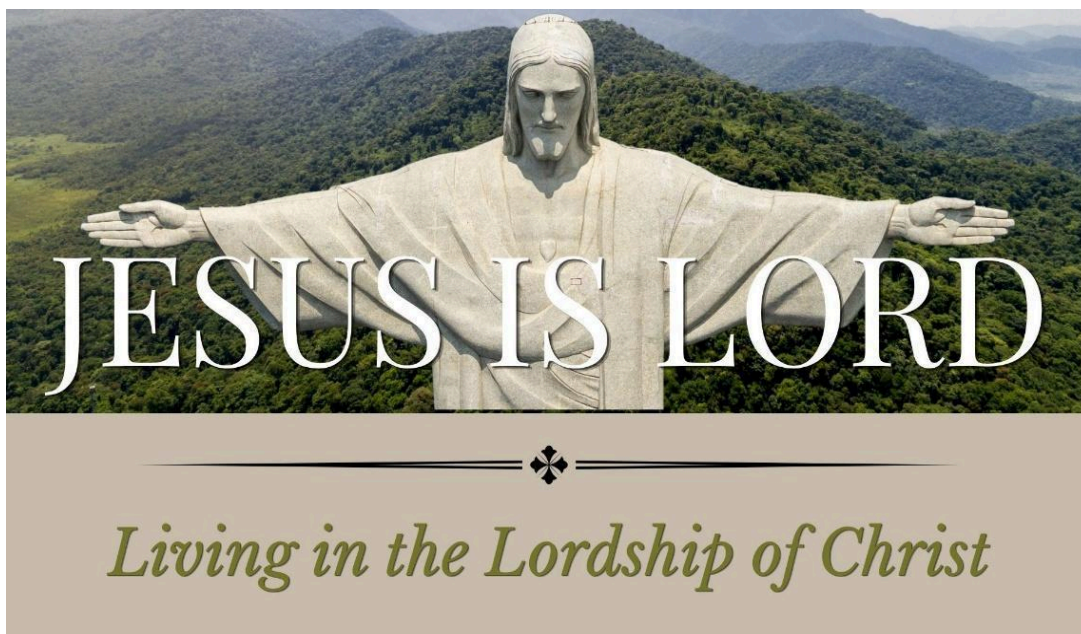




September 6th, 2026
11:15 am • Sanctuary & Online

CHURCH OFFICE

4444 5th Avenue North • St. Petersburg, FL 33713
(727) 321-1335 • st-lukesumc.com

Tuesday & Thursday 9 am – 12:30 pm
The pastors are available by appointment

Your Pastoral Team

Rev. Erick Ashley – erick@spconnection.org

Rev. Tracie Ashley – tracie@spconnection.org

Rev. Sue Garcia – sue@spconnection.org

Administrative Assistant – Patti Redmond-Marshall – patti@spconnection.org

Director of Music – Bruce Mook | AV Tech – Izz Prange

Bishop of the Florida Annual Conference – Rev. Tom Berlin

Gulf Central District Superintendent – Rev. Emily Hotho

WELCOME

Welcome to St. Luke's United Methodist Church. Every week, we look forward to this time to gather as a community. We are glad YOU are here today with us!

You can use this bulletin to help lead through worship and throughout the week. We truly hope you enjoy your time here this morning and hope you return soon.

Some logistics you may find helpful:

- Worship runs about an hour and fifteen minutes, sometimes a bit shorter & sometimes a bit longer.
- Grab a nametag from the table in the Narthex. If you are a guest, our Hospitality Team will be happy to assist you.
- The restrooms are straight out the sanctuary doors and down the hall.
- Prayer Cards are available in the pew in front of you and in the narthex. Please place your prayer card in the offering plate when it comes around toward the end of the service. It is our joy and privilege to be praying with and for you.
- We have several ways you can give financially to support St. Luke's mission.
 1. Place cash/check in the offering plate or mail to the church.
 2. Text any amount to (833) 959-1469.
 3. Visit st-lukesumc.com/give.
 4. Use your bank's bill payer system.

