



ST. LUKE'S

HISTORIC CHURCH & MUSEUM

Volume 6 | Spring 2020

A LOOK INSIDE THE ST. LUKE'S COLLECTION

As a small museum with incredibly limited exhibit space, many fascinating pieces of our collection are rarely or never displayed. The St. Luke's collection houses a broad range of items from archaeological materials collected during dig projects to doors and windows removed from the church building during the 1950s restoration. Because so many of these pieces remain in permanent storage, we would like to share some of our favorites to start off the new year.

During the 1890s Restoration of St. Luke's Historic Church, an intricate wine-glass pulpit was installed in the church building. Roughly 60 years later, the pulpit was removed during a second restoration. The pulpit was presumed destroyed after its 1950s removal until Lynn Kirk Rose contacted St. Luke's staff in December 2016. Rose informed staff that the 1890s pulpit, thought to be lost, was actually in her barn. In Spring of 2017, Mrs. Rose returned the pulpit to the St. Luke's collection and shared the history of the pulpit following its removal from St. Luke's. The pulpit was first donated to St. John's Episcopal Church, an historic church building in Chuckatuck. It was installed and used by St. John's but was removed at some point due to space constraints. Instead of allowing the pulpit to be lost or destroyed, Rose's grandfather, John Russell Kirk, took ownership of it and had the pulpit stored by his business, Kirk Lumber. The Roses moved the pulpit to the barn on their property in 2000 where it remained until its move into St. Luke's collection storage in 2017. It is amazing that a piece



Above: Sepia photo of the complete pulpit, excluding the sounding board which is still in use at St. Luke's. Image courtesy of Dan Duvall.



Left: St. Luke's board and staff work together to pack pulpit for transport into St. Luke's Collection Storage.



St. Luke's Education Coordinator Rachel Popp (left) poses with the 1890s pulpit and the two people who have kept the pulpit in safekeeping since 2000: Lynn Kirk Rose and her husband, Charles Rose (right).

lost to St. Luke's for more than 60 years was not only returned to the collection, but also had such an interesting journey. Furthermore, we are thankful to John Russell Kirk, Lynn Kirk Rose, and their family for the many amazing ways they have protected and supported St. Luke's over the years, even in ways that we never before realized. Lynn Kirk Rose is an avid local historian, long-time St. Luke's donor and supporter, and descendent of Joseph Bridger via her grandfather, John Russell Kirk.

In April 1956, The Times (now the Smithfield Times) reported the discovery

of "time-tinted bones" beneath the floor of St. Luke's Historic Church. Half a dozen ornamental handles were recovered during the excavation of the shallow grave as all that was left from coffins that had decomposed long ago. Despite the archaeological investigation of the contents of this grave, who was buried there remains a mystery. Two coffin handles were added to the St. Luke's collection but all other grave contents were returned and left to rest under the portion of the floor that is now underneath the baptismal font in the southwest corner of the church building. This mystery piqued interest once again in 2016 when new research conducted on the coffin handles by St. Luke's Intern, Lauren Harlow, raised a new question: Is there only one person buried beneath that portion of the floor? The two coffin handles, though both Victorian in style, are distinctly different. Harlow contacted Laurie Burgess, Associate Chair for the National Museum of Natural History, hoping to find out more about the coffin handles as pieces like this are part of Burgess's expertise. Burgess observed that she has never seen two different handles on one coffin before. So how many people are buried beneath the baptismal font and who are they? The mystery continues.

Continued on page 2



Photos of two of the coffin handles with decorative embellishments discovered during archaeological investigations beneath the church building's floor during the 1950s restoration project. Note the significant differences between the two styles.

Continued from front page

A weathervane that may be original to the church building was removed from the tower roof sometime after 2007 due to deterioration. An impressive piece, the weathervane is currently one of our most endangered artifacts. Layers of rust and holes in the metal are testaments to the powerful weather conditions that the building has survived. St. Luke’s plans to begin conservation efforts this year with the hopes of preserving the weathervane for future exhibition.



Left: Photo of the weathervane installed on top of the tower of the church building taken in 2007 before its removal. Right: Closeup of the weathervane’s surface.

