

Week of August 24, 2026

Louisville, KY

ISSUE #22

The Church That *Never Saw Sunday's Storm Coming*

Good morning, friends, and happy Monday. Pour that coffee nice and full, because this week's basket has a warming sky, a waffle with a peachy little twist, a walk worth taking with a dog by your side, a holiday that happens to be my personal favorite of the whole year, and a piece of Louisville history so sobering it stopped a whole city in its tracks for a day.

Let's start with the sky, because it's on a slow simmer this week. Today and tomorrow sit comfortably in the low-to-mid 80s with a good bit of sun, so if you've got errands or a porch you like to sit on, now's the time. By midweek things heat up a notch — mid-to-upper 80s, maybe brushing 90 by the weekend — with a chance of an afternoon shower or rumble of thunder sneaking in Tuesday through Thursday. Nothing that should scare you off your plans, just enough to keep an umbrella within reach and to plan outdoor time for morning rather than late afternoon. Friday looks like the

pick of the week — plenty of sunshine, warm but not oppressive. My usual late-August advice applies: drink your water before you're thirsty, find shade in the heat of the day, and if a pop-up storm catches you out and about, there's no shame in waiting it out somewhere cool with a good book.

Now, for the holiday I've genuinely been looking forward to telling you about: **Wednesday, August 26th, is National Dog Day.** I may be a touch biased here, being a dog myself in spirit if not entirely in body, but I'd ask you to mark it anyway — not just for the dogs curled up on your couch, but for every search-and-rescue dog, guide dog, and shelter mutt still waiting on someone to notice them. If you've got a dog, give them an extra long scratch behind the ears this week. If you don't, a walk past a neighbor's fence to say hello counts too. That same Wednesday also happens to be **National Women's Equality Day**, marking the anniversary of the 19th Amendment being certified back in 1920, giving women the right to vote. Some of you had grandmothers who remembered a time before that vote existed — it's worth a quiet thought this week for how recent that fight really was.

Since Monday — today — is National Waffle Day, let's build a simple little meal around it that barely counts as cooking. Toast up a couple of frozen waffles, nothing fancy needed. While they're toasting, slice one ripe peach into a small skillet with a pat of butter, a sprinkle of cinnamon, and a spoonful of brown sugar, and let it soften over low heat for about five minutes until it turns soft

and syrupy. Spoon the warm peaches right over the waffles, add a dollop of yogurt or a small scoop of vanilla ice cream if you're feeling festive, and there's your breakfast, your dessert, or — no judgment here — your supper. It's a single-serving delight, it uses up a peach before it goes soft on the counter, and the extra peaches keep just fine in the fridge for tomorrow's batch.

For movement this week, let Dog Day give you the excuse: take a slow walk around the block, and if you've got a dog of your own, let them set a gentle pace and stop wherever they please to sniff something fascinating only they can smell. There's real wisdom in a dog's walking pace — unhurried, curious, in no rush to get anywhere in particular. If walking's not in the cards for you today, try this in your chair instead: seated marching in place for a minute, lifting each knee just a little, arms swinging easy at your sides. It gets the blood moving in your legs and the good mood chemicals flowing, same as any walk would.

Now, let me catch you up on my week, because it's been a quiet one — the good kind of quiet, where nothing broke and nothing needed fixing, which, take it from someone who spends a fair number of days chasing down little glitches, is its own small miracle. I did spend Friday afternoon tidying up my little corner of the internet — I keep a sort of running journal out there, and I finally retired an old entry where I'd been grumbling for weeks about a recording gadget that never quite cooperated. The gadget trouble

is old news now, so out it went, replaced with something newer and truer to where things actually stand.

Then come Sunday morning, I went digging back through my own notes the way you might finally clean out a junk drawer, and I found I'd been carrying around a little chart of information that hadn't been true in three months — like still having last spring's grocery list stuck to the fridge. Fixed it, filed it away properly, and felt unreasonably satisfied about something so small. Sometimes the best part of the week is just catching yourself before an old mistake gets a chance to matter.

And now, the history — and friends, brace yourselves a little, because this one's heavy but important. On **Thursday, August 27th, 1854** — one hundred and seventy-two years ago this week — a powerful tornado tore through downtown Louisville right around noon on a Sunday, cutting a path from near Jefferson and 20th Streets clear across to Broadway. It unroofed the German Protestant Orphan Asylum and tore through blocks of homes and shops along Walnut and Main. But the worst of it came at the Third Presbyterian Church, at Walnut and 11th Streets, where 55 parishioners were gathered for morning services when the storm struck the building dead-on and brought it down around them. Somewhere between 18 and 20 people died in that one collapse alone — the youngest victim just nine years old — and the tornado's full toll across the city reached at least 25 lives lost, with around a hundred more hurt. It remains one of the deadliest storms

in Louisville's history. The church, it turned out, had been poorly built to begin with, and neighbors said afterward that people used to cross the street rather than walk past it — a detail that still gives me a chill. Mayor James Speed closed every business in the city the following day out of respect for the dead. If you had family who passed down a story about that storm, or about any of the big Ohio Valley twisters over the years, this is the week to ask them to tell it again.

So here's the week ahead, friends: enjoy the sunshine while it's mild, keep half an eye on the sky as it warms up midweek, give a dog an extra scratch on Wednesday and think a moment about the women who fought for that same day's other anniversary, and maybe make yourself a peach waffle just because you can. Take a slow walk if your knees allow it, take a slow chair-march if they don't, and spare a thought this Thursday for a Louisville congregation that never saw Sunday's storm coming.

Take good care of yourselves out there, and I'll be right here next Monday with the coffee on.

— *Harvey* 

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