



ST. LUKE'S UNITED  
METHODIST CHURCH  
DENTON, MD

# THE VOICE

DECEMBER 2020/JANUARY 2021

## MUSINGS FROM PASTOR DAN

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### Musings from Pastor Dan:

2020 is one of the strangest years of our lifetime. The pressures and strains of our lives since March are virtually incomprehensible. Fears of the Wuhan virus, lockdowns, loss of jobs, shortages of material needs, a hotly contested election, and the unknown long-term implications of all these issues that have yet to be realized only add to the anxiety many folks are experiencing. And here we are; entering the Christmas season with an increasing movement toward a new set of constraints inhibiting our lives and relationships yet again.

Despite all of those things, I propose that we focus more upon the blessedness of peace and tranquility that can only come from God. God is stronger than any difficulty we face, and He will help us through it all. Very specifically: God loves you! Jesus died for you. He has risen and wants to give you a life of freedom. Hold on to those facts. When you feel overwhelmed, first pray and seek the Lord.

Recall what the Apostle Paul wrote to the Philippian church (4:6-7): “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.” Now, this is not a passage that suggests you should pretend the problems and the subsequent anxiety are not there. Nor does it suggest ignoring the anxiety. Rather it encourages action.



Let’s take a few moments and go back in time, a few thousand years back, to the time of Simeon. The Apostle Luke tells us that Simeon was a devout and righteous man, who had the Holy Spirit with him. He was eagerly awaiting the consolation of Israel—that is the Messianic Savior of Israel. He yearned for the coming savior, but did not know when He would come. However, there was one thing he did know. The Holy Spirit revealed to Simeon that he would not die until he saw the Savior. Can you imagine what must have gone through Simeon’s mind? Both great anticipation and great peace at the same time because he knew he would not die before the savior arrived.

One day, the Holy Spirit told Simeon to go to the Temple Courts. Now, the Bible doesn’t tell us if he knew why he was going to the Temple Courts, nor does it tell us if Simeon even suspected why the Holy Spirit told him to go to the Temple Courts. But, we do know that Simeon obeyed.

This is Christmas according to Simeon.

While Simeon obeyed God’s instructions; Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus were also on their way to the Temple Courts to fulfill the requirements of the law after circumcision. Luke 2:21-23 states, “Eight days later, when the baby was circumcised, he was named Jesus, the name given him by the angel even before he was conceived. Then it was time for the purification offering, as required by the Law of Moses after the birth of a child; so, his parents took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. The law of the Lord says, “If a woman’s first child is a boy, he must be dedicated to the Lord.” This is important. Exodus 13:2 says, “Dedicate to

me all the firstborn sons of Israel and every firstborn male animal. They are mine.” This dedication meant that the firstborn sons of Israel were to serve God all of their lives. While the Levites actually served in the place of all first-born Israelite males, we can readily see why Jesus had to be presented at the Temple. He would indeed, serve God through his life on earth.

The stage is set. Simeon is at the Temple Courts. Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus are on their way to the Temple Courts.

As you read this story, you can sense the great anticipation of what would happen next. Sure enough, as Mary, Joseph and Jesus arrived; Simeon came over and took Jesus into his arms and praised God!! What elation!! What excitement!! What joy must have befallen Simeon as the



long-awaited Savior had finally arrived. You can almost see tears of joy...you can almost hear the excitement in his voice...you can hear Simeon Praising God with all of his heart and soul in joyous celebration of God's greatest gift to humanity as he said: "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all people, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."

What a Christmas! Can you imagine yourself as Simeon? Can you imagine how you would feel and react if you were in Simeon's shoes? Look at what Simeon has just declared.

He declared that God has fulfilled a promise—the promise of a Savior. Simeon declared that salvation has arrived... Indeed that Jesus is the Messiah. Simeon declared that this Messiah would be the Savior for Jew and Gentile alike. Within two weeks after His birth, Jesus' status as Savior of the entire world was recognized!



