
The Encourager



St. Luke's Lutheran Church
"a church that encourages"

May 2024

(Deadline for the upcoming Newsletter submissions is on May 25th)

**The Mission of St. Luke's Lutheran Church is to
Share God's Love Through
Welcoming, Encouraging and Serving**

Our Rule of Love

CONGREGATION COUNCIL

Lisa Rhyne, President

Tom Ainsworth, Vice-President

Rebekah Woodward, secretary

Sara Mueller, Treasurer

Phil Brooks, Treasurer

Erin Pushman-Aldred, Pete Schmidt, David Sweet

Members are encouraged to bring any questions, suggestions,
or concerns to Council.

Click on the buttons below to view reports.

March Council Minutes 2024

Interim Pastor's Report March 2024

Our Rule of Love

Revising St. Luke's Constitution Bylaws

Admin Support Meeting & Recommendations March 2024

Social Media Project

CONGREGATION & WORSHIP LIFE



Watch us on YouTube

SIXTH SUNDAY IN EASTER - May 5th at 10:00am
(Sanctuary)

with Guest Pastor Joe Glymph

SEVENTH SUNDAY IN EASTER - May 12th at 10:00am
(Sanctuary)

with Guest Pastor Jim Merkel

DAY OF PENTECOST - May 19th at 10:00AM
(Sanctuary)

w/ Noisy Offering ELCA World Hunger

CHILDREN'S CHURCH

We have launched a new educational program for our children. During the service, Pastor will call the children forward, but instead of a Message, he will dismiss them from the sanctuary, and they will go to another location for Bible studies and activities. They will rejoin the service in time to have communion with their families.

Marilyn Schuster and Mr. Terry, with their years of experience as Sunday School teachers, will lead the program. Until the end of the school year, the children will be studying "Heroes of the Old Testament" and enjoying many of the most famous and beloved stories of the Bible.

We think this will be a great learning experience and a lot of fun for our children. Please pray for the success of the program and contact Diana Brooks or Heather Micci with questions or concerns.

WORSHIP NOTES PENTECOST TO AUGUST

"Guide You Into All Truth"

Overall Theme: As we enter a major election cycle, we will be bombarded with messages. These messages in many cases will be claiming possession of truth. Jesus Christ said in the Gospel of John, "I am the way, and the truth and the life." If Jesus is the truth, then it can't be our possession. The world tried that when they nailed him to the cross. The truth cannot be contained or possessed. It can, however, be discovered and discerned. The truth has not been lost, because we can't possess it and we couldn't kill it. During this first part of the Pentecost Season, we will explore how the Holy Spirit guides us into all truth. As we mine the scriptures regarding truth, you are invited to join in a book study over the summer. The book is "Trust: Knowing When to Give it. When to Withhold It. How to Earn It and How To Fix It When It Gets Broken" by Dr. Henry Cloud. This will be a companion study to our prayerful exploration of scripture regarding truth. We pray that through this season, the Holy Spirit will guide us into all truth!

May 5th

Sixth Sunday of Easter

"Can Anyone Withhold The Water?"

Main Text: Acts 10:44-48
(1 John 5:1-6; John 15:9-17)

May 12th

Seventh Sunday of Easter

“So That They May Be One”

Text: John 17:6-19
(Acts 1:15-17, 21-26; 1 John 5:9-13)

May 19th

Day of Pentecost

“Spirit of Truth Comes”

Main Text: John 15:26-27, 16:4b-15
(Acts 2:1-21; Ezekiel 37:1-14)

April 28th

The Holy Trinity

“Bearing Witness With Our Spirit”

Main Text: Romans 8:12-17
(Isaiah 6:1-8; John 3:1-17)

COPELAND'S CORNER

*For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to ridicule him, saying, ‘This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.’
(Like 14:28-30)*

Foundations Take Time to Build: In watching housing communities being built, the longest part of that development is in laying the foundation. First, there is the sign out front that says something is coming. All the work of pulling permits and getting permissions as well as the resources needed happens outside of view and can take years. Finally, we can see the land being cleared and infrastructure being built. Finally, we start to see foundations being poured. Once it gets to the point of framing it seems only a short while and people are moving in. That early work is essential to sustain that new community in life. When corners have been cut, many communities have had to deal with the consequences later. It is time that is well spent.