Our collection tells us so much about the history of St. Luke’s Historic Church. Sometimes, as in the case of the coffin handle mystery, the collection can even tell us what we don’t know - what needs further research, investigation, and even archaeology. But museum collections involve time-consuming, tedious, and expensive care. Maintenance of a collection requires addressing and readdressing the storage environment as well as every collection item, constantly checking for new damage or decay. This preservation is not possible without our generous donors and tireless volunteers. We thank you for your support.

Fascinated with the mystery of the coffin handles? Learn more by visiting the blog post, *Who Lies Beneath the Baptismal Font?*, found under Education Blogs on our website, stlukesmuseum.org.

TODD TALK: 2020 IS THE YEAR OF PARTNERSHIPS



I am excited about what St. Luke’s is pursuing in 2020. We are continuing to establish many great partnerships and are working together on journeys of discovery. Join us in our pursuits to learn more about our history. More partnerships to come!

John Cross, Independent Historical & Archaeological Researcher

Cross is producing a two-volume history on Richard Bennett (1607-1675) and Virginia Religion between 1619 and 1675. We are locating lost church buildings, glebes, and chapels-of-ease in and around Newport Parish between 1619 and 1780. Our hope is to learn more about these locations, their parishioners, and how they contributed to our history.



Rebecca Suerdieck, Historic Sites Cataloger for the Sacred Heritage Foundation

Suerdieck is producing infographics and histories including interactive dynamic maps of church building locations and population migrations throughout early Tidewater Virginia between 1607 and

1780. This research will help us present a more complete picture of how churches were integral to society, politics, and economics as the original “social networks” of their times.



Photo of Lower Surry Southwark Parish Church Building Ruins



Craig Wansink, Ph.D., Joan P. and Macon F. Brock, Jr., Director Center for the Study of Religious Freedom and Professor and Chair, Department of Religious Studies at Virginia Wesleyan University

As a National Patriotic Shrine and Symbol of Religious Freedom, St.

Luke’s is collaborating with Virginia Wesleyan University to host thought-provoking programs highlighting the history and status of religious freedom. Our hope is to create a safe space for academic conversations on Religious Freedom, the 1st Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, and the unique nature of our Constitutional Republic.

Todd Ballance, Historic St. Luke’s Restoration’s Executive Director, welcomes conversations about St. Luke’s past, present, and future. He can be reached at 757-357-3367. Email: tballance@stlukesmuseum.org

BECOME A TOWER SOCIETY MEMBER IN 2020

The Tower Society is the Annual Fund Giving Society where leadership donors make annual gifts of \$1,000 or more to support the mission of St. Luke’s. The Annual Fund provides vital support for education, promotion, and preservation. St. Luke’s Historic Church & Museum is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization that relies solely on public support from corporations, foundations, and individuals. Tower Society Members are invited to special events and educational experiences throughout the year to show appreciation for giving at the leadership level.

The Tower Society had 36 leadership donors in 2019 and we invite you to join this year!

We make leadership giving very easy:

Please visit stlukesmuseum.org to support St. Luke’s Historic Church & Museum.

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS



Witchcraft in Colonial Virginia: 1626 - 1730

Saturday, March 28, 2020, 1 p.m. – 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Speaker: Carson Hudson

Tickets are \$15 per person

The witchcraft mania that swept through Salem, Massachusetts in 1692, while significant, has tended to overshadow the historical records of the persecutions of alleged witches in other colonies. Colonial Virginians shared a common belief in the supernatural and the existence of witches with their northern neighbors, and throughout the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, they conducted several witchcraft inquiries.

Join historian Carson Hudson as he explores the often-misunderstood subject of witchcraft persecution in early Virginia. He offers insights into the beliefs, occurrences, and legal proceedings regarding witchcraft in early Colonial Virginia, separating historical fact from historical fiction. Beware! It's not exactly as Monty Python depicts it!

Due to this program's previous popularity, this lecture will be available at 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. on Saturday, March 28. Please keep this in mind when selecting tickets online.

So Pious an Undertaking: Slavery, Religion, Education, and Virginia's Bray Schools

Saturday, April 18, 2020, from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.

Speaker: Nicole Brown

Tickets \$15 per person

When the Williamsburg Bray School opened its doors on September 29, 1760, it was the first official endeavor in Virginia to provide education for enslaved and free African Americans. Offering religious instruction in the Anglican tradition, the varied perspectives on Virginia Bray Schools were often complicated and contradictory. Public historian and early colonial scholar Nicole Brown will explain the pivotal role these schools had on our understanding of the relationship between slavery, religion, and education prior to the American Revolution and the Second Great Awakening.

