

# Historic ST LUKE'S CHURCH

*Virginia's Oldest Church*

## Historic St. Luke's Receives Eight Major Preservation Awards

In the last eighteen months, Historic St. Luke's Restoration (HSLR) has received gifts and commitments totaling \$765,000 for major capital initiatives to preserve and protect the site's ancient grounds and cemeteries.

This includes eight major awards from foundation and corporate grantors, said Executive Director Todd J. Ballance.

Awards for preservation and protection of the 100-acre national landmark include \$250,000 from TowneBank Foundation; \$100,000 from Farmers Bank; \$100,000 from The Robert G. and Maude Morgan Cabell Foundation; \$50,000 from The Mary Morton Parsons Foundation; \$50,000 from the Beazley Foundation; \$25,000 from the Birdsong Foundation; \$20,000 from the Marietta McNeil Morgan and Samuel Tate Morgan, Jr. Trust, Bank of America, N.A., Trustee; and \$15,000 from The Roller-Bottimore Foundation.

In addition, capital gifts and commitments of more than \$150,000 have been received from Board Members and individual friends of Historic St. Luke's in support of the Restoration's preservation initiatives.

The Restoration has also purchased an additional protective parcel on its southeast perimeter and added site-appropriate fencing along the border.



The process of preservation is an ongoing one. The most significant restoration of the church building proper occurred in 1954 when a national appeal was made for funds to restore the iconic building closer to its 17th-century appearance and to create an endowment for its ongoing preservation and maintenance. That effort garnered support from approximately 1,000 donors from 40 states and two foreign countries.

Only once in the ensuing 60-plus years was it necessary to raise significant capital for preservation projects at "Virginia's Oldest Church." That restoration project, completed in

2012, was generously led with funding from Joseph W. Luter III and the National Parks Service, correcting a longstanding water infiltration problem and bringing the building back to its 1954 restoration condition.

More work is planned as funding progresses, said Dickens, including archaeological excavations to unearth heretofore hidden information on the 17th-century site's founding.



"We are enormously gratified," said Board President David Hare, "and very honored by the confidence these grantors and investors have placed in us. Thanks to their generosity, we have already begun to make major improvements to our historic grounds."

*David Hare*



"Preserving one of America's most important and iconic sites requires constant vigilance, stewardship, and significant financial investments," added Board Vice President E. Dana Dickens III. "We're excited by the philanthropic community's enthusiasm for our efforts."

*Dana Dickens*



"The response from the philanthropic community has been highly encouraging," said Board President-Elect William "Bill" Hodsden. "Our 'ancient Indian Trail' has undergone the most extensive changes. The site's primary roadway through the property has been repaired and resurfaced, the dam has been reinforced, and the ponds have been dredged."

*Bill Hodsden*



"The Board deals with maintaining the church in a historic yet very pragmatic way, with a close eye on keeping its lasting beauty for our future generations to enjoy. We are grateful for all of the generous gifts and commitments that foundations, corporate grantors and individual friends of Historic St. Luke's, including Board members, have donated to our major capital initiative."

*Jane Schaubach*





## Historic St. Luke's Restoration Board of Directors

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## “Old Brick Church”

Historic St. Luke's Church in Smithfield is Virginia's oldest church and the oldest church in British North America of brick construction.

Built sometime between 1632 and 1682 and once known as “Old Brick Church,” Historic St. Luke's has been designated a National Shrine and a National Historic Landmark, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The 17th-century, 100-acre historic landmark receives no federal, state, or municipal funding and relies on charitable gifts and admissions revenue to support its operations, maintenance, and preservation.

Historic St. Luke's Restoration is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization established in 1954 whose mission is to “preserve, protect, and promote the historic church landmark and its collections, documents, history, graveyard, and surroundings.”



## RESTORATION CHARTERS TOWER SOCIETY

To acknowledge those who generously support Historic St. Luke's ongoing operations, the Restoration's Board of Directors has chartered the Tower Society.

Members of the Tower Society are recognized for their leadership gifts to Historic St. Luke's Annual Fund at \$1,000 (Newport Parish), \$2,500 (Chancel Circle), and \$5,000 or more (Old Brick Church Council).

“Our goal is to engage generous support for Historic St. Luke's annual operations so that this great American icon remains a vibrant learning center and community asset,” said Tower Society Chair E. Dana Dickens III.

“Few 17th-century American landmarks survive, and fewer still have important lessons to teach about the values that shape a free nation. Historic St. Luke's is that rare and special place,” said Dickens. “We are building a core of generous supporters for its programs, and we are going to have a lot of fun in the process.”

Historic St. Luke's Annual Fund supports the site's annual operating budget, including its preservation and education programs, maintenance, tours, lectures, research, and personnel.

For more information on Historic St. Luke's Tower Society, contact Todd Ballance at 804-357-3367. [tballance@historicstlukes.org](mailto:tballance@historicstlukes.org).



## Todd Talk

Our American experience began before many of our ancestors reached these shores. These new Americans brought with them their unique perspectives, faith traditions, and convictions of conscience. Historians at one time believed the religious landscape of early Virgin-

its parishioners, and those passionate about its representation. Our Education Department is proud to collect and preserve artifacts and oral histories, research and present historical articles and lectures, and host special events. Our operational and landscape team maintains the 100 acres of cemeteries and of course preserves the ancient church building.