ORDER OF WORSHIP

UMH: United Methodist Hymnal • TFWS: The Faith We Sing

**Please stand as you are able*

WE GATHER

Welcome & Announcements

Call to Worship*

Hymn* | *For The Beauty Of The Earth*– UMH 92 vs. 1, 2, 5, 6

WE PROCLAIM

Affirmation of Faith* | *The Apostles' Creed* – UMH 881

Gloria Patri* | *Glory Be To The Father* – UMH 70

Invitation, Confession, & Pardon – UMH 12

Passing of the Peace*

Hymn* | *Come, Sinners, To The Gospel Feast* – UMH 339 vs. 1, 2, 4, 5

Prayer For Illumination

Scripture Reading | *Romans 6: 6-11* NRSV

Choral Response | *He Is Lord* – UMH 177

Message | *What Happens When Jesus Becomes Your Lord?* – Rev. Sue Garcia

WE RESPOND

Sacrament of Holy Communion – UMH 13-15

Presentation of Tithes and Offerings

Offertory Music

Doxology* | *Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow* – UMH 95

Offertory Prayer*

WE GO OUT

Hymn* | *I Surrender All* – UMH 345 vs. 1, 4, 5

Benediction*

Flowers have been placed on the altar by Brint & Patti Marshall in honor of their Anniversary.

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Leadership Summit Postponed - The South Pinellas Connection Leadership Summit, originally scheduled for September 19, has been postponed until November. We're still looking forward to this important time to connect, grow, and dream together about where God is leading us! We'll share the new November date as soon as possible. Stay tuned!

Called to Lead? Our Nominations & Leadership Development Committee is beginning its prayerful work of identifying leaders for 2027. If you have been thinking about becoming more involved in our church's leadership and would like to be considered, we would love to hear from you! Please let one of the pastors know of your interest as we prayerfully discern together how God may be calling you to serve.

2nd Sunday Celebration! Next Sunday, stay after worship as we celebrate our birthdays and anniversaries together! Join us for a little food, fellowship, and celebration of the special people in our church family.

Inviting Can Be Simple! Inviting someone to church doesn't have to feel awkward. Simply say, "Would you like to come with me?" Invite a friend to worship, dinner, a GROW Group, or another church event; and offer to meet them or save them a seat. Here are a few more ideas:

- "I really enjoy my church. Would you like to come with me Sunday? I'll save you a seat."
- "Our church has a Community Dinner Wednesday night. Want to come eat with me?"
- "I'm doing this group at church that's been really interesting. You'd be welcome to come with me."
- "My church is doing something this weekend that I think you'd really enjoy. Want to go together?"
- "Have you found a church yet? You're always welcome to come with me."
- "Our church has been a really supportive community for me. If you ever want to come, I'd be glad to go with you."
- "We've got a really welcoming group of people at our church. I think you'd fit right in."

Help Our Sister Church! Volunteers are needed to fold and staple coloring books for the Clearview Pumpkin Patch! Come to St. Luke's on Tuesday or Thursday anytime between 9 am–noon to lend a hand. It's a simple way to help our sister church and serve together as the South Pinellas Connection.

United Women in Faith - All women are invited to join United Women in Faith on Tuesday, September 8. The meeting begins at 10 am, followed by Bible Study at 11 am. Come for fellowship, faith, and time together—all are welcome!

ST. LUKE'S WEEKLY CALENDAR

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 6

- **ACA**, 9 am – Joy Room
- **Jesus is Lord Grow Group**, 10 am – Library
- **St. Luke's Worship**, 11:15 am – Sanctuary & Online
- **OA**, 5:30 pm – Joy Room

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 7 – LABOR DAY

- **Chair Volleyball**, 1 pm – Wesley Hall
- **Karate/Self Defense**, 5 pm – 2nd floor Rec Room
- **AA**, 8 pm – Wesley Hall

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8

- **Office Open**, 9 am – 12:30 pm
- **Jesus is Lord Grow Group**, 5:30 pm – Joy Room
- **ACA**, 6:30 pm – Nursery Room

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9

- **Thrift Store**, 9 am – 1 pm - Thrift Store
- **Al-Anon**, 10:30 am – Wesley Hall
- **ACA Study Group**, 6:30 pm – Nursery Room

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10

- **Thrift Store**, 9 am – 1 pm - Thrift Store
- **Al-Anon Begins**, 12 pm - Wesley Hall
- **Al-Anon**, 1 pm – Wesley Hall
- **Feed The Hungry**, 4:30 pm - Kitchen
- **Karate/Self Defense**, 5 pm – 2nd floor Rec Room
- **Leadership Board**, 6:30 pm – Joy Room
- **Girl Scouts**, 6:30 pm, Girl Scout Room
- **AA**, 7:30 pm – Wesley Hall

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11

- **Chair Volleyball**, 1 pm – Wesley Hall
- **Food Pantry**, 5 pm – Parking Lot
- **Children/Youth**, 5:30 pm – 2nd Floor Rec Room
- **ACA Study Group**, 5:30 – Nursery Room
- **ACA**, 6:45 pm - Nursery Room