A Day of Remembrance: Honoring Our Veterans

Saturday, May 16, 2020, from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Free Event, Open to the Public

This May, St. Luke's Historic Church & Museum will be honoring the veterans buried in our cemeteries during a day-long event. Join us for tours throughout the day featuring the biographies of some of those who fought for our country. Explore military history from the War of 1812 to more modern conflicts. There will be many different activities and displays available throughout the day including a kids' activity table, live music, and delicious food from Jessie Lou's Food Truck. Please follow this event on Facebook or check it out on our website for more information. Join us as we remember and honor those who served!

June Cemetery Preservation Workshop

Saturday, June 13, 2020, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Free Workshop, RSVP Required

Complimentary lunch provided

Join us for these hands-on workshops where volunteers will learn techniques for cleaning and preserving historic tombstones based on industry best practices. Lunch and the necessary tools for the workshop will be provided.

RSVP required! Please contact Education Coordinator Rachel Popp via email, rpopp@stlukesmuseum.org, for further instruction. Keep in mind that spots are limited and these workshops fill up quickly.

Religion and the U.S. Constitution

Saturday, June 27, 2020, from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.

Speaker: John Ericson, St. Luke's Outreach Coordinator

Tickets \$15 per person

The Articles of Confederation were inadequate to the growing needs of a new nation. The Constitution is surprisingly silent on many aspects of religion. Article VI and the First Amendment are the two places that deal with issues of religion. This presentation will deal with the religious arguments on both the federalist and anti-federalist camps and how our Constitution deals with issues of religious freedom and expression.

RSVP required! Please contact Education Coordinator Rachel Popp via email, rpopp@stlukesmuseum.org, for further instruction. Keep in mind that spots are limited and these workshops fill up quickly.



For ticketed events, advance ticket purchase is encouraged as spots are typically limited.

For ticket information and purchase, please check out these events on our website at www.stlukesmuseum.org.

Please contact Education Coordinator Rachel Popp via email, rpopp@stlukesmuseum.org, with questions regarding lectures and events.

“BEHIND THE TOMBSTONES”

How Cemetery-Focused Events are Saving History



St. Luke’s Education Coordinator Rachel Popp shares some of the Ancient Cemetery’s history with a family taking her tour of the church building and grounds. Tours are available on the hour, Tuesday through Saturday, February through December.

loved ones with family every Sunday, often taking a picnic and treating these cemeteries much like parks. Today, most of us avoid cemeteries and graveyards, viewing them as creepy and uncomfortable. But as some cemeteries have begun to fall into disuse and disrepair, this active avoidance of all things cemetery-related is falling to the wayside.

This is a necessary shift if we want to save the history recorded and preserved in cemeteries all over the U.S. So far, it has thankfully been a well-received and subtle change in how our communities view and treat their cemeteries and graveyards. These often-avoided memorial parks are becoming active community spaces once again. By incorporating local cemeteries into historical tours, workshops, and other events, communities are breathing new life into spaces that have become ignored and sometimes abandoned. Great examples of this can be seen both here in Isle of Wight County and the surrounding Hampton Roads area.

Local examples include the guided tours of Ivy Hill Cemetery here in Smithfield. Held the second Saturday of each month, March through October, these tours highlight some of the local families who influenced Smithfield’s history. In October 2019, the Norfolk Society for Cemetery Conservation and the Norfolk Bureau of Cemeteries hosted a Victorian era-themed 5k called the “From Here to Eternity Twilight Run/Walk.” All proceeds supported conservation efforts

Throughout history, our cultural view of cemeteries has gone through cycles of change. For example, during the Victorian Era, mourning was in vogue and visiting cemeteries was viewed as a popular pastime. Even today, many members of our older generation recall visiting deceased

of Norfolk’s eight municipal cemeteries. In celebration of National Wreaths Across America Day on December 14, 2019, the Hampton National Cemetery made, collected, and placed thousands of wreaths on veteran graves with the help of numerous volunteers and organizations.

