

April 2013

St. John Lutheran Church

Mission Statement

St. John is a living witness to the love of God as shown in Jesus Christ. We gather faithfully in His name to worship and praise Him; and we go forth in peace to share the Good News and to serve the world around us.

Individual Highlights:

Opening article	1
Calendar tea and other church events	2
Mission and May	4
Save the Dates	5
Thank yous and Assemblies	6
Birthdays	8

St. John Lutheran Church
PO Box 411
420 Beaver Street
Mars PA 16046

<http://www.stjohnchurchmars.org>
(724) 625 - 1830
Office email: office@stjohnchurchmars.org
Pastor Mark's email: pastor@stjohnchurchmars.org

My sisters and brothers in Christ,

There are a lot of Steeler fans in the country and around the world. In Baltimore, home of the team with probably the largest Steelers rivalry, there is a Steelers bar. You can find them all over the world. Some of that might say because the owner is honorable, or the players are great, but at least part of it has to be the fact that the Steelers have won more Super Bowls than any other team in the NFL.

There are not nearly as many Pirates fans all around the world, perhaps because the Pirates have had twenty straight losing seasons (though I am hopeful, along with a number of you that this year will be different). It is easy to cheer for a team when times are good, when things are going the way that they are supposed to. It's much harder to be a fan of a team that is down in the dumps. There is much temptation in being a fair weather fan.

In some ways, many of the disciples of Jesus, initially, were fair weather fans. As Jesus is going around Galilee, drawing crowds like an ancient rock star, healing the sick, casting out demons, feeding thousands, teaching with

authority the disciples are glad to be with him. It is after all easy to be with Jesus at this point, when his popularity is incredible, it is easy to imagine that they will be enjoying all of the riches, rewards and praise along with him.

When they march on Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, all of their dreams must seem to be coming true. They have picked a winner, they are going to get to live on easy street, they are going to have no worries or troubles all the rest of their life.

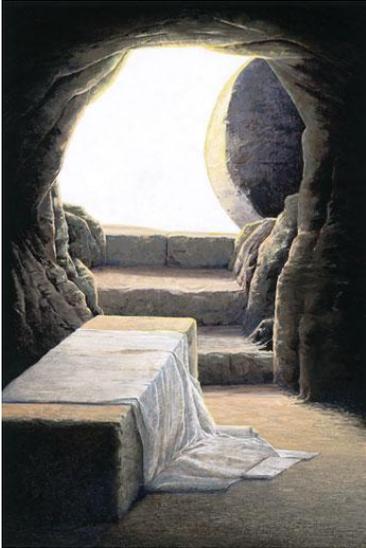
And then everything falls apart. The Romans, chief priests, Pharisees and scribes, the powers of the world are threatened by Jesus, they turn on him and they viciously tear him down, beating, flogging and mocking him before lifting him up high on the cross. For the disciples and other fair weather fans, this is too much, they run and flee. Even his best friend, the one that he calls Rock (Peter), denies knowing

him.

The only people who stay with Christ the whole way, are the women. Often ignored and looked down upon by their time, the women stick with Christ through thick and thin – they are at the crucifixion, they are heading to the tomb to take care of his body. They will not let anything get between them and the one that they know as the Messiah.

They are therefore the ones that see the angels and here the joyful news – “Why are you looking for the living among the dead? He is not here but has risen!” They are the ones who carry that back to the disciples, the news that Jesus has conquered death forever. The disciples, perhaps ashamed of their fear, perhaps unwilling to listen to women do not believe them. Luke tells us that the disciples thought the women's word and idle tale. It was not – Jesus himself would prove that a number of times, instead their word was the sign of the world being fundamentally changed.

Continued on next page



We live in a changed world. Nowadays people don't want to talk about it. They want to talk about movies or politics or sports, not about matters of faith. Increasingly we live in a world that wants faith to be kept in a private quiet place, where it won't disturb anyone or anything. The world increasingly wants faith to be treated like women of the ancient world – pushed to the side, ignored, ridiculed, just as the women were for saying that Jesus had been raised.

But we know that Jesus is raised, that because he lives we shall live too. We know that in him is life and truth and we will continue to proclaim it to the world. Increasingly, the church is being pushed to the borders of society, increasingly we are encouraged to be silent about what we know. The fair weather fans of the world have found other things to invest their hope and time in – the same answers that humans always seek – power, pleasure, mind altering substances, video games, television, the internet, gambling, pornography, instant gratification. None of these answers satisfy – instead we know we must seek after the one who abides with us through all joys and sorrows.

The church though knows the ultimate one who sticks through in thick and thin – Jesus, who endures all for us and promises to be with us to the end – the ultimate determined fan for the world. Because we know him, we have the hope of being like the women, who stood by him and had the joy of seeing him face to face.

Peace in Christ
Pastor Mark



Our Annual Calendar Tea

April 20th, St John Lutheran Church @ 12:00

Calling ladies of all ages!! Please see a deacon to buy your tickets for the Calendar Tea which will be held on Saturday, April 20th at 12:00. Tickets are \$12. There will be entertainment, a basket raffle, great food, some lovely tea and of course wonderful conversation. Bring your friends for an afternoon of fun.

Our Friends in Christ

Meeting at St. John on April 11th

Is a group for folks 55 and older that usually meets on the third Thursday of every month. However we will be meeting on April 11th at St. John 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. This is a group that meets for fellowship and food, if you come please bring a covered dish (a side, a meat, a vegetable, or a soup or salad to share). And the age minimum isn't a hard and fast rule – after all Pastor Mark has been to a number of the events.

Worship Planners April 7th

Worship Planners will be meeting after worship on April 7th after late church. This group of the church is open to all, we gather to study the lessons, pick hymns and discuss worship for coming Sundays. We invite you to join us as we gather around God's word for worship.

Baptism April 14th

Harper Lee Holm will be baptized at St. John on April 14th at late church. As Lutherans we baptize during services because we are baptized into a community. Many promises are made – by parents (in the case of infant baptism), on behalf of their child, by sponsors, by the congregation and most significantly by God. Help us to make promises as we welcome a new sister into our family.

First Communion April 28th

This year we have one student celebrating her first communion, Madison Cardinal. Lutherans believe that communion “is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine, instituted by Christ himself for us Christians to eat and to drink” and that the benefits include “forgiveness of sin, life, and salvation, [which] are given to us in the sacrament....because where there is forgiveness of sin, there is also life and salvation.” (Martin Luther's small catechism). We celebrate the meal of salvation every Sunday and invite you to join us and Madison as she celebrates her first communion.

The First Sunday Breakfast - April 7th 9:00 a.m.

The first Sunday of every month we will be having breakfast at the church, a time of food and fellowship. We invite you to join us, as we gather between the early service and the late service and come together.

Parent's Night Out – Free Babysitting

Don't forget Friday evening, April 12th, is Parent's Night Out