This Summer Is Time of Preparation: This summer will be an important time for us not only to build the plan for a new future for St. Luke's, it will be a time of considering the cost and our commitment to actually build this future. It is an important time and important work, otherwise, we will not complete what we start. We hear God's call to build something new and the congregation committed in theory to move toward this new vision, but now we need to build the plan and estimate the cost. It may seem like it's taking forever but it is

important and essential work.

Development Plan To Be Presented in the Fall: Once we have considered the cost and what it will take to move this community into a new footprint and develop the Encouragement Center, we will present clearly what it will take to do this. Then it will be up to this community of faith to decide. Before we do anything, it is important to consider what it will take to make it happen and make the appropriate commitments to do it.

Prayer and Support in this Important Work: We need you consider your God given gifts and abilities and ask for your participation in developing this plan and exploring the costs and opportunities. If the Lord is leading you to help, please contact the church office and let us know. All of us can and should be in prayer for God to open the path before us and direct us. Please join me in this prayer as we move forward:

Let us pray...*God of new life, we hear you calling St. Lukes into a new day. You have already been preparing the way. Bless the discernment we will be doing this summer in preparation to establish ourselves in a new way. Open our hearts and make us ready and willing to not only desire to do this new thing but to actually move into it. Be our cornerstone in this new adventure. In Jesus name we pray. Amen!!!*

SUMMER PENTECOST STUDY TRUST

Invitation: The Summer months are often considered a time of recreation. Break that word down and you see Re-Creation. We were created in the image of God. That means we are called to reflect the presence of God in and through our lives. What might re-creation mean for you? Where do you need to re-create in your life? We live in a society and culture that seems to be pulling further and further from the image of what God intended. Community seems to be breaking down into affinity groups with no relationship and no trust. We would like to invite you to explore trust, which scripture tells us is essential to relationship, community and life.

Book Study: *Trust: Know When To Give It. When To Withhold It. How To Earn It. And How To Fix It When It Gets Broken* by Henry Cloud.

Though not marketed as a Christian Book, it is filled with scriptural examples regarding trust. Dr. Cloud shows how trust is essential for life. He defines five essential of trust. He addresses how to grow in trust and offers a model for repairing trust and moving forward. It is a great opportunity to reflect on how to re-create trust in your life. This trust is not blind trust that requires us to overlook dangers.

Informal Conversation During the Summer on Zoom: I would invite any who would like to discuss this to join me on Zoom Wednesday nights at 7pm. I will open the Zoom meeting and you are welcome to drop in anytime between 7pm and 8pm. Watch for more information coming. I am also glad to discuss any other time one on one if you would like. Just email, call or text and we can set something up.

DR. HENRY CLOUD

New York Times bestselling author of *Boundaries*

TRUST

KNOWING WHEN TO GIVE IT,
WHEN TO WITHHOLD IT,
HOW TO EARN IT, AND HOW TO
FIX IT WHEN IT GETS BROKEN
IN LIFE AND BUSINESS

Buy your copy
here

NOISY OFFERING

In April we collected for:



The Center for
Community
Transitions

Building people, not prisons since 1974

This month we will be collecting for:

ELCA World Hunger

What do the book, *The Princess Bride*, the puzzle, Rubik's Cube, Skittles candy, and ELCA World Hunger have in common? They all turn 50 this year! It

is a humbling reminder that our work in service of our neighbors—whether down the street or across the globe—is worthy of our time, talents, and giving. For 50 years we have joined together as Lutherans to address the root causes of hunger and poverty around the world through ELCA World Hunger. Watch this 50th anniversary celebration video below.

ELCA World Hunger



FLOWER CHART IN THE NARTHEX

If you would like to beautify our church sanctuary, honor someone, or commemorate a special day, please add your name to the chart!