I would be remiss if I didn’t also mention St. Luke’s. As of 2016, St. Luke’s Historic Church & Museum has presented multiple examples of programming that focuses on its cemeteries, from Cemetery Preservation Workshops in the warmer months of the year to the Twilight Cemetery Tours in October which explore the lives of some of those buried here. These programs continue to be some of our most popular, inspiring amazing voluntarism and overall involvement from members of our local community.

Events like these make cemeteries harder to ignore and create opportunities for members of our communities to become emotionally invested. In turn, this “adoption” of our local cemeteries will inevitably save the history so prevalent in these memorial spaces. Save history today by taking an interest in your local cemeteries!



In the warmer months, St. Luke’s presents Cemetery Preservation Workshops about once a month. These workshops are free to the public and provide basic knowledge and skills for the cleaning and preservation of historic tombstones.



The annual Twilight Cemetery Tours are held in October and explore the lives of many of the Ancient Cemetery’s residents. The tours aim to regain and encourage interest in the cemetery and those buried there by sharing stories and histories in a spooky setting: a graveyard at night.

Locals interested in taking part in the cemetery initiatives of St. Luke’s should consider attending a Cemetery Preservation Workshop. Please visit our website, stlukesmuseum.org, for more information.



Here rests the remains of
Fannie N. Parker
Wife of H. R. Parker
Born Oct. 15, 1835
Married by Rev. P. E. Robert of Smithfield at the residence of her father, N. W. Norsworthy at Plain Field Farm, Isle of Wight Co., Va., June 1, 1860
Died May 20, 1886, in Smithfield, leaving her husband and seven children to mourn their loss;
Viz: Eva W, Nora W, Ernest W, Nannie W, Jesse H, Henry R and Fannie N Parker

(On back of stone, not pictured)

At her request the following pall bearers bore her remains to the grave; W. H. Jordan, Dr. R. Galt, J. O. Thomas, A. G. Spratley, R. L. Boykins, R. S. Thomas, C. F. Day, V. Wrenn
The burial services were conducted by Rev. David Barr and at her request the remains were taken in the Old Church where the hymn “Asleep in Jesus” was sung, and at the grave “Sweet Bye & Bye,” by Mrs. David Barr, Mrs. Filmore Jordan and Mrs. R. S. Thomas.



Here lies
the remains of the son
of
H. R. & Fannie N. Parker,
who died without a name
BORN
Apr. 9, 1868,
DIED
Apr. 17, 1871.



Robert Gary Blackwell
BORN June 10, 1842
DIED Oct. 3, 1915
Gone but not forgotten.
To the glory of God and in loving memory of
Sgt. Robert Gary Blackwell 1842 – 1915
Enlisted 23 June 1861, Discharged 17 April 1865
Served in Co. I, 3rd Regiment Virginia Infantry, C.S.A.
SOLDIER PATRIOT CHURCHMAN PLANTER
Through his generosity, courage and integrity our father contributed generously to the preservation of St. Luke’s Church and mankind.
By his children
William Smith Blackwell, Nancy Blackwell Latimer, Juliette Blackwell Brown, Christine Blackwell Bergen, and Robert Gary Blackwell, Jr.

PRIVATE SUPPORT THEN, NOW, AND FOREVER

Today St. Luke's remains an important symbol to people from all over the country. This symbolism inspires us in everything we do to preserve, promote, and protect this National Historic Landmark and National Patriotic Shrine. Take a few more moments and read the next three quotes from people who have been, and continue to be, inspired by St. Luke's.

Recently our Education Team discovered a Smithfield Times excerpt quoting Historic St. Luke's Restoration's first President of St. Luke's Board of Directors, Thursday, April 8, 1954, Henry Mason Day:

"It would be hard to overstate the importance of St. Luke's both as a symbol and as a relic of this country's earliest past... Rescued from neglect and the ravages of time, St. Luke's and its grounds will remain, in perpetuity, a vital memorial to the faith, the traditions, and the enterprise of our earliest American ancestors."

In the very recent past, our team of volunteers, event and lecture attendees, donors, and cemetery clients have increased in numbers. Many of these people enjoy the opportunities St. Luke's has to offer. Here are two more quotes from the current generation of stakeholders:



Daniele and Sophia Delarivas work diligently on minor historic tombstone repair during a workshop at St. Luke's.

