

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS AT ST. LUKE'S



Thursday Morning
Women's Advent Study

Nov 21, Dec 5, 12, & 19
10 AM - FLC Rm 108

1st

Communion at all worship
services - 10 AM

Outdoor decorating
4-6 PM

8th

Combined Worship
10 AM - FLC

"Modern Advent in
Story and Song"

13th

Las Posadas

Bilingual Celebration
6 PM - FLC

14th

A Night at the Cinema
(KidsPoint)

2-4PM
KidsPoint Building

15th

Combined Worship
10 AM - Sanctuary

Traditional Cantata
"The Glory of Christmas"

19th

Blue Christmas
Service

"Mysterious Grace"
7 PM - FLC

22nd

Advent Worship at all
Services - 10 AM

Christmas Brunch
11:30 AM - FLC

24th

Bilingual Candlelight
Christmas Eve Communion

6 PM
Sanctuary

29th

One Worship Service

10 AM - Sanctuary



ST. LUKE'S 2024 MISSION SUPPORT RECAP

One Body Nourishing North Carolina – United Methodist Church General Conference

During the General Conference gathering of The United Methodist Church in Charlotte in May 2024, churches throughout the Western NC Conference collected non-perishable food for their local communities. St. Luke's joined this conference-wide ministry and collected 772 food items, which were shared with Centro Latino, Hickory Soup Kitchen, and Lenoir-Rhyne University.

Shower Kits – Greater Hickory Cooperative Christian Ministries

Each Wednesday during the summer, St. Luke's youth served in different ways throughout Catawba County. The students invited the wider church to collect supplies for shower kits. Greater Hickory Cooperative Christian Ministries provides shower facilities for our neighbors in Hickory. The shower kits provide necessity items with this service. Through the generosity of St. Luke's, the students packaged more than 40 shower kits and delivered them to GHCCM when they served on a Wednesday.

Hurricane Response – Western NC Conference of the UMC

Following the devastation from Hurricane Helene in September, St. Luke's responded with a collection effort to fill 50 buckets with cleaning supplies (an estimated cost of \$75/bucket). We exceeded the goal with 61 buckets. Those buckets were delivered directly to Spruce Pine UMC for that hard hit area. St. Luke's also joined churches throughout the WNCC in a conference-wide offering in October and generously gave \$9050. In November, Heather Savage presented a benefit piano concert for hurricane relief, with an additional \$2066 collected to be sent to the WNCC. The WNCC resources United Methodist Churches and their communities in North Carolina's 44 westernmost counties. Of those, 22 were directly impacted by Hurricane Helene. Every dollar sent through the WNCC is used directly for hurricane relief.

Family Care Center – St. Luke's Pumpkin Patch

Our 2024 pumpkin patch and mum sales will benefit Family Care Center of Catawba Valley. Family Care Center serves homeless families with dependent children through an emergency and residential program. They offer physical, emotional, social, and educational services to assist families in the transition to becoming self-sufficient. From the proceeds of the Pumpkin Patch, St. Luke's will share a gift of \$7000 with Family Care Center.

Hunger Walk – Hickory Soup Kitchen, The Corner Table, and Ashure Ministry

St. Luke's sponsored the 2024 Hunger Walk in support of the Hickory Soup Kitchen, The Corner Table, and Ashure Ministry. These three organizations are vital to communities throughout Catawba County. The purpose of the walk is to raise funds for hunger relief efforts in Catawba County and to heighten awareness of hunger within our community. With a team of walkers, St. Luke's was present for the gathering in Newton. Along with a \$500 church sponsorship, individuals contributed donations personally.

Fall Giving Match – Habitat for Humanity of Catawba County

Habitat for Humanity is a Christian-based community organization dedicated to building, renovating, and repairing safe, decent, and affordable housing for hard-working, low-income families in our community. They build houses through partnerships with diverse segments of the community—churches and temples, businesses and individuals, service clubs and foundations. Thanks to community support, Habitat has built over 165 houses in Catawba County. St. Luke's was able to offer a gift of \$500 from the Liz Helms Fund, which was matched dollar-for-dollar, increasing the amount for Habitat to \$1000.

Christian Aid – St. Luke's United Methodist Church

St. Luke's is blessed through generous giving with a Christian Aid fund. These monies support community needs and assist individuals and families in extraordinary or emergency circumstances. With oversight by the pastors, we work directly with community organizations that are vetting persons who are making requests. St. Luke's has shared \$10,388 in 2024. These funds provide support in varying ways: gas cards, rent assistance, utility assistance, other family needs, etc.

Foster Care – Catawba County Social Services

In August, KidsPoint and youth students collected money to purchase Sweet Cases (suitcases) for children in foster care. Sweet Cases are made up of a specially manufactured duffle bag, that allows for a side panel of the duffle that can be decorated and removed with Velcro. Each Sweet Case comes with five additional comfort items: a stuffed bear, blanket, coloring book, crayons, hygiene kit, and a card from our students. Partnering with Sweet Cases allows us, as a church, to provide essential items for children in foster care during difficult times of transition. St. Luke's students raised \$ 534.00 to purchase twenty-six Sweet Cases through Fostering Love. The Sweet Cases were decorated and filled by our youth and delivered to Social Services.

Greater Hickory Cooperative Christian Ministries

GHCCM is a hub in Hickory for helping families in crisis, those living in poverty, and those experiencing homelessness. As a faith-based, volunteer-driven organization, GHCCM meets immediate needs with utility and rent assistance, basic clothing, hygiene resources, healthy food market for medical patients, and medical, dental, and pharmacy services. St. Luke's total budgetary support for GHCCM in 2024 totals \$8000.

Hopkins Missionaries – Nicaragua

Through our prayers and our financial support, we connect God's message of love to Nicaragua through the ministry of Angi and Ronnie Hopkins. The Hopkins have been in Nicaragua for almost 20 years. After taking mission teams to Nicaragua from the Red Bird Missionary Conference in western Kentucky, they found their love for the Nicaraguan people was so strong that God called them to be full time missionaries. St. Luke's total budgetary support for the missionary work of Angi and Ronnie Hopkins in 2024 totals \$8000.