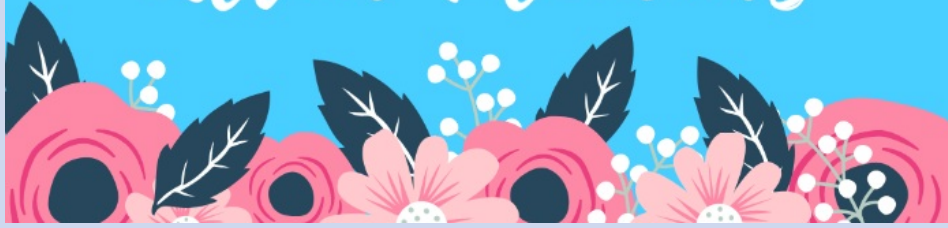
We are now using Starclaire House of Flowers. They can be contacted at 704-553-2435. Payment is by credit card or check in advance to the florist.

Remember to tell the florist the date you are giving.

Call Ami-Luise at the church office at 704-523-7981 or email office@stlukeselca.org with the information you would like put in the bulletins by Wednesday morning of the week you are giving.

If you have any questions, call Pam Moser at 704-552-0996. Thanks!

Sign Up for *Altar Flowers*



MAY BIRTHDAYS



Did we miss your birthday?

Email us
or
call us at
704-523-7981
so we can update our Birthday List.

Email the
office

- 2 Ruby Black
- 4 Ed Mueller
- 5 Fancita Lorimer
- 6 Ben Brauer
- 6 Sophie Whelan
- 7 Kathy West
- 10 Matthew Whelan
- 11 Sean Borachok
- 11 Susan McClave
- 11 Samie Roberts
- 11 Cheri Williams
- 16 David Sweet
- 18 Marie Lorimer
- 18 Calvin Schlick
- 20 Terry Cheville
- 21 Ryenne Ritchie
- 23 Julia Passmore
- 26 Keith Brunnemer
- 26 Mary Lachacz
- 27 Jennie Regan
- 28 Katie Howard
- 29 Philip Huntley
- 30 Mike Hix

The Katharina Circle, please reach out to members for updates.

Anna Vee Circle

The Anna Vee Circle will be meeting in the Conference Room at 12:00pm on May 7th.

Lutheran Men In Mission (LMIM)

If you need minor repairs, changing out smoke detectors, and batteries please contact the church office and we will get you in touch with Tom Frick.

The LMIM gents want you to know they are available for odd jobs with their "Congregation/Community Help Program".

SYNOD GATHERING: TWO UPDATES!

This year's Synod Gathering at Lenoir-Rhyne University promises to be a time to connect, be inspired, learn, and share under the theme, "We Are More" (Romans 8:37) from **Thursday, May 30, through Saturday, June 1.**

Clear your calendar, invite your friends, and make plans to join others from across the synod—old friends and new!—at this exciting event for lay people as well as pastors and deacons. Today's two updates are:

- Workshops are now listed by day/time on the Synod Gathering **webpage**.

**2024 SYNOD
GATHERING**

**REGISTER
HERE**

2024 WORKSHOPS

ST. LUKE'S HAPPENINGS!

2024 HIGH SCHOOL & COLLEGE GRADUATES

We would love to recognize your achievement!

Please click on the button to fill out a Graduate Profile form.

SUMMER WORSHIP BEGINS JUNE 2nd

Summer Time and the Living is Easy: It has been the tradition of St. Lukes to lighten the liturgy during the summer. We will be continuing that tradition as the Choir takes a break. A few things to watch for:

- **Congregation Singing during offering**
- **Special prayers and Lord's Prayer sung**
- **Invitation for individuals or groups to share special music**

We Do Not Break for the Summer – WE RECREATE: Summer is not a time to take a break from Worship. It is a time for us to change things up a little and allow God to re-create us. If you travel, we hope you will find a place to worship. When you are home, join with your family of faith as we seek God's renewal.

NEW ONLINE GIVING PROCESS A GREAT WAY TO GIVE!

Easy Online Giving Form on Website: You can now give securely online either as a one time gift or recurring gift using the form on our website. This form is very easy to use and self explanatory. Donors can give to the general fund or designate a gift for a specific purpose such as flowers or other specific mission priorities. Simply click on the link below. You can give by ACH Transfers from your Bank or Credit Card on this platform.