"After attending a tour of St. Luke's, I sought other ways for my daughter and me to become more involved. We have now been volunteers for over two years by participating in the Cemetery Preservation Workshops. We also enjoy attending educational lectures and find them truly compelling. Through these experiences, I have developed a deep love for St. Luke's, so much so that I have decided to stay forever by purchasing grave plots in the Ancient Cemetery!"

*Daniele Delarivas,
St. Luke's volunteer, donor,
& cemetery plot owner*

**Does St. Luke's continue to inspire you?
If so, please help us through your generous
gift of financial support to our Annual Fund:
stlukesmuseum.org/donate**



Henry Mason Day (left) discusses Historic St. Luke's Church with William G. Mennen (right), executive Vice President of the Mennen Co., who donated \$50,000 to the restoration of the church building circa 1957.

"The first time I went to St. Luke's was for a Christmas Eve Church Service roughly four years ago. I had driven past the church for 20+ years but never visited. Soon after visiting, I saw an article in the local newspaper discussing the Cemetery Preservation Workshops and decided to attend. I enjoy these workshops and now participate in one or two of them each year. But what I enjoy most are the wonderful academic lectures presented by St. Luke's. My favorite lecture so far was 'Preserving America's Oldest Organ,' a presentation this past summer on the historic organ in the St. Luke's collection."

*Mark McCurry,
St. Luke's volunteer and donor*



Mark McCurry (left) discusses historic tombstone repair with Ta Mara Conde (right), President of Historic Gravestone Services, a monument conservation company that specializes in the care and restoration of historic tombstones.

OUT OF THE ASHES PROJECT UPDATE: FILM DIGITIZATION

Over the last year, St. Luke’s has worked diligently with Colorlab to digitize four reels of film, two of which were recovered from the 2005 house fire on our property. Before digitization, St. Luke’s staff could only guess what the contents might be as none of the film had been viewed in many years and little was known about them. Today, St. Luke’s is excited to share a few photos from these films.

Two of the videos are local high school football games. One of the films is a promotional video encouraging donations for the restoration efforts underway at St. Luke’s during the 1950’s. The last is very brief footage of the 1957 celebration and unveiling of these restoration efforts.

Thank you to all of the donors and volunteers who have contributed to the Out of the Ashes Project thus far. There is still much to do but the digitization of these films is a huge step forward in this project.



Still frame image from the promotional video.



Still frame image from the celebration unveiling the 1950s restoration work, typically referred to as the 1957 Pilgrimage.



Still frame from football game footage, film 1.



Still frame from football game footage, film 2. Note that the jerseys say “Packers” on the back, identifying the team as the Smithfield High School Packers.



2019 EDWARDS FAMILY ISLE OF WIGHT SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT

Bob and Verne Edwards, for the 20th consecutive year, welcomed the winner of the Edwards Family Isle of Wight Scholarship to the grounds of St. Luke’s Historic Church & Museum. Mr. Edwards was a member of the Board for 25 years and enjoys the tradition of inviting students to tour the museum. The 2019 award was given to Darren Upton, a graduate of Isle of Wight Academy, who currently attends the University of Virginia where he is majoring in Physics.

The Edwards Scholarship is administered by the Hampton Roads Community Foundation. The scholarship is \$3,000 a year and is renewable for four years. It is awarded based on a combination of merit and financial need, and graduating seniors from Isle of Wight Academy, Smithfield High, and Windsor High are eligible. Students interested in applying should see their Guidance Departments.

From left: Bob Edwards, Verne Edwards, Darren Upton, Lee Morgan (Darren’s mother), and Gloria LaBoone (St. Luke’s Museum Interpreter)

BRIDGER HOME REVEALED

by Alain Outlaw

Following extensive remote sensing (radar), tree cutting, careful hand excavation, the employment of mechanical equipment to remove overlying disturbed soils, and mapping, the plan of Joseph Bridger’s home at Whitmarsh was revealed. Based upon the detailed room by room inventory and appraisal taken at the time of his death in 1686, a substantial structure was expected. As it turns out, compared to other excavated archaeological sites, it is certainly one of the largest brick dwellings in Virginia at the time, measuring 28’x 53.5’. Moreover, it was likely connected to an earlier 1650s brick dwelling measuring 16’x 24.5’, referred to as the “ould bricke house” in the records.