Please do not lose the excitement of the season because of worldly issues. Our place with God is eternal and secure. Nothing, and I mean nothing, can take that away from us and ultimately that is where our peace and tranquility reside. Recall again that which Paul wrote in Romans 8:38-39: "For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Peter told us to "cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7). God loves you and will help you. He knows your heart and will bring clarity to your confusion.

Live it! Share it! Speak it! Jesus Christ IS Lord and Savior of all! Regardless of anything that may be wrong in our world or in your life, the only real joy, the only real peace, the only real salvation, is freely given from God through Jesus Christ! Merry Christmas!

Pastor Dan

Missy and I would like to thank you for the many cards, gifts, and prayers that have been offered to us both through Pastor Appreciation and the recent transition of my mom to the heavenly kingdom. All of these are deeply appreciated and have helped us feel a true part of St. Luke's church family! Thank you!!

Peace be with you.

Pastor Dan and Missy.

**News from the United Methodist Women**  
**Submitted by Becky Schoonover**

The United Methodist Women will not be having our annual Christmas brunch, due to COVID-19 restrictions. We look forward to getting together at another time!

Thank you to everyone who ordered nuts from our UMW fundraiser. If you did not have a chance to order, or would like to purchase more, we will have packages for sale after each service until they are sold out.

For Christmas, the UMW is offering red poinsettia plants for purchase in honor or in memory of loved ones. Order forms are available in the Voice and in the church office. Please order on or before December 1, by bringing or mailing your order to St. Luke's UMC, 100 S. Fifth Ave., Denton, MD 21629. The plants are \$14.00 each, and checks can be made payable to St. Luke's UMW. The poinsettias will be on display at the altar, and can be picked up following the 11:00 service on Christmas Eve.

**Christmas Poinsettias**



Beautify the St. Luke's sanctuary this Christmas by ordering poinsettias in honor or memory of loved ones. We are offering **Red Poinsettias** plants for **\$14.00 each**. Please fill out your dedication(s) below and return this form to the church office on or before **Tuesday, December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020**. Please make checks payable to **U.M.W. of St. Luke's**. You can bring or mail your order to St. Luke's U.M. Church, 100 S. Fifth Ave., Denton, MD 21629. You may pick up your poinsettia(s) following the 11:00 p.m. Christmas Eve worship service on Thursday, December 24<sup>th</sup>. **Thank you!** *Carol Rouse, U.M.W. Flower Chairperson (410-479-0233)*

Your name \_\_\_\_\_ Your Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

IN HONOR OF (if living) \_\_\_\_\_

Given by \_\_\_\_\_

IN MEMORY OF (if deceased) \_\_\_\_\_

Given by \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of plants \_\_\_\_\_ Check # \_\_\_\_\_ Total \$ Amount \_\_\_\_\_

## **Update From United Methodist Men** **Submitted By George Lacy**

The United Methodist Men will not hold their December monthly breakfast due to the concerns of group gatherings during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The decision as to whether we will hold the January or February breakfasts will be determined at a later date.

### **Sunday School Season Greetings!!!!**

One of the blessings of St. Luke's Church is having a Sunday School Program for almost any age. Sunday School meets from 9:30a - 10:30a. Please note the information below:

***The Nursery Class*** -meets on the first floor next to the Chapel, room 7. This class is staffed by Alex Penn, whose full-time job is working with small children. Ms. Penn brings a lot of enthusiasm and great activities for all those attending.

***The Elementary Class*** -meets on the second floor - Room 19. This class is taught by Jim Orr former teacher. The class is currently focused on Old Testament stories, but will be getting into the season with Advent and holiday activities.

***The Secondary Class*** -meets on the second floor - Library. This class is taught by Walt Palmer. Mr. Palmer is a Scout Leader and very experienced teaching this level of Sunday School. Mr. Palmer has a loyal following and is always looking for more to join.

***The Adult Bible Class*** -meets on the first floor - Rooms 1 & 3. Teaching this class is shared by Louise Webb, Tracy Berrigan & Mary Turkington. All of them have led many Bible classes and studies. Currently, the class is using the series, With All My Heart, Being God's Presence to Our World by Ray Vander Laan. December's study will be, The Case for Christmas by Max Lucado.

