



Sharing Our Faith

St. Luke's United Methodist Church

3080 Okatie Highway, between the back gates of Sun City on Hwy 170

"Praising and Serving God Thru the Ages"

Volume 13, Issue 10

OCTOBER 2020



We are now in the season of fall. Everything in nature is beginning the slow process of "shutting down." The grass is growing a little slower, soon turning brown and with the cooler temperatures, we will soon see the leaves on the trees begin to turn to fall colors and will gently begin to release themselves from their source of life.

We have seen the shutting down during the pandemic of many businesses, recreation activities and even churches. But does the church really ever shut down? Remember the true church is the people and not the building, so as long as God has given breath and strength in our bodies, the church never actually should shut down, for we can and should continue to be the hands and feet of Christ serving God where opportunities present themselves.

So, as we transition from the growing season to the dormant season, what are we going to do as the church? Should we become dormant while awaiting spring, or can we still even in the season of "shutting down" be the church that continues to thrive; continues to serve and the church that continues to do the work of a God that never has a dormant season?

What are you going to do?!

It takes us all to make the church the viable witness in the community and in the world, yet that comes from following God in faith, seeking opportunities to serve, to be the hands and feet of Christ while reaching the community with the good news of Jesus Christ.

Nature may be "shutting down," but the church should not, for God never does!

Grace and Peace,
Brian

Contact Info for Pastor Brian
Cell: 803.686.0794
Home: 843.707.7991
Email: bpreveaux@umcsc.org



Thank you for all your cards, emails and texts wishing us a Happy Birthday last month. Receiving these lifted our birthdays and spirits!
Rev. Brian and Joy Preveaux

tradeOffs

Here we are...FALL. My favorite time of the year. Summer has just gone by and we survived another season of heat. But that's why we moved here right? We gave up snow shovels for garden shovels and windshield scrapers for garden rakes. At least we don't have to put up with too many fallen leaves in Bluffton. But then there's the pine needles. Tsk! Trade-offs, trade-offs.

Our entire life is consistent with trade-offs. No such thing as 'something for nothing'.

Except BOGOs at Publix right? Not really. Ever notice if it's a buy-one, get-one, that they always jack up the price right before the sale?

Thank goodness our relationship with the Lord is a buy-one get-one. He tells us basically to be good Christians, love one another, practice the golden rule, and love Him with our whole heart and soul. In return we get the greatest gift ever given. Heaven eternal. Eternity with the Lord. How nice is that? Now that's a really good trade-off don't you think?

Enjoy your Fall and the many holidays within it. Get out the decorations and beautify your surroundings. While you're doing that, I'm going to run down to Publix because they have a BOGO sale on Planter's Peanuts. See you in (at) church.

Blessings,
Ron Pozsonyi, Lay leader

GIFTS

I know that you must think that Rob is going to write (again) about giving to the church. Wrong! As I was sitting in our outdoor sanctuary (cathedral?) with the oak tree canopy and a pleasant breeze, I could only think about all that is given to us (gifts). As we gather Sunday mornings as a congregation to jointly worship our God and hear the Word, all I experience are the gifts that we have received. The written word, the spoken words, the community of friends, the quiet setting of trees, grass, and monuments to those who have passed surround us. All these things are more than we could ask for and is given freely by our God.



This peaceful experience provides all that I need to open my heart to my church, my God, and those around me. If you want the wrappings, then just consider that the weather has cooperated every Sunday since we began worshipping together in this place.

I encourage all of you who have not yet enjoyed our Sunday 9:00 a.m. services, to please join us in a fully “pandemic safe” environment (outdoors, separation, masks, etc.). And, oh yes, please keep mailing in your tithes and offerings.

Rob Clark, Finance Chair
rclark55@sc.rr.com

MAIL IT IN

Even when we are “shut down”, many of our operating expenses at St. Luke's have continued. Please continue to “mail it in” to support St. Luke's until “normal” times finally arrive. To the many of you who have been supporting your church the past several months – a big THANK YOU!