“ We continue to celebrate the history of the Historic St. Luke's Church, its parishioners, and those passionate about its representation. ”

(Todd's signature)

ia was more singular under the Church of England, also known as the Anglican Church, but modern historians and archaeologists have presented a far more diverse picture of the early religious landscape.

Conversations among historians and archaeologists now include questions on Catholics, Puritans, Anabaptists, Brownists, Quakers, and Anglicans. Their differences were enough to cause religious persecution and wars, and their experiences would ultimately influence the architects of the Bill of Rights and the Constitution of the United States of America.

Over the centuries citizens have challenged and defended their spirit and words. United States history is peppered with other laws and events that enabled persecution and protected pursuit of conscience from how the State of Missouri responded to migrating Mormons to Executive Orders protecting atheists. The State of American Religious Freedom is that it is ever-evolving.

We continue to celebrate the history of the Historic St. Luke's Church,

Historic St. Luke's now enters the national conversation by introducing why early Americans pursued religious freedom and how the First Amendment remains an important part of American discourse today. We do not wish to rewrite history, but to explore it together in an effort to enlighten and move closer to “a more perfect Union.”

I personally invite you to join us on this journey of preserving America's heritage and religious freedom.

Todd Ballance, Historic St. Luke's Restoration's Executive Director, is a passionate cultural resource manager with a degree in historic preservation. He merges his interest in history and his experience in marketing to lead the Restoration's preservation, education, and protection efforts. Todd welcomes conversations about Historic St. Luke's past, present, and future. He can be reached at 757-357-3367. [tballance@historicstlukes.org](mailto:tballance@historicstlukes.org)





# Calendar of Events, Fall 2017

## 17th Century Isle of Wight County: A Living History Event

Saturday, September 9, 2017, 9:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. Period vendors, living historians, modern food vendors, and more will be available to the public. Archaeologist Alain Outlaw will speak on Col. Joseph Bridger, the patron of Historic St. Luke's Church. Admittance is the cost of general admission. The Locrian Consort will also be performing 17th-century chamber music in the afternoon. Tickets to the concert will be \$15 per person and should be purchased in advance.

## September Cemetery Preservation Workshops

Saturday, September 30, 2017, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. • Saturday, October 21, 2017, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.

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

## Blessing of the Animals

Sunday, October 1, 2017, 2 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Do you have a special pet in your life, be it furry, feathered, slimy, or scaly? Then bring it to Historic St. Luke's Church for Christ Episcopal Church's Blessing of the Animals. Join us for special blessings by Rev. Connie Gillman inside the church building at Historic St. Luke's.

## Twilight Cemetery Tours

(Tours leave every 30 minutes.)

Friday, October 6, 2017, 6:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m. • Friday, October 20, 2017, 6:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

Friday, October 27, 2017, 6:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m. • Saturday, October 28, 2017, 6:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

Dead men don't tell tales, but their tombstones do! Enjoy the stories of local saints and sinners on a 30-minute, family-friendly guided tour of the historic cemetery at Historic St. Luke's Church. Tickets are \$10 per person and must be purchased in advance.

## Witchcraft in Colonial Virginia: 1626-1730

Saturday, November 4, 2017, 1 p.m. – 2 p.m.

Join historian Carson Hudson as he explores the often-misunderstood subject of witchcraft persecution and offers insights into the beliefs, occurrences, and legal proceedings regarding witchcraft in early Colonial Virginia. Beware! It's not exactly as Monty Python depicts it! Tickets are \$15 per person, and light refreshments will be provided.



## Meet Gloria and Visit the Gift Shop!

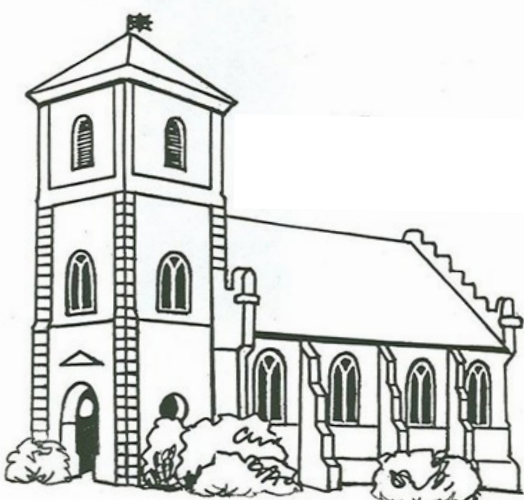
Gloria LaBoone, Gift Shop Assistant Manager and Museum Interpreter, celebrated her tenth anniversary with the Restoration this year. She was persuaded in 2007 by her friend and long-time Historic St. Luke's supporter Barbara Lindley to come to work in the Gift Shop. Soon Gloria began volunteering as well, assisting with special events, giving tours, and telling what she calls "the untold St. Luke's story." Gloria takes great pride in the gift shop, and her tours regularly receive high praise. "St. Luke's story is amazing to me," said Gloria. "This place has survived because of the determination and tenacity of those who built it and those who chose to preserve it."



## Historic ST LUKE'S CHURCH

*Virginia's Oldest Church*

14477 Benn's Church Boulevard  
Smithfield, VA 23430



Visit us between 9:30 am and 5 pm every day between February 1 and December 31.

Learn more at [www.historicstlukes.org](http://www.historicstlukes.org), email us at [contact@historicstlukes.org](mailto:contact@historicstlukes.org) or call 757-357-3367.