As with all things church related, we ask that participants wear a mask, practice social distancing and wash hands frequently. We hope you and/or yours take advantage of all that is offered. Should you have any questions, feel free to contact the church office.



### **Prayer Concerns.....**

Colleen MacFarland, Robbin Ritter, Charles Griffith, Luther Lee, Pastor Dan's step-father, Mr. Granger, Wendy Bradley, Walt Nemcek, Alex Slonin, Mitchell Wheatly, Barbara Little, Archie Carroll, Brooke Drawdy, Susan Bunker, Joshua Breeding, Jenny Jusell, Gary Simpson, Dwight Kimble, Sylvia Holland, Sheila Orr, Elaine Orme, Anne Jusell, Alan and Gloria Vandam, Robbie Lister, Pat Browne, Lisa Barge, Katherine Watts, Jim Johnson, Phyllis Harrison, Carol Stockley, Dale Nygren, Hayden Semans, Don Holmesley, Ruth Dore, Hugh Butler, Mary and Aaron Gamble, Su Jusell-Lapin, Harry Muir, Roni Muir, Conrad Rosemere, Tommy Thomason, Rob Cohee, Elaine Friel, Sarah, Abby, and Roger Price, our country and its leaders on both sides of the aisle. Thanks for successful surgery on Walt Nemcek's hip. He has another surgery to face for the other one.

**Sympathy to the family and friends of** Barbara Greenley Smith; Pastor Dan's mother, Mrs. Granger; Joan Reed; Nathan Councill

**Prayers for those serving in the U.S. Military:** John Biddle, Jake Brown, Chelsea Bunker, Sean George, Seth Gill, Brockman Harris, Justin Moore, Andrew Robbins, Dale Tuel, and James Wright.

To add names to these lists, we ask that you either call (410-479-2171), e-mail ([stlukes@goeaston.com](mailto:stlukes@goeaston.com)), or drop-off/mail to 100 South 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Denton. Please be sure to include your name and telephone number so that we can contact you regarding the status of the person needing prayer; otherwise the name will be removed after a couple of months.

Thank you to all who remember those named on our prayer lists. Only God knows how many are blessed because you care enough to pray.

### **REMINDERS:**

- **Next Leadership Meetings: Thursday, January 21, 2021 at 7:30 p.m.**
- **February *Voice* articles, updates, and pictures due Wednesday, January 20, 2020.**

# Thank you!

**Thank you for your continued financial support during these difficult times.**

## 236<sup>th</sup> Peninsula-Delaware Annual Conference

### November 2020



Like none other, this Annual Conference, postponed from June 2020, was conducted virtually over the span of 8 sessions between September 30<sup>th</sup> and November 14<sup>th</sup>. A special vote was required in order to even hold Annual Conference virtually, vote electronically, and go without the ability to debate or amend resolutions. The earlier sessions were for “e-ballot” training, information on resolutions, and to provide a time for delegates to ask questions and seek clarification.

#### **Resolutions snapshot:**

Financial- all passed

Redistricting: Our conference is currently divided into 4 districts with St. Luke’s part of the Easton District. Beginning on July 1, 2021, our conference will consist of 3 districts with St. Luke’s in the Central area. Exact boundary determinations are up to the Bishop with input from congregations, pastors, and the Cabinet, but will most likely be Northern, Central, and Southern. All District offices will then be relocated to Dover, DE. It is estimated that these changes will save the conference \$300,000 per year.

Disaffiliation: Congregations from four churches within our conference sought to disaffiliate from the United Methodist Church. They each followed the established procedures to this point and were approved by the voting members of Annual Conference. Disaffiliation will be finalized once each completes the final required steps.

#### **Celebrating the lives of those in ministry:**

Bishop Johnson’s message, “Seeing Jesus”, not only referred to the faithful service given by those celebrated, but to each and every one of us, as we are to be the hands and feet of Jesus in our communities and beyond.

Guest speaker, Bishop Sharma Lewis’ message “Take Jesus to the Streets” stressed the need for finding creative ways to continue sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ, especially during this Covid Pandemic and beyond.