Hello Fellow Church Members,

My name is **Nancy Sarisack** and I am your **Worship Committee Chair**. I accepted this position in January, 2020 but did not have a lot of time to get my feet wet before the COVID-19 Pandemic hit.

For those of you who don't know me, my husband (John) and I are from Pittsburgh, PA. We moved here in August 2019. We had been spending time in Bluffton that past 3 winters and while here our friends Diana and Walker Hamilton invited us to come to church with them. We loved your little Methodist church from the very beginning. Everyone was so warm and inviting. We met several people during our visits here. When we finally moved here it seemed only natural to make St. Luke's our place to worship. Before the virus we attended the 8:30 service so I don't know many of you who attend the 10:00 service but would love to get to know you. We have been attending the outdoor backyard services since they started back in June and enjoy them very much. There is just something so special being able to worship while listening to nature's sounds, enjoying the sun (most Sundays) and the gentle breezes that bring some much-needed coolness in those warm months. It's a blessing that the service has never been cancelled since it started. We had a couple of Sundays where a few raindrops fell but never anything more than that. Along with the sermons we also enjoy Geoff playing beautiful hymns and some music I've not heard before but absolutely beautiful.

I don't know when we will be able to get back inside to worship but our Worship Committee will be ready. I have some big shoes to feel as Jane Disney did such a wonderful job. She also left me with an amazing team of women that prepare the bulletins, Communion, and the church for Worship each Sunday.

I look forward to serving St. Luke's and with everyone's help and support, it will be better than ever. If anyone has suggestions on how the Worship Committee can enhance your worship experience going forward, please contact me by email:

nlsack72@gmail.com.

In God's Love & Service,
Nancy

**FIRST SUNDAY
FOOD MISSION DRIVE**

The First Sunday Food Mission Drive is now under the leadership of Rick Hoel, Missions Chair. If you have any questions regarding Missions and the Food Bank in particular, please contact him at 843.295.9002 or rickhoel12@gmail.com or 843.295.9002.



Helping to feed the hungry is an important mission of St. Luke's. As you know we expanded our efforts in September to include two drop offs in order to provide more opportunities for those not attending Sunday services to participate and for those who can donate more. In addition to our regular drop off on the first Sunday of the month, we added a drop off on the third Monday of the month. I am delighted to announce that the additional drop off was extremely successful as you can see in the picture!



Specifically, for October, please drop off your contributions in the back-parking lot at the church on Sunday, October 4th. We will be loading before and after the service. You can now also drop off at the church on Monday, October 15th from 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM. "Social distancing" will be observed to avoid any risk of virus transmission. Your contributions are vital as the community needs are extreme due to the pandemic. Feeding the hungry is truly part of us doing God's Work!

Please help us with our **FIRST SUNDAY** and **THIRD MONDAY** FOOD MISSION DRIVES for our local food pantry, **Bluffton Self Help**. PLEASE help us stock the pantry with the most desired/requested items. These include:

- cereal – Cheerios preferred, instant grits/oatmeal,
 - peanut butter, jelly, dried pasta, pasta sauce,
 - boxed or bagged dinner mixes such as Hamburger Helper, Beefaroni, etc., dried beans, and rice.
- Also needed are recycled shopping bags & diapers (sizes 4, 5 & 6) and toilet paper. Unfortunately, we can't accept any open, expired or damaged items.

In case of rain and church services are cancelled on October 4th, we will be at the church parking lot on Monday, October 5th from 9:00 – 10:00 AM. Please remember to show your willingness to be of service by signing up to deliver the food donations for an upcoming month.,

Thank you.



Operation Christmas Child, a project of Samaritan's Purse, has delivered millions of shoeboxes to boys and girls around the world. We praise God for so many children whose lives have been transformed because of a simple gift.