Overhead view of partially excavated 1650s “ould bricke house” (between scales) found below the superimposed surviving portion of a c.1760s-1770s outbuilding ruin (center). North is at the top of the photo.

Called the “new house” in the 1686 inventory, the revealed plan includes large internal chimneys on the north and south gables, a root cellar on the north end, and a massive 28’x 24’ brick-walled and brick-floored cellar which occupied the southern half of the building. The latter was not found by radar due to the presence of a live five-foot-in-diameter sycamore dubbed the “Bridger Family Tree,” since it occupied the very center of the large cellar. In the lab, an important and rare artifact discovery was made in the Whitmarsh collection donated by the Ferguson family: A manufacture date of 1678 was found in window lead, providing a date for the completion of the “new house.”

As details of the architecture at Whitmarsh continue to be gathered, fieldwork is proceeding at the Bridger family cemetery, found 325’ to the east. Mapping has recorded the presence of 20 graves which will be investigated once the burial excavation permit request is approved and providing that funding is available.



Northern half of large “new house” cellar under excavation in 2019, during Bridger Family Association visit. View looking west.

EVERYONE HAS A PLAN

When we talk about death, funerals, and final arrangements everyone has a plan. Either they plan for themselves or they let others plan it for them. The greatest gift you can give your loved ones is to make all your arrangements ahead of time. We encourage you to consider your legacy and plan how you want to be memorialized in perpetuity.

Become Part of History

St. Luke’s cemeteries -- the Ancient Cemetery along with St. Luke’s Memorial Park and Columbarium -- are open to all people, regardless of faith or background. Our rich history spans four centuries. Yet, our history is not complete. We may be Virginia’s oldest open cemetery, but



Family pauses at a headstone with flowers in St. Luke’s Memorial Park.

there remains room for you to “Become Part of History.”

True Perpetual Care

Today, the hallowed grounds give witness to lives and memories of generations past. All are



Prospective clients enjoy an Autumn stroll through the Ancient Cemetery.

you to start planning, a Fee Schedule is available on our website, stlukesmuseum.org or you may contact Fred Hodges, our Sales & Services Manager, by phone at (757) 357-3367 or by email at fhodges@stlukesmuseum.org.

Blooming roses embrace the Columbarium at St. Luke’s Memorial Park while the Sales & Services Manager talks with prospective clients.



welcome to tour our grounds, walk the serene landscape, and enjoy the peaceful natural environment. The carefully maintained cemetery is a testament to our pledge of perpetual care – that we will always care for this place. St. Luke’s plans for our perpetual care by investing at minimum 25% of each cemetery sale. Earnings from these investments fund the care and maintenance of the cemeteries now and into the future.

When the time is right for

PICTURE YOUR PERFECT EVENT

St. Luke’s is the perfect venue to celebrate life’s milestones. The ancient church building presents a simple elegance and an atmosphere rich with history. The “Old Brick Church” has stood the test of time and the church building and expansive grounds provide the perfect backdrop for picturesque memories with family and friends.

Weddings

St. Luke’s is the perfect backdrop for your special day. Create timeless memories in the oldest church building in Virginia, and start your future together in a historic way. The use of a bridal suite in the main building, included in most rental packages, provides an elegant and relaxing setting to prepare for the big day.

Picture Yourself Here

Brick paths wind their way through our grounds, creating places for quiet moments of reflection and beautiful photo opportunities. Our evergreen foliage looks lush year-round. The pond in the background makes this secluded space seem almost magical.

Capacity

The Church Building can accommodate up to 150 guests, but our outdoor spaces are flexible and can be tented and decorated to meet your needs.



A young couple poses with St. Luke’s East window in view behind them.

Grounds

The Pine Grove, behind the church facing our beautiful stained-glass windows, can also be utilized for reception space. The South Lawn is equipped with electrical hookups, and is ideal for a tented space and dance floor.

The patio in front of the church may be outfitted to host a lively cocktail hour after the ceremony, and is ripe with potential for your decor.

Book Your Dream Event Today!

You may view the Fee Schedule on our website, stlukesmuseum.org, or contact our Sales & Services Manager, Fred Hodges, by phone at (757) 357-3367 or by email at fhodges@stlukesmuseum.org.



Bride and Groom beam as their friends and family celebrate their marriage.