Retirees- including Rev. Earle Baker (a Denton native) and Rev. Dr. Vanessa Lee

Service of Remembrance- celebrated the lives of clergy or spouse who passed away prior to June 2020.

Service of Commissioning and Ordination- Ronald Bell, Jr. ordained as an Elder in Full Connection.

A very moving part of this service was the “Passing of the Mantle”. Rev. Baker explained that in 2 Kings 2:9, Elisha prayed that the power of the Holy Spirit at work in the prophet Elijah would be passed to him when Elijah was taken up to Heaven. The Mantle (cloak), the symbol of that power, was passed from Elijah to the younger prophet Elisha. In that same spirit, our conference retirees took a “mantle” from their shoulders and placed them on the shoulders of those newly ordained. What a spirit-filled moment!

St. Luke’s contributed \$50 to each of the 3 Conference Appeals: Board of Ordained Ministries Scholarships (for those preparing for the ministry), the Central Congo Partnership (clean water, education, health care, self-sustaining agricultural program), and Salisbury Urban Ministries (provides programs that serve and minister to the needs of materially impoverished people).

Please continue to keep St. Luke’s and the United Methodist Church in your prayers as we try to live into the lives God has planned for us!

Linda Parsons, Lay Representative to Annual Conference

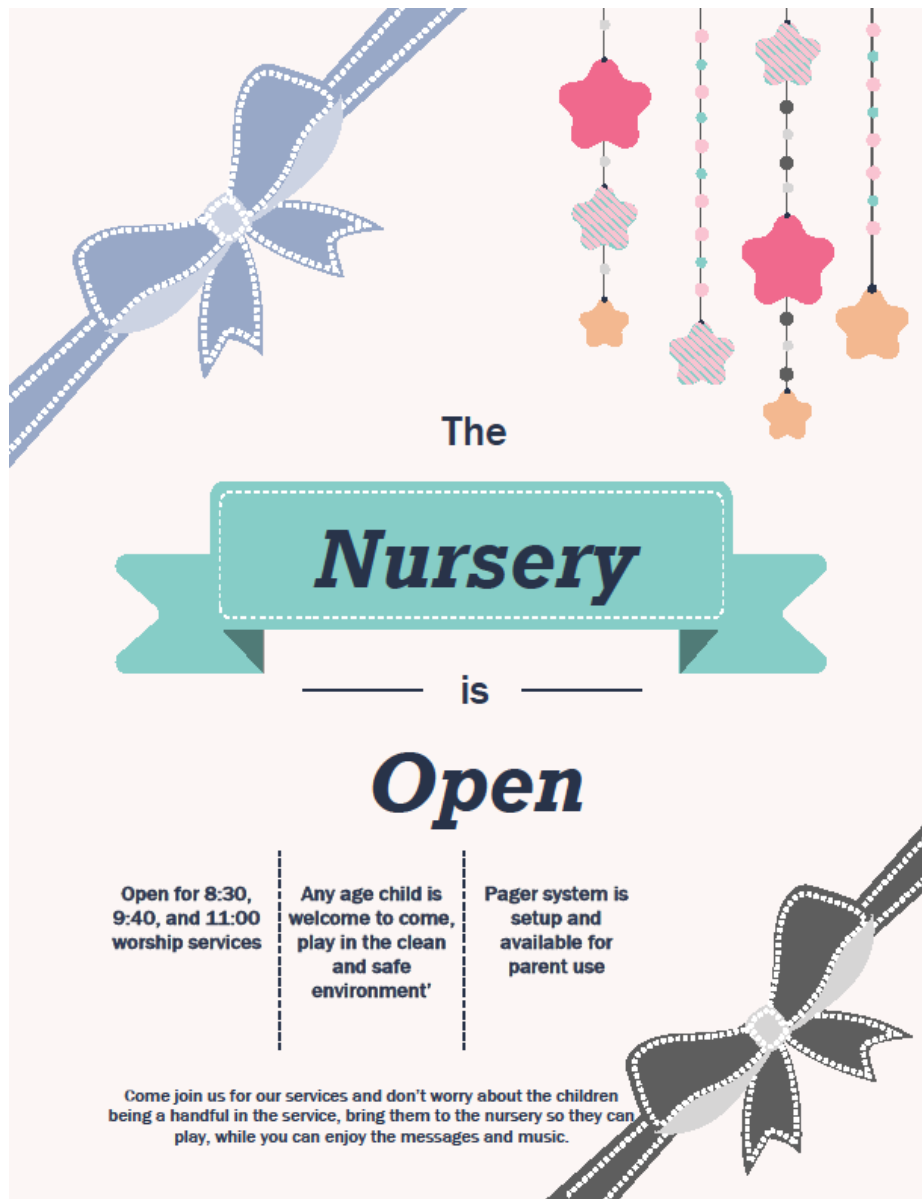


## Fundraiser for MYF—*Proverbs Up Close and Personal*

Submitted By: Mary Turkington

Thank you so very much for your support for the sale of books by Mary Turkington and other donations which will help the youth with their projects and at the same time blessed Mary in her book sales. The fundraiser officially ended on November 8; however, there were a few books ordered prior to that time which have since been filled. The total raised by the MYF was \$208.50 of which \$44.50 were direct donations and the balance was from the sale of books. Joanna Schoonover was responsible for taking orders for 27 of the books sold. Good job Joanna!

Both Mary and the MYF are grateful for your participation in this project. Thank you again.



The

# Nursery

is

# Open

Open for 8:30, 9:40, and 11:00 worship services

Any age child is welcome to come, play in the clean and safe environment

Pager system is setup and available for parent use

Come join us for our services and don't worry about the children being a handful in the service, bring them to the nursery so they can play, while you can enjoy the messages and music.