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

- **ACA**, 9 am - Nursery Room
- **Thrift Store Open**, 10 am – 2 pm - Thrift store
- **ACA**, 11 am – Nursery Room
- **Chair Volleyball**, 1 pm – Wesley Hall
- **Qi-Chong**, 4:30 pm – Wesley Hall

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

- **ACA**, 9 am – Joy Room
- **Jesus is Lord Grow Group**, 10 am – Library
- **St. Luke’s Worship**, 11:15 am – Sanctuary & Online
- **Birthday & Anniversary Celebration**, 12:15 pm – Narthex
- **OA**, 5:30 pm – Joy Room

SOUTH PINELLAS CONNECTION UPCOMING DATES

Sept 8	United Women in Faith Meeting & Study	10 am	SL
Sept 9	Weekly Community Dinner (every Wednesday)	6 pm	FG
Sept 13	Campus Ministry Sunday	-	ALL
Sept 16	United Women in Faith Luncheon	12 pm	FG
Sept 23-29	Ashleys on Vacation in Vermont	-	-
Sept 27	FREE Community Dinner	5-6:30 pm	CV

Sept 30-Oct 2	Ashleys at Emotionally Healthy Leadership Conference In New York City	-	-
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KEY

Clearview (CV)	First Gulfport (FG)	Lakewood (LW)	St. Luke's (SL)
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STEWARDSHIP OF PRESENCE & GIFTS

Week of Aug 30

Worship	31
Online Worship	20
Giving Received	\$1,444.72
Giving Needed	\$3,055.78
Surplus/Loss	-\$1,611.06

2026 Year To Date

Worship (avg)	35
Online (avg)	18
Giving Received	\$106,953.75
Giving Needed	\$106,952.30
Surplus/Loss	\$1.45

THIS WEEK'S PRAYER LIST

COMPLETE A PRAYER CARD FROM THE PEW AND PLACE IT IN THE OFFERING PLATE

St. Luke's: Marian Galloway, who fell and is very sore; Judith Fain, who has the flu; a young lady named Ellie, who has brain cancer (Carolyn Rogers); prayers for my daughter, Lisa, my 3 granddaughters, & my great-granddaughter (Bev Becker)

St. Luke's Ongoing: Bev Becker, Christine Brockway, Madison Brown, Fred Bunnell, Jr., Melissa Celurale, Pastor Erick, Judith Fain, Cheryl Fennell, Cliff Flowers, Larry Frye, Eric Harvey, Trudy James, The Leonard Family, Geraldine Parsons, Buck & Sunny Roberts, Harriett Swartzmiller, Joelle Wells, Justin Wells, Annalise, Jennifer, JJ

Clearview: My mother's upcoming surgery to restore her hearing. She lost it in March, and we are praying for a full restoration and healing (Unknown name); I got a job! (Linda Stanley)

Clearview Ongoing: Pamela Arnold, Cassie Berg, Eileen Clark, Carol Comerford, Kathy Davis, Stephen Davis, Trevor Davis, Tim Deacon, Genevieve DeHoog, Pastor Erick, John Goude, Theresa Goude, Amy Gordon, Mary Grauv, Carl Gunn, Robert "Skip" Hanshe, Ruth Hockersmith, DeeDee Hornby, Marc Jones, Ruth Katzen, Nelson Kimber, Charlotte Klotzbach, Ian Kolaczyk, Carolyn McGovern, Sabrina Mull, Kirstin Owens, Jim Patterson, Scott Pierce, Tiffany R, Tammi Radcliff, George Roth, Sr., Anver Suleman, Logan Sullivan, Crystal, Hilary, Kelly, Lydi, Max, Blayne, Amber, George, Steve & Alba, Diana, Theresa & Scott

Gulfport: No requests received

Gulfport Ongoing: Alice Johnson, Allison (Cindy & Per Lee's granddaughter), Willie, Pastor Erick

Lakewood: No requests received

Lakewood Ongoing: Joan and family, Otha Hudson (Josephine's husband), Family of Brian L. , Pastor Erick

THIS WEEK'S "AT HOME" DEVOTIONAL

Connected to Christ: John 15:1–11

GATHERING

Light a candle to remind yourselves that Jesus is present with us and invites us to remain connected to him, the true vine.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Lord Jesus Christ, you are the true vine and the source of our life. Draw us close to you in Scripture, prayer, worship, and Christian community. Prune away the habits and distractions that keep us from your love. By your Spirit, help us remain in you so that our lives bear the fruit of grace, compassion, courage, and joy. Amen.