Unique Gifts Available at The Old Brick Gift Shop

The Old Brick Gift Shop is a specialty gift shop designed to highlight unique gifts for loved ones and cherished mementos of your visit at Virginia’s Oldest Church Building. Poppin Paper Cards are one of the most popular items in the gift shop. Hand-made from colorful cut paper, Poppin Paper Cards brings to life distinctive designs for all occasions! Delight the people in your life with one of these charming cards today!



14477 Benn’s Church Boulevard
Smithfield, VA 23430

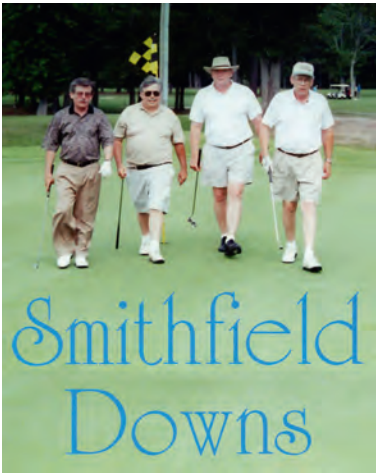


Photo and logo courtesy of Gloria and Gerald LaBoone.

Gerald LaBoone pictured (far left) in the company of golfers at Smithfield Downs, the golf course he owned from 1982 until its 2006 closing. Part of the golf course was deeded to St. Luke’s in 2012, providing a potential buffer between the historic church building and any future developments. St. Luke’s recently removed old fencing, opening up the viewshed to include this property. Today, visitors can see down through the pine grove behind the church building and across the rolling green grass leftover from years of use as a popular golf course.

Visit us Tuesday through Saturday, 9:30 am to 5 pm, between February 1 and December 31.
Learn more at www.stlukesmuseum.org, email us at contact@stlukesmuseum.org, or call 757-357-3367.

EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH PROGRAMS: THE LECTURES THAT COME TO YOU



John Ericson, Outreach Coordinator and Museum Interpreter

Not only does St. Luke’s Historic Church & Museum present educational programming onsite, it also has an impressive catalog of outreach programs. Spearheaded by John Ericson, Outreach Coordinator and Museum Interpreter, available presentations focus on an array of topics related to the early American religious experience. These outreach programs typically span an hour to include the presentation and time for Q&A. If interested in hosting one of these programs, please contact the St. Luke’s Education Department via email at rpopp@stlukesmuseum.org for availability and pricing information. New presentations are added to the catalog regularly.

500 Years of Reformation: This lecture presents the dynamic events of the early 16th century beginning with the Lutheran Reformation in Germany and its connection to the English Reformation and the religious traditions that were present in the early Colonial period.

Religion and the American Revolution: This presentation deals with the role of religion in the Revolution. How clergy entered into the political sphere and how many patriots and loyalists interpreted the conflict through the lens of their religious faith.

Religion and the U.S. Constitution: The Articles of Confederation were inadequate to the growing needs of a new nation. The Constitution is surprisingly silent on many aspects of religion. Article VI and the First Amendment are the two places that deal with issues of religion. This presentation deals with the religious arguments on both the federalist and anti-federalist camps and how our Constitution approaches issues of religious freedom and expression.

History and Memory: The Second Great Awakening changed the way Americans understood our origins in the 17th and 18th centuries, especially in terms of religion. This lecture will deal with the concept of memory and how it differs from the historical record of the period.

Religion and Manifest Destiny: The movement westward was dubbed Manifest Destiny, meaning something self evident from God. But that movement came at great expense to the Native population. This presentation looks at one of the most controversial eras of American history and how religion was used to justify it.

The Church and Race: The idea of race is an invention of the 17th century. This presentation explores the origins of the concept of race and how the church was complicit in the racist structures that we still battle with today.

From Religious Wars to Religious Freedom: How the European Wars of the Reformation influenced political philosophy and the ideals of religious freedom.

“John Ericson’s lecture on the topic of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation and how that impacts religious freedom and the founding of America was both informative as well as engaging. The material was presented in a way that indicated Mr. Ericson’s knowledge and enthusiasm for the topic.”

- The Suffolk Public Library

“Martin Luther at the Diet of Worms 1521,” c. 1754, unknown artist. Image courtesy of Universal History Archive/Getty Images.