If You Are Currently Giving Through Vanco, Tithe.ly or Venmowe will need you to cancel your EXISTING transactions before setting up on this new platform. Please be aware that we will be unable to receive donations through these platforms as of May 20th. Once you cancel your existing transactions, then set up anew using the below form:

SLLC ONLINE GIVING

Please Consider Option to Cover the Fee: There is an option to cover the fee of the transaction so that 100% of the gift goes to mission. Simply mark the box indicating the fees and it will be added in. Either way, we are grateful for your gift!

If You Need Help We Are Here: We commit to support you every step of the way and will be glad to walk you through it either on the phone or you can come to the office as well. You can reach us at the office by email at office@stlukeselca.org or phone 704-523-7981. You can also contact me at west@stlukeselca.org.

UPDATE ON OUR JOURNEY TO THE FUTURE

Architect Working: The council has secured an Architect to develop drawings in support of the overall plan of moving the footprint of the congregation to the front part of the building. Ami has met with the team and the architect to provide the information needed regarding the needs of the office and will continue to work on this development.

Encouragement Center Development Plan: In addition to the plans by the Architect, there are other aspects of the Encouragement Center Development Plan that are being explored and researched. They are:

- **Plan to Move Offices:** Besides developing a plan and timeline for the move, consideration is being given to the needs in the new location including technology and communications in the new space. This plan will also include cost for doing this work.
- **Security Considerations:** In order for the building to be useful and safe, we will need a security system that covers the whole building and is useful for the planned use.
- **Management of Encouragement Center:** A team is working on clarifying needs for management of the encouragement center. A position description is being considered that includes three focal points of a Facility Manager. They are:
 - **Manage the Facility Maintenance and Repair**
 - **Manage the Facility Use and Scheduling**
 - **Manage the Facility Promotion**

The Team is researching potential compensation for this kind of position. Once identified, ***a year salary will be included in the plan.*** With a year salary, it will give this position time to develop income sources capable of covering the cost of the position as well as the costs of the facility. Other options are still on the table such as a management company.

- **Financing Plan:** A vital part of the plan needs to be options for financing. Once we have a clear and reasonable plan along with cost estimates, we need to have recommendations on financing this new direction. This plan will explore:
 - **Capital Campaign**
 - **Loans**

One of the greatest assets of the church is the building, even though it has felt like a burden. Without current debt, leveraging the building and including that debt in the Encouragement Center business plan, is a reasonable way of covering the work needed and providing for potential unexpected costs.

All of these things need to be in place before moving forward into this new future. It takes time to create the plan, but if done well it will make for a clearer

path and smoother movement. *We hope to bring a clear plan and path to the congregation by early fall.*

FACILITY USE TEAM

A Facility Use Team has been engaging several groups on leasing space in our facility. This conversation includes a church interested in the chapel space, a school, a mothers morning out and others. Please pray for this team and the ongoing conversations! We may have some new partners in ministry on site soon!

MUSIC DIRECTOR POSITION

The Search for a new Music Director has been delayed until Summer. We will then develop a team to begin work on a position description. We are thankful for the ongoing help of Monty Bennett who has been putting in the music into the organ. We are thankful for the leadership of Karen Smith who has been leading the choir. We are thankful for the choir. We are truly blessed! Watch for more information coming.

LAWN CLEAN UP VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Here are some lawn projects that we need to tackle this month. If you are able to help, please reach out to Ami-Luise.



This tree by the double red door broke off in several places. Looking for someone with a chainsaw to cut down to a stump. We would like to turn this into a flowerbed.



This tree is being taken over by the ivy. We are looking to remove all the ivy and replace with flowers.



Walkway to the Day Care is overgrown and would need to be cut back.



Due to an Interment of Ashes next Tuesday, we will be spending time cleaning up the Prayer Garden on Monday, May 6th.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We need help in these areas:

- Video (Live Stream)
- Sound
- Organ
- Sunday Offering Counters

Please reach out to the office.

SPARK STORY BIBLE

For many years, St. Luke's has provided the families of our Sunday School children with Spark Story Bibles for their use in family devotions. We are continuing that tradition now, but our supply has gotten low. Before ordering more new Bibles, we were wondering if perhaps some parents of past children who are now grown might still have that children's Bible in their home library. If you have a copy that you are not using, please hand it in to the church office so we can share it with new families of young children.

Thanks so much!

BOY SCOUT TROOP 355

The Scouts still have some BBQ left to sell.