Since 1993, Samaritan's Purse has partnered with local churches around the world to deliver 178 million Operation Christmas Child shoebox gifts to children in need in 150 countries. Each one—packed full of fun toys, school supplies, and hygiene items by a family or individual—is sent with prayer that the child who receives it will experience God's love through their simple gifts.

These shoebox gifts are an opportunity to share the Gospel and "declare His glory among the nations, His wonders among all peoples" (Psalm 96:3).

Below is an article taken from the Operation Christmas Child website dated: September 8, 2020.



"When people tell Karabo Maretlane he's lucky, he says, "I'm chosen."

Karabo grew up in a village in the southern African nation of Lesotho. When he was 5 years old, his father died and his mother left him with his grandmother. As this elderly woman raised him, she taught him how to read, write, and follow God. But Karabo's grandmother died when he was still young and, shortly afterward, his mother died as well. Loneliness set in like never before as he realized he was an orphan.

Karabo's uncle soon invited him to come live with him in the city. It was there that a friend invited him to an Operation Christmas Child outreach event where he received a box full of gifts just for him.

“That shoebox filled one of the holes in my heart,” he said.

Today Karabo is part of a family again and he encourages others to pack shoebox gifts for other kids around the world: If you hear the voice of God, do not harden your heart” (paraphrasing Hebrews 3:15).

Now more than ever, children need hope. You can bless a child, like Karabo with great joy and the Good News of Jesus Christ by packing a shoebox.”

Once again this year, St. Luke's has the opportunity to participate in this wonderful mission. Shoeboxes, instructions, box labels, and materials will be available for distribution before and after the October 4th St. Luke's Sunday Service which starts at 9:15 a.m. For those who cannot attend the Service, our Missions Chair Rick Hoel will distribute the boxes and other material on Tuesday, October 6th in the church parking lot from 8:30 to 10 AM. Rick can be contacted with any questions at rickhoel12@gmail.com or 843.295.9002.

It's amazing what you can manage to fit into these boxes of love. Select a boy and/or girl and age group and track the amazing journey of your box to a child in some distant land. Suggestions for boys and girls of various ages are included on the list in your shoebox along with items not allowed: (No candy, toothpaste, war related items, nor chocolate or lotions). The children would LOVE fun toys and school



supplies. Every shoebox needs a \$9 donation to provide for collecting, processing, shipping, and other project costs.

Boxes may be brought to our Sunday services anytime through Sunday, Nov. 8th. Rick

will have further announcements and updates on our progress throughout October and will make arrangements for shoebox drop offs for those not attending Services.

Thank you for being part of this effort to bring hope through God to places where the Gospel has never been heard.



Operation Christmas Child is looking forward to a great season as they prayerfully consider ways to modify their collection and processing in light of COVID-19. They are already monitoring local, state, and national guidelines and adjusting to help protect the health of those involved in preparing shoebox gifts.



As we enter the eighth month of the COVID-10 pandemic, what have we learned? Maybe you've learned some of the same things I have:

- many of the things I thought were important, aren't
- a little "down time" is good for us
- family is more precious than ever
- friends are still helping friends
- we have found safe ways to worship, and most importantly, always remember...
- GOD IS OUR REFUGE AND STRENGTH, A VERY PRESENT HELP IN TROUBLE (PSALM 46:1).

Angie Harting,
Church Council Chair

9:15 AM · Back Lot
COME WORSHIP
with us!



Sunday mornings

Bring your Lawn Chair and wear a face covering.
In case of rain, service will be cancelled.



Telling Our Stories

The Bible is a collection of stories left to us. The writers wrote them because these stories were important, then and now. They are stories of faith in and relationship with our God. These Bible stories are just as relevant today because they examine timeless questions: Who are we? Where did we come from? Why are we here? Where are we going? How should we live?

