goodies. The bake sale is always a highlight of our sale!

Working together is a really great way to become better acquainted with other church members while providing items at a reasonable price for our community. We have a lot of fun and keep each other going!! Lunch is provided Monday - Friday. We look forward to serving with you!

Blessings, from Co-Coordinators, Karlene Bledsoe and Charlene Munro.

Women's Fellowship Fall Rally
Tuesday, September 22 @ 7:00pm

Plan to join the women of St Luke Union at our annual Fall Rally on Tuesday, September 22 at 7:00 at the church. Our guest speaker will be from the Bloomington Public Library. Look for a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall.

Saturday, September 26, 2026
Illinois State University CEFCU Arena
702 W. College Ave. Normal, IL
8:30 am – 6:00 pm



Distribution Partner
 **Midwest**
FOOD BANK







ONE DAY. ONE COMMUNITY. ONE MILLION MEALS.

2026 Million Meal Pack Event

On Sept. 26, State Farm® is partnering with U.S. Hunger and Illinois State University to combat food insecurity. Thousands of volunteers will come together again to pack one million meals, which will be distributed in McLean County and throughout Illinois.

Event details

- **When:** Saturday, Sept. 26, 2026, 8:30AM – 6:00PM
- **Where:** Illinois State University CEFCU Arena, 702 W. College Ave. Normal, IL

Click [here](#) to sign up.

Note: Jim and Charlene Munro have signed up for the shift from 8:30 am to 10:00 am. If that time works for you, then follow these instructions for registration: the form will ask you to choose a "Volunteer Type", select "Representing Local Non-Profit Group", then you will be able to type in "St. Luke Union Church" as the Non-Profit Name/Organization. *That way the organizers will try to keep you as a group so you can work together.*

Bells and Choir Rehearsals Starting Soon

Wednesday night rehearsals will resume September 9, 2026 at 6:00 pm for Bells and at 7:00 pm for Choir.

Sunday morning choir practice will resume September 20, 2026 at 9:30 a.m.

If you have been considering joining choir or bells, now would be a great time to get involved!

Contact our Music Director, Jeff Hendricker if you have questions. His email address is thefourjs1993@gmail.com.

Committee and Team Budgets

It is time to start planning for 2027. Budgets will need to be submitted to Brian Trower by Thursday, Oct. 1st.



Known for their tight four-part harmonies, dynamic vocals, and engaging stage presence, the group blends timeless style with fresh, modern energy. This quartet is a favorite of CJ Wahmann, and she would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

FOOD PANTRY SUNDAY IS ALWAYS THE FIRST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

Our next Salvation Army food drive is on August 2

UPDATED LIST!

The Salvation Army Food Pantry has provided us with an updated list of their most needed items.

Let's make sure we help stock their shelves with what they need.

Most Needed Items List: (as of 7/1/2026)

Ramen Noodle Packages (all flavors)
Tuna (cans or pouches)
Chicken (cans or pouches)
Canned "Ready-to-Eat-Meals" (Progresso soup, Chunky soups, Ravioli, Spam, corned beef hash etc.)
Hamburger Helper/Tuna Helper
BBQ Sauce (in plastic bottles please)
Gravy mix packets (brown, chicken, sausage etc.)
Taco Seasoning Packets
Corn Muffin Mix (Jiffy etc.)
Brownie Mix

Note: Canned food items DO NOT have to be pop-top.

Stand Down for Veterans 2026 –

TIME IS RUNNING OUT!

We will be delivering items to Goodwill around SEPTEMBER 17. Time is getting short!

As of Sunday August 16 we have collected:

- **771 pairs of men's socks** (an increase of 254 pairs; our goal is 867, so we are still 96 pairs short. We're getting close!!)
- **66 pairs of men's diabetic socks** (an increase of 6 pairs)
- **106 pairs of ladies socks** (an increase of 6 pairs)
- **48 pairs of ladies diabetic socks** (an increase of 6 pairs)
- **711 pairs of hand warmers** (no change)
- **0 pairs of foot warmers** (goal is 1500 hand and foot warmers)
- **387 washcloths** (an increase of 180!! Our goal was at least 250, so we've **MET GOAL! YAY!!!!**)

We are collecting **NEW, UNUSED** products in the **ORIGINAL** packaging.

The Stand Down donation bin is in the upstairs Fellowship Hall, near the staircase. It will move during the Group Sale.

IF YOU'D LIKE TO MAKE A MONETARY DONATION, please send your checks to:

Goodwill Industries
Care of Tim O'Malley
2319 E War Memorial
Peoria IL 61614

Make checks payable to "Goodwill Foundation" and put "Stand Down 2026" in the memo line.

As always, I suggest adding a note that you are from St Luke Union Church; Goodwill knows who we are and appreciates our work!

THANK YOU for any help you can!!

James Munro

Dreaming our Way into a New Year

*When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream.
Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongues with shouts of joy;
then it was said among the nations,
“The Lord has done great things for them.” The Lord has done great things
for us, and we rejoiced. Psalm 126:1-3*

At the August Vision and Ministry Council (VMC) meeting, I shared this Psalm, as it's a psalm about joy and dreaming. It always makes me think of Caliban's speech in Shakespeare's play The Tempest, which starts with "Be not afraid" and concludes with:
"The clouds methought would open, and show riches
Ready to drop upon me; that, when I waked, I cried to dream again"

What are our dreams for St Luke Union Church? Acts 2: 17 says, "I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams."

As this newsletter closes out summer, with the return of yellow school buses on the road and a different pace, what are your dreams for this community of faith? "The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet" is a line from Presbyterian minister writer Frederick Buechner. To what dream might God be calling you? How does "what makes your heart sing" (Pastor Andy's sabbatical theme) tie in with concerns in this community?

A church member and I were talking recently about how the church can be an antidote to the cruelty, mean spiritedness, and divisiveness we see in the world. At its best, church can offer hope, compassion, and a willingness to fight for the dignity of all people. It's a sacred third space, with home being first space, work being second space, and this church can be a communal safe third space for people, a place of community and for building up people. It can be a place where the Spirit puts dreams and visions in hearts for what could be.

As I read historical documents of this church, dating back to 1833, I'm mindful the founders had a vision and dream for what they were creating at the time. Their vision is nearly two hundred years old. What's the vision going forward? What are the dreams? Joy rides in with dreams and visions, it casts away the fear. Joy dares to believe. Because Jesus knew it's not the work of our hands, it's work through our hands.

Keep listening to what makes your heart sing. Keep dreaming for your own life, and for the life of this church, remembering what Jesus said, 'For mortals it is impossible, but for God all things are possible.'" (Matthew 19:26)

With gratitude to God for the way God has blessed the past and present of this church, and will no doubt bless its future,
--Pastor Susan

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!



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
 - **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 squeeze® 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)
 - **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.

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.

Updated 6-2-2026