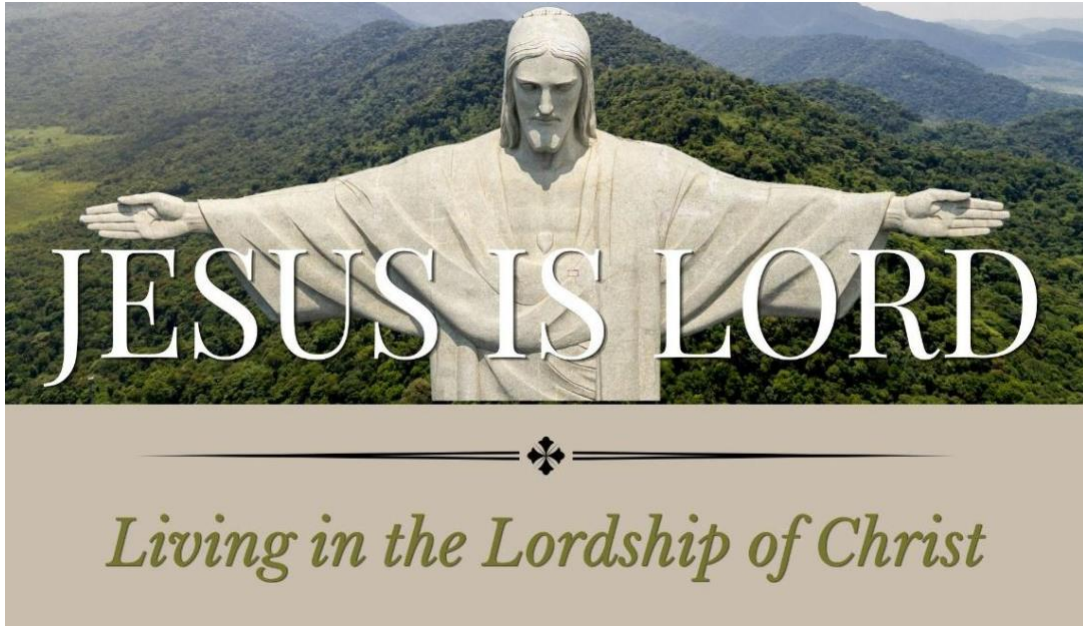




August 23rd, 2026

11:15 am • Sanctuary & Online

A combined worship service of the South Pinellas Connection

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* | *All Hail The Power of Jesus' Name* – UMH 154 (vv. 1, 2 & 6)

WE PROCLAIM

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

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

Pastoral Prayer

Passing of the Peace*

Hymn* | *My Hope Is Built* – UMH 368 (vv. 1, 2 & 4)

Prayer For Illumination

Scripture Reading | *Exodus 3:14-15; Acts 2:22-24* CEB

Choral Response | *He Is Lord* – UMH 177

Message | *Jesus Is My Lord* – Rev. Sue Garcia

WE RESPOND

Presentation of Tithes and Offerings

Offertory Music – *Jesus Is All The World To Me* – Patti Marshall & Bruce Mook

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

Offertory Prayer*

WE GO OUT

Hymn* | *Have Thine Own Way, Lord* – UMH 382 (vv. 1, 2 & 4)

Benediction*

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

A Heartfelt Thank You - What a glorious day! A huge THANK YOU to everyone who helped make our Combined Worship Service such a joyful and meaningful celebration. From music and worship to hospitality, food, setup, cleanup, children's ministry, tech, and all the work behind the scenes; you made the day special!

What a beautiful picture of our South Pinellas Connection coming together to worship, serve, and celebrate Jesus our Lord! We are so grateful for each of you!

Save the Date - The South Pinellas Connection Leadership Summit is coming **Saturday, September 19, from 8:30 am–12 pm**. All Leadership Board members are asked to attend, and anyone interested in serving in leadership now or in the future is warmly invited. Come ready to connect, grow, and dream together about where God is leading us! Save the date - more details coming soon!

Jesus Is Lord GROW Groups Begin This Week! - Come **GROW in faith together** as we study Bishop Tom Berlin’s *Jesus Is Lord!* Choose the group that works best for you—you do not have to attend at your home church.

- **Clearview:** Sundays 10:45 am & Mondays 6:45 pm — Care & Share Room
- **First Gulfport:** Sundays 10 am & Mondays 6:30 pm — Room 7
- **St. Luke’s:** Sundays 10 am & Tuesdays 6:30 pm — Library & Joy Room
- **Lakewood:** Tuesdays 10:30 am — Conference Room

Qi Gong Meditative Movement Class - All are invited to a Qi Gong Meditative Movement Class, led by Allarah LaVelle, on Saturdays at 4:30 pm in Wesley Hall. Come experience gentle, meditative movement designed to encourage relaxation and well-being. This class is a ministry of Unity Church and is offered by donation. All are welcome!

Plant-Based Potluck - Come enjoy food and community at a new Plant-Based Potluck, beginning Sunday, August 30, from 5:30–7:30 pm!

Bring a dish to share, meet new people, and discover what it means to eat a plant-based diet. Use the QR code on the flyer to sign up in the Narthex or simply show up. All are welcome.

ST. LUKE'S WEEKLY CALENDAR

SUNDAY, AUGUST 23

- **First Unity Devotional Service,** 8:30 am – Wesley Hall
- **ACA,** 9 am – Joy Room
- **Jesus is Lord Grow Group,** 10 am – Library
- **First Unity Celebration Service,** 11 am – Wesley Hall
- **St. Luke’s Worship,** 11:15 am – Sanctuary & Online
- **OA,** 5:30 pm – Joy Room

MONDAY, AUGUST 24

- **Parkinson's Support Group,** 1 pm – Wesley Hall
- **Chair Volleyball,** 3 pm – Wesley Hall
- **Karate/Self Defense,** 5 pm – 2nd floor Rec Room
- **AA,** 8 pm – Wesley Hall

TUESDAY, AUGUST 25

- **Office Open,** 9 am – 12:30 pm
- **Development Team Meeting,** 6:30 pm - Library
- **Jesus is Lord Grow Group,** 6:30 pm – Joy Room
- **Central Oak Neighborhood Association,** 6:30 pm – Wesley Hall
- **ACA,** 6:30 pm – Nursery Room

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 26

- **Thrift Store,** 9 am – 1 pm - Thrift Store
- **Al-Anon,** 10:30 am – Wesley Hall
- **First Unity Meditation,** 6 pm – Wesley Hall
- **First Unity Music Rehearsal,** 7 pm – Wesley Hall

- **ACA Study Group**, 6:30 pm – Nursery Room

THURSDAY, AUGUST 27

- **Thrift Store**, 9 am – 1 pm - Thrift Store
- **Al-Anon Begin**, 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
- **AA**, 7:30 pm – Wesley Hall

FRIDAY, AUGUST 28

- **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, AUGUST 29

- **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

SOUTH PINELLAS CONNECTION UPCOMING DATES

Week of Aug 23	<i>Jesus is Lord</i> Grow Groups Begin (All Church Campuses)	See Above	ALL
Aug 23	FREE Community Dinner	5 – 6:30 pm	CV
Aug 30	5 th Sunday Offering Residing Hope & Mission Partners		
Sept 1	Virtual Fall Laity Gathering via ZOOM	10 am	ALL
Sept 5	United Methodist Men's Breakfast	8:30 am	SL
Sept 8	United Women in Faith Meeting & Study	10 am	SL
Sept 13	Campus Ministry Sunday	-	ALL
Sept 14-15	Rooted: Training for Children, Youth, and Family Ministry Warren Willis Camp & Conference Center	-	ALL
Sept 16	United Women in Faith Luncheon	12 pm	FG
Sept 19	SP Connection Leadership Summit	8:30 am – 12 pm	ALL

KEY

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

Week of Aug 16		2026 Year To Date	
Worship	120/43	Worship (avg)	35
Online Worship	36	Online (avg)	17
Giving Received	\$3,992.60	Giving Received	\$102,988.92
Giving Needed	\$3,055.78	Giving Needed	\$100,840.74
Surplus/Loss	\$936.82	Surplus/Loss	\$2,148.18

THIS WEEK'S PRAYER LIST

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

St. Luke’s: Melissa Celurale to find a new job (Carla Clausen); Christine Brockway, having back surgery (Susan Brockway, Mom)

St. Luke's Ongoing: Annalise, Bev Becker, Charlie BeVille, Madison Brown, Fred Bunnell, Jr., Lisa Duffy, Judith Fain, Cheryl Fennell, Larry Frye, Eric Harvey, Trudy James, The Lieber family, The Leonard Family, Geraldine Parsons, Buck & Sunny Roberts, Harriett Swartzmiller, Joelle Wells, Justin Wells, Jennifer, JJ

Clearview: Ruth Katzen, she is having severe pain in her back, hip, & knee on her left side. She had a MRI last Tuesday and we find out this Wednesday, please pray that they can do something to help her (Andy Cantara); Matt Burdewick is being deployed this week (Karen & Jim Burdewick); my friend Diana, her mom was diagnosed with kidney cancer (Shelly C.); Protect my children and me while we sleep and are unhoused. (Tiffany R.)