Jesus knew the power of teaching through stories. We are more eager to learn through stories than through facts alone. I volunteered for the position of St Luke's historian because I love history and history is told, in one way or another, through story. Remember that old hymn, "I Love to Tell the Story". Well, I'd love to tell the story, "St. Luke's in the Time of COVID-19".

I wonder what stories we are telling during this pandemic. What are the ways we as a church family and as each individual member have adapted to the COVID-19 epidemic? What stories do we tell about events and activities we are engaged in?

I wish we knew how our church members who lived through previous pandemics used their faith to guide and sustain them. No doubt there are lessons from their stories to help us in 2020. But we will never have them. The history of those previous pandemics and how members of St. Luke's adapted wasn't written down.

We have a chance to record the St. Luke's history of the COVID-19 virus through our stories. So I am asking for your help so that future St. Luke's members will know what we did individually and what our church family did during this pandemic.

Humans cope with life's events in various ways. Some keep a journal. Some write poetry. Some write stories. But the written word isn't the only way of telling your story. You can tell your story through a variety of mediums— poetry, photography, drawing, painting, crafting, reading, music, etc. Maybe you have planted a garden, completed house repairs, finally gotten those photos or videos organized. You get the idea. So, I am asking you to share your stories—through any medium you like.

- Here are some things to think about as you tell us your story:
- What have you done during the pandemic?
- How has your faith guided you?
- How have you used prayer?
- Has your faith been strengthened? In what ways?
- How have you connected with family and friends?
- What is God calling you to do?

Sometimes good things can come from even the worst and most fearful form of evil. We certainly see examples of this in the Bible. We can, even in the midst of this pandemic, encounter and share spiritual gifts such as wisdom, hope, thanksgiving and love. Did you see or experience anything good during this pandemic?

I will write a brief timeline of the COVID-19 progression and developments since January 2020, a description of St. Luke's activities in response to the pandemic, and of course my own story. These, along with what you share, will be compiled and placed in a notebook, such as those on the church's history and the Christon Tree as well as various pamphlets stored in the Fellowship Hall. Like those, this compilation will become part of St. Luke's history and a resource available for the future. In addition, some stories will be shared on the webpage and in the newsletter as well.

Please send any questions and your contribution to me by email at professorpamela1@gmail.com or mail to 43 Heartwood Court, Bluffton, SC 29910.

Thank you and I look forward to hearing from you.

Pam Hoel,
Historian Chair



IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BECOME A MEMBER OF

ST. LUKE'S – Please email Pat Simmons at

st.lukesumc.hwy170@gmail.com for an

“Invitation to Membership” form. Fill it out and mail it to St. Luke’s UMC, PO Box 2779, Bluffton SC 29910. You will then be contacted by Pastor Brian.

“**Contact Us**” using email. Our church website, www.stlukesumc-okatie.org is a valuable tool to attract people, share information and create



interest in St. Luke’s. To enhance capabilities and provide a foundation for the future, a collaborative effort is underway that changes some website organization, layout, content and navigation. **For example, listen to the “Online Sermons by Pastor Brian,** and Newsletters are available through the “About Us” area. For more information or assistance using the website, please contact Dave Disney, 706.372.2178 or disneydw1@gmail.com



Many of you may not know that we are posting our “backyard” sermons on YouTube. Each Sunday, after 1:00 PM (that gives time to set everything up) you can click on the link below to listen and watch the sermon.

Here is the YouTube link:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCj_gXL78wJ24jKL6HMBp02g

The link is also on our website under “Quick Links” on our website: **This is the website address:**

www.stlukesumc-okatie.org

(If clicking on the link doesn’t work for you, copy and paste it in your browser.)

“IN-PERSON” WORSHIP

We continue to have “in-person” worship in the “back parking lot”. We bring our chairs and do social distancing, plus we wear our face coverings. We have only **One** Worship Service at **9:15 a.m.** In the event of rain, services will not be held

We look forward to seeing you there!