CARING CONVERSATION - Take a few moments to check in with one another.

Highs & Lows

- 1.What is one thing that brought you joy this week?
- 2.When have you felt especially close to God—or distant from God—this week?

THINKING ABOUT THE UPCOMING WEEK’S SCRIPTURE

I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, then you will produce much fruit. Without me, you can’t do anything. — John 15:5 (CEB)

A branch cannot produce fruit by trying harder; it bears fruit by staying connected to the vine. In the same way, Christlike living grows from an ongoing relationship with Jesus. Spiritual practices create space for us to receive his grace, hear his guidance, and share his love.

- 3.What practices help you feel connected to Christ?
- 4.What distractions or habits sometimes crowd out your attention to God?
- 5.What fruit do you see Christ producing in your life right now?
- 6.Which spiritual practice would you like to strengthen this week?

DAILY BIBLE READINGS - As you read this week, ask: How do we remain connected to Christ and bear the fruit of his love?

DAY	READING	THEME
Sunday	Romans 6:6–11	<i>Alive to God in Christ</i>
Monday	Psalms 1:1–6	<i>Rooted by Streams</i>
Tuesday	Mark 1:35–39	<i>Jesus Makes Time to Pray</i>
Wednesday	Luke 10:38–42	<i>One Thing Is Needed</i>
Thursday	Colossians 3:12–17	<i>Let Christ’s Word Dwell</i>
Friday	Galatians 5:16–26	<i>The Fruit of the Spirit</i>
Saturday	Hebrews 10:19–25	<i>Encourage One Another</i>
Sunday	John 15:1–11	<i>Connected to Christ</i>

If your household includes children, feel free to use a children’s Bible or summarize the readings in simple language.

DEVOTIONAL

Jesus gives his disciples a simple image: he is the vine, and we are the branches. A branch does not create life for itself. It receives life by staying connected to the vine. In the same way, our growth as followers of Jesus begins not with trying harder, but with abiding in him.

Abiding means making an ongoing home in Christ's love. It is more than a decision made once or a Sunday activity. It is a daily relationship in which we listen for his voice, receive his grace, and allow his presence to shape our words, choices, priorities, and relationships.

Spiritual practices help us stay connected. Reading Scripture teaches us the story and way of Jesus. Prayer creates space for honest conversation and attentive silence. Worship, Communion, and Christian community remind us that faith is never a solo journey. Retreat and fasting help us step away from noise, while noticing and daily review help us recognize where God has already been present.

These practices do not earn God's love. They place us where grace can reach and reshape us. Like pruning a healthy branch, Christ may remove habits, distractions, or attitudes that keep us from flourishing. Pruning can be uncomfortable, but its purpose is deeper life and more abundant fruit.

The fruit Jesus desires is visible: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. The closer we remain to Christ, the more his character can take root in us and flow through us for the sake of others.

Connection grows through small, faithful choices. Open the Bible. Sit quietly with God. Share honestly with another Christian. Notice grace in an ordinary moment. At the end of the day, give thanks, review your choices, ask forgiveness, and begin again. Jesus is the source; our invitation is to remain.

PRAY TOGETHER

Invite each person to name one practice that helps them feel close to Jesus and one practice they would like to try this week. Then pray together:

Loving Jesus, you are the true vine and the source of our life. Help us remain in your love. Meet us as we read Scripture, pray, worship, rest, serve, and gather with others. Prune away what keeps us from flourishing and grow in us the fruit of your Spirit. May our connection with you become visible in the way we love our neighbors. Amen.

MEALTIME PRAYER

Lord Jesus, thank you for this food and for everyone gathered here. As this meal nourishes our bodies, nourish our spirits with your grace and keep us connected to you and to one another. Amen.

SERVICE CHALLENGE - *This is one way we share God's love with the world.*

Choose one practice that helps you abide in Christ—Scripture, prayer, silence, worship, Christian conversation, or a daily review—and give it ten intentional minutes each day. Then let that connection bear fruit through one concrete act of love, encouragement, or service.

CLOSING & BLESSING

Extinguish your candle as a reminder that Christ's presence remains with you, nourishing your life and helping you bear good fruit.

With permission, make the sign of the cross on one another's hands or foreheads and say: **'Remain in Christ's love. Receive his grace. And let your life bear the fruit of his presence.'**