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

Gulfport: No requests this week

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

Lakewood: Otha Hudson (Josephine's husband), The family of Brian L., Friend's husband who passed away suddenly (Gloria)

Lakewood Ongoing: Joan and family

South Pinellas Active-Duty Military: Matthew Burdewick, Seth Crist, Will Dudley, Casey Linde-Powers

THIS WEEK'S "AT HOME" DEVOTIONAL

Lord of Love: 1 John 4:7–12

GATHERING

Light a candle to remind yourselves that God is love and that Christ’s love is present with us and ready to flow through us.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Lord Jesus Christ, you are the Lord of Love. You welcome us with compassion, meet us in suffering, and lead us toward healing and hope. Help us trust your loving authority, receive your grace, and surrender every trembling part of our lives to you. Let your love take root in us and flow through us to our neighbors, our enemies, and all who need your care. 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 did someone’s love or kindness strengthen you this week?

THINKING ABOUT THE UPCOMING WEEK’S SCRIPTURE

Dear friends, let’s love each other, because love is from God— 1 John 4:7 (CEB)

We may resist the idea of a lord because human authority can control, exploit, or disappoint. Jesus is different. His authority is the authority of self-giving love. He does not force us into submission; he reaches toward us with grace and invites a trusting response.

- 3. Why can it be difficult to surrender control to Jesus?
- 4. How does knowing that God is love change the way you understand Christ’s lordship?
- 5. Where have you experienced Christ’s presence in suffering or grief?
- 6. Through whom might God’s love need to flow this week?

DAILY BIBLE READINGS - As you read this week, ask: **How does the love of Christ come to us and flow through us?**

DAY	READING	THEME
Sunday	Acts 2:32–36	<i>Jesus Is Lord and Messiah</i>
Monday	Psalms 136:1–9	<i>God’s Love Endures</i>
Tuesday	Luke 15:11–32	<i>The Love That Welcomes Home</i>
Wednesday	Matthew 5:43–48	<i>Love Your Enemies</i>
Thursday	John 13:1–17	<i>Love That Serves</i>
Friday	Romans 8:31–39	<i>Nothing Can Separate Us</i>
Saturday	1 Corinthians 13:1–13	<i>The Way of Love</i>
Sunday	1 John 4:7–12	<i>God’s Love Lives in Us</i>

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

DEVOTIONAL

Many people are uneasy with the word ‘lord.’ Human authority often brings control, pressure, and the fear of losing ourselves. Why would anyone willingly surrender their life to another?

Jesus answers that question by revealing what God’s authority is like. God is love. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit exist in a relationship of overflowing love, and that love reaches outward to creation. When we encounter God in Jesus Christ, we encounter compassion, welcome, healing, and hope.

Jesus never used power to dominate. He ate with people others rejected, treated every person as beloved by God, washed his disciples’ feet, and taught us to love even our enemies. At the cross, Jesus did not act as a victim of divine cruelty. He freely offered himself as an agent of healing and restoration, demonstrating that love is stronger than sin and death.

This is why Jesus can be trusted as Lord. His lordship does not force us to become something false. It forms us into people capable of receiving and sharing God’s love. Even in suffering, Christ is present because he knows the way of suffering. He reaches toward us, understands our grief, and offers the strength of hope.

First John says that God’s love is made complete in us when we love one another. The love of Christ comes to us, but it is never meant to stop with us. It flows through our patience, forgiveness, generosity, truthfulness, service, and compassion.

Surrender to the Lord of Love is not a loss of life; it is the beginning of a life shaped by grace. As we trust Christ’s love, fear loosens its grip, relationships can heal, and our lives become pathways through which others encounter the God who is love.

PRAY TOGETHER

Invite each person to name someone who needs to experience God’s love, comfort, or hope. Then pray together:

Lord Jesus, thank you for loving us without limit. When we are afraid to surrender, remind us that your authority is compassionate and trustworthy. Meet those who suffer, grieve, or feel alone with the comfort of your presence. Fill us with your Spirit so that your love may flow through our words, choices, service, and relationships. Make your love complete in us. Amen.

MEALTIME PRAYER

Lord of Love, thank you for this food and for everyone gathered here. Nourish us with your grace and help us share your welcome, compassion, and care with others. Amen.

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

Choose one person who may feel overlooked, burdened, or alone. Offer a concrete act of Christlike love: listen without rushing, share a meal, write an encouraging note, help with a need, or simply remain present. Let God’s love reach that person through you.

CLOSING & BLESSING

Extinguish your candle as a reminder that the love of Christ remains with us and continues to shine through every act of compassion.

With permission, make the sign of the cross on one another’s hands or foreheads and say: **‘Trust the Lord of Love. Receive his grace, walk in his way, and let his love flow through you.’**