October Birthdays

- 09 John Hubbard
- 09 Sharon Makarick
- 14 Vivian Smith
- 15 Roger Weaver
- 16 Jane Disney
- 16 Doris Heck
- 18 Julie Bascom
- 18 Bill Halstead
- 19 Loretta LoMonaco
- 22 Haigler Woods
- 23 Judy Watkins
- 27 Nancy Adkins
- 27 Steve Klapp
- 29 Jerry Wick

November Birthdays

- 05 Sue Reed
- 08 Dottie Apgar
- 16 Phil Mitchell
- 18 Ouida Dell
- 30 Jim Shaffer

October Anniversaries

- 13 Pat & Will Ross



November Anniversaries

- 07 Judy & Gary Landin
- 28 Terri & Wes Reutter



Let us remember with cards, and prayers...

Nancy Adkins, 49 Heron's Bill Drive, Bluffton 29909
Doris Boskey, Sonata Viera, Rm; 208
 3325 Breslay Dr, Melbourne FL 32940
Elnora Ekholm, 173 May River Rd., Bluffton 29910
Angie Harting, 33 Knotweed Court. Bluffton 29909
Jim Seymore, 23 Clairborne Court, Bluffton 29909
Jane Slayton, NHC, 3039 Okatie Hwy, Rm. 331 Okatie, SC 29909; Tel: 843.705.1319



THE AMAZING JOURNEY OF A SIMPLE SHOEBOX GIFT BEGINS WITH YOU



PACKING, COLLECTING & SHIPPING

People pack shoebox gifts each year to bless children in need around the world. Churches and groups collect these boxes the third week of November. Then, thousands of volunteers inspect and prepare the shoeboxes for international shipping.



WORLDWIDE DISTRIBUTION

Long before shoeboxes arrive in more than 100 countries, volunteer National Leadership Teams train pastors and community leaders who want to share the Gospel and bless children.



OUTREACH EVENTS

Churches around the world hand out shoebox gifts at festive outreach events where the Good News is clearly presented. Along with the gifts, we offer Gospel booklets called The Greatest Gift to help shoebox recipients learn about God's Greatest Gift, His Son, Jesus Christ.



DISCIPLESHIP & MULTIPLICATION

After receiving a shoebox gift, children have the opportunity to enroll in our 12-lesson follow-up discipleship program, The Greatest Journey. As a result of what they learn, boys and girls grow in Christ and share Him with others. Families are reached, churches grow, new churches are started, and communities are transformed.



Dear friend,

Since 1993 Samaritan's Purse has collected more than 168 million shoeboxes packed with toys and other fun items by people like you, and delivered them to boys and girls in need around the world in partnership with local churches.

Sampil who has cerebral palsy received one of those shoebox gifts. Volunteers in his hometown of Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, hosted an Operation Christmas Child outreach event for disabled children like him, but he was sick that day. Not wanting him to miss out, a volunteer visited Sampil's house to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with him and give him a gift-filled shoebox. Sampil was delighted to find, among other fun items, a towel, toothbrush, and various school supplies inside.

"After I got a shoebox, I became a Christian and my relationships with others changed," Sampil said. He hadn't been to school in years, but the notebooks in his gift inspired him to enroll in a school for the disabled where he made many friends. Aware of Christ's forgiveness of his sins, Sampil also forgave his father who left his family more than 10 years ago. Today, Sampil has since graduated and serves as an assistant teacher at a camp.

Many boys and girls who receive shoebox gifts also enroll in The Greatest Journey, our 12-lesson follow-up discipleship program, where they learn to follow Christ and share Him with Others. Millions of boys and girls have participated in this dynamic course so far.

Would you consider joining us in spreading Good News and great joy this year by packing a shoebox?



*Franklin Graham
President, Samaritan's Purse*



To learn how to pack a shoebox, visit samaritanspurse.org/occ

View solicitation disclosure information for Samaritan's Purse online at samaritanspurse.org/disclosure