Smoked BBQ, Brunswick Stew, Red Slaw & BBQ Sauce are still available.

Hickory Smoked BBQ \$14.00 per pound

Brunswick Stew \$14.00 per quart

BBQ Sauces \$5.00 a bottle
Eastern Mild, Eastern Hot, Western

Please make checks out to Boy Scout Troop 355.

Please call the office regarding purchase.

FROM TOM AINSWORTH

OK, so far this year you've made it through New Year's Day, the College Football National Championship, Super Bowl Sunday, Valentine's Day, Saint Patrick's Day, March Madness, Easter and Tax Day (and will soon engage in The Kentucky Derby, Cinco de Mayo and Mother's Day) and have managed to survive them even though many of you have intentionally tried to do yourselves in on all the above occasions. It's time to get serious and face the most overlooked but imminent threat to the wellbeing of every American and the biggest contributor to the U.S. healthcare crisis— of course I'm talking about spicy foods! On pretty much every holiday and important event in this country many of you crazy people douse your food with Texas Pete, Tabasco, Cholula, Huy Fong, Frank's, and other noxious concoctions with the actual intention of burning the hell out of your mouths! What, is America just rife with a plethora of auto-sadists? Adding to this madness are restaurants which it seems in the last 50 years or so have shamelessly competed to contribute to this national insanity. In my formative years I don't remember restaurants advertising spicy dishes on their menus as they do now. Today pretty much everything they offer is either blackened, Cajun, Creole, Tex-Mex, Southwestern, Indian, Thai, chiled, chipotled, jalapenoed, or just plain spicy. At least when you see those adjectives you know to run! More insidious are those institutions that don't warn you that they're out to kill you. I love deviled eggs and decided to order some as an appetizer at a franchise restaurant here in Charlotte with no other description than that. Instead of "normal" deviled eggs you can expect to get at a St. Luke's pot-luck supper (yay), the waitress came out with six of them on a tray, each with a thick jalapeno slice embedded in the yolk and sriracha sauce streamed on both sides! Whaaaaat? Even usually dependable places have sought to do me in without an announcement. Chick-fil-A never warned me when their chicken strips had suddenly become spicy overnight, and the Honey Baked Ham's ham salad all of a sudden magically changed to contain bits of jalapeno to my painful surprise. Usually dependable Fresh Market did me in recently when I bought their innocently labeled potato salad. They didn't warn me it contained cayenne pepper until I read the fine print on the label after ingesting a big forkful! I don't care if I am labeled a "wimp", "weaking" or "wuss" since at least I'm not a masochistic, moronic, mindless mass-murderer of moderately mild mucous membranes! Yes, I have an unusual susceptibility to capsaicin, the active ingredient in chile peppers, the least amount of which can start a three-alarm blaze in my mouth, and can trigger painful numbness and fire on my lips which send me in desperate search for milk-related products to douse the inferno. But in my defense I don't go out of my way to stupidly climb the Scoville scale and intentionally see how much pain and damage my whole digestive system can endure with the likes of Ghost, Trinidad scorpion, our own hometown Carolina Reaper, or -- God forbid - - Pepper X! Do you spice lovers really like the sensation of pouring the

equivalent of Capsicum gasoline in your mouth and then setting it on fire? Really? Do you have a Mylanta, Prilosec or Prevacid monkey on your back? Why not give your poor tastebuds a break and let them savor the actual nuances of the food you're eating without self-harm? Do yourself and your gastroenterologist a favor and knock it off! Stick to burning the roof of your mouth with a hot slice of pizza if you still need to do intentional harm to your buccal cavity -- just a suggestion. Your intestinal system will thank me.

BAPTISM OF ANTHONY DIPIANO







**BAPTISM OF MARGOT WASIL &
NEW MEMBERS COOPER & DIAMOND**







FROM BEHIND THE LENS OF "MR.TERRY" CHEVILLE

While you "big kids" were singing hymns, saying prayers, and listening to sermons, we younger kids were learning about plagues, stubbornness, and parting the Red Sea. We finally got the Israelites safely to the other side of the Red Sea but it wasn't easy. Next week Lucille will be our Sunday school teacher. She's going to tell us how the Israelites survived by drinking water from a rock, ate manna (whatever that is) and dead birds, and climbed a mountain and came back down with the Ten Commandments. I hope she also explains how the Israelites managed to somehow get lost between the Red Sea and Promised Land, and why it took them forty years to get their bearings and finally arrive at their destination. Whew, that's a lot, but it sounds pretty exciting,...like a real adventure.

The week after, Esmi (with help from Orin and Adley) is going to teach us about the Battle of Jericho. That sounds like a pretty exciting adventure too I may be able to help with some of the details since I used to blow a horn and I've become pretty expert at going round and round in circles.

Now here's the question.

Who do you think is having the most fun on Sunday mornings?

Remember, Sunday school, like St. Luke's, is a place where ALL are welcome, even big kids or old kids with the heart of a five year old. If you can't stay or hang out, you can just stop by and say hey. We've got some really incredible people be they very young or young at heart. Get to know each other every chance you get. You'll be glad you did.

OK Ms. Ami, that's all I have for now. Stay tuned. I sure there are more adventures just around the corner.

Check you later,









OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES

MISSION POSSIBLE WORDS OF HOPE MINISTRIES

We had some production delays, hence we're a little late in delivery and distribution.

We have transmitted 100 newsletters in multiple institutions across the NC Dept of Corrections together with a few via regular mail.

Sadly, 1 of our readers, John K., has passed away. We pray for his loved ones. I'm happy to report the release of James P.

We have \$70.75 on our account at Text Behind. Thank you again for St. Luke's faithful support of this ministry.

April MP Newsletter

NOURISH UP

We are continuing to collect items for our neighbors in need.
You can bring items on Sunday or during office hours.

Priority Needs

- Canned Meat - Tuna, Chicken, etc.**
- Canned Fruit - No Sugar Added**
- Canned Vegetables - Low Sodium**
- Pasta - Canned or Dry boxed**
- Cereal - Whole Grain**

No Glass Please



New Name, Same Mission

Loaves & Fishes/Friendship Trays is now **Nourish Up**, providing the same mission to nourish our neighbors with food and compassion.

LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF COFFEE

Lutheran World Relief Farmers Market now offers chocolate in addition to coffee!

Mountain Harvest works with roughly 850 farmers in eight communities on Mount Elgon, Uganda with each farm growing between 600 and 1,000 coffee trees. We pay farmers up to 30% above local market prices allowing them to better provide for their families, invest in their crops and land, and ultimately, drive the local economy to benefit their community.

Latitude Craft Chocolate signs long term contracts with their suppliers to grow organic cocoa, promote biodiversity and ensure fair labor practices on all the farms. Over half of their contracted farmers are women. Latitude pays on

average 50% higher than prices in Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire, the world's leading cocoa producing countries.



LWR Farmer's Market
Coffee

Assist M.E.

We take in gently used medical equipment and gift it to low income, uninsured patients in our community.

Assist M.E. is a non-profit [501c(3)] organization in the Charlotte, North Carolina area. We take in gently used medical equipment and gift it to low-income, uninsured patients in our community. Assist M.E. gets wheelchairs, bedside commodes, walkers, shower chairs, and other medical equipment from individual donors and organizations.

If you have any unused, or gently used medical equipment to donate, simply call our church office 9-12:30pm M-F to make arrangements to drop your equipment off so that it may be reused by someone in need.

Visit Assist M.E.
website

List of donation needs

FAMILIES IN CRISIS NEED YOUR HELP

Your love will reach your neighbors who feel so alone as they continue to fight for their lives.

You'll provide frightened, cold and hungry children, mothers and seniors with:

- Shelter from the deadly cold with beds, pillows and heaters.

- Warm meals and clean water.
- Mobile medical clinics that provide health care, critically needed medical supplies and mental health support for PTSD and trauma.
- Essential supplies, like soap and toilet paper.
- Comforting quilts made by members of our caring Lutheran family.
- Love, support — and most importantly — hope for a brighter tomorrow.

Click on the button below and connect to the website enabling you to contribute directly and your offering will flow swiftly to where it needs to go.

Lutheran World Relief



St. Luke's Lutheran Church | 3200 Park Road, Charlotte, NC 28209

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