## Trustees Report

The Board of Trustees is entrusted to manage the property, equipment and investments of the church.

This past year we have replaced the roof on the sanctuary at a cost of \$38,281.00, repaired the ceiling tiles in the sanctuary at a cost of \$3165.00, replaced exit and emergency lights and ongoing maintenance, painting and service on equipment.

In addition, the past few years we have financed the renovation of rooms 1 and 3, purchased new chairs for the fellowship hall, replaced the heat and air systems in the sanctuary and fellowship hall, repaired and painted all exterior trim on the entire church property, upgraded the sound systems and lighting in the sanctuary and fellowship hall, and replaced several heat and air units in the education wing.

We have several expense items being considered for the future, i.e. installing additional heat and air units in the upstairs Sunday school room, installing a new bathroom on the second floor of the education wing for the Sunday school, and re-surfacing the parking lot.

The trustees financial accounts are comprised of bequests received from members and friends of St. Luke's over the years. In the recent years we have received bequests from the estates of Jo Ann Collins, Madge Thomas and J. Boone Jarrell. The church's trustee funds include unrestricted, temporarily restricted and permanently restricted funds. The bulk of these funds are invested and we receive dividends monthly.

We would like to thank several volunteers who have helped to keep our property in shape this year; Mark Beaven and his crew for yardwork, Mike Penn for power washing, and Mary Robbins who will be cleaning gravestones in the old St. Luke's cemetery across from the church. We are in need of a group to volunteer to weed and trim the landscaping on a regular basis; if interested contact a trustee.

The trustees, after much discussion, have agreed that we should sell the parsonage. Our new pastor will not be residing there, he has a home in Williston and our prior pastor used it sparingly. It is an older structure which requires continual upkeep and we will sell it "as is". We are in the process of getting an appraisal, survey and preparing a Resolution to Sell. The congregation will have an opportunity to express concerns at a Charge Conference prior to it being listed for sale. Monies received from the sale will be invested in a safe interest-bearing account to be used solely for the purpose of acquiring another house should a subsequent pastor require housing.

May God bless everyone throughout the Season and in the New Year!

Trustees: Barbara Little, Secretary  
Mark Beaven, Rusty Biddle  
Chuck Dean & Glenn Orme



# St. Luke's United Methodist Church Treasurer's Report

For Period January through December 2020 as of October 31, 2020

Description	Annual Budget 2020	Actual Income or Expense To Date	Variance	% Budg Used
<b><u>Income</u></b>				
Offerings	250,612.00	168,437.72	82,174.28	67.21%
Offerings - Sunday School	100.00	60.00	40.00	60.00%
Interest Income	25.00	41.65	(16.65)	166.60%
Building Use	8,000.00	3,830.00	4,170.00	47.88%
Administrative Building Use	0.00	0.00	0.00	
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>258,737.00</b>	<b>172,369.37</b>	<b>86,367.63</b>	<b>66.62%</b>
<b><u>Expenses</u></b>				
<b>Pastor Expenses</b>				
Salary	47,722.00	43,194.36	4,527.64	90.51%
Travel Reimbursement	2,400.00	562.03	1,837.97	23.42%
Cable TV at parsonage	1,600.00	860.40	739.60	53.78%
Hospitalization/Dental	18,180.00	12,860.00	5,320.00	70.74%
Bishop's Retreat	550.00	0.00	550.00	0.00%
Continuing Education	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00	0.00%
Pension Plan	9,783.00	6,705.04	3,077.96	68.54%
Pastor Expenses - other		267.84	(267.84)	
<b>Total Pastor Expenses</b>	<b>81,235.00</b>	<b>64,449.67</b>	<b>16,785.33</b>	<b>79.34%</b>
<b>Staff Expenses</b>				
Staff Salaries	73,580.00	60,263.28	13,316.72	81.90%
Wage and Tax Expenses	7,358.00	6,364.26	993.74	86.49%
Worker's Compensation	1,092.00	904.00	188.00	82.78%
Expenses - other		246.91	(246.91)	
		227.18	(227.18)	#DIV/0!
<b>Total Staff Expenses</b>	<b>82,030.00</b>	<b>67,778.45</b>	<b>14,024.37</b>	<b>82.63%</b>
<b>Other Operational Expenses</b>				
Easton District Office	1,415.00	1,415.00	0.00	100.00%
Janitorial Supplies	1,000.00	492.62	507.38	49.26%
Electricity/Oil	18,000.00	9,248.29	8,751.71	51.38%
Equipment Rental & Maintenance	5,871.00	4,437.60	1,433.40	75.59%
Fuel (parsonage)	6,500.00	2,840.26	3,659.74	43.70%
Grass and Shrubbery Maintenance	3,000.00	1,400.00	1,600.00	46.67%
Insurance	10,300.00	8,595.00	1,705.00	83.45%
Maintenance and Repairs	6,800.00	4,221.24	2,578.76	62.08%
Miscellaneous	100.00	84.08	15.92	84.08%
Music Committee	1,200.00	925.00	275.00	77.08%
MYF Program	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00	0.00%
Office Supplies	2,250.00	1,927.76	322.24	85.68%
Postage	1,500.00	910.00	590.00	60.67%
Pastor/Organist, Substitutes	300.00	0.00	300.00	0.00%
Pastor's Moving Exp Escrow Acct	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00	0.00%
Stewardship	1,500.00	1,038.22	461.78	69.21%
Telephone	1,500.00	1,630.81	(130.81)	108.72%
Water and Sewer	1,750.00	1,745.98	4.02	99.77%
Spiritual Life	2,500.00	1,038.82	1,461.18	41.55%
Worship Materials	1,200.00	501.55	698.45	41.80%
<b>Total Operational Expenses</b>	<b>95,472.00</b>	<b>56,210.29</b>	<b>39,631.82</b>	<b>58.88%</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>258,737.00</b>	<b>188,438.41</b>	<b>56,417.15</b>	<b>72.83%</b>
<b>Net Income over Expenses</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>(16,069.04)</b>	<b>29,950.48</b>	

# The Voice

of St. Luke's

December 2020/January  
2021

**St. Luke's UMC Staff:**

**Rev. Dan T. Gedman- Minister**

Administrative Assistant: Ann Willey

Director of Music: Rebecca Zinser

Christian Education and Youth Ministry

Director: Tracy Harding

Nursery Coordinator: Alex Penn

Sexton: Dennis R. Weaver, Sr.

Voice Editor: Stacey Reid

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[www.stlukesdenton.org](http://www.stlukesdenton.org)

Return Service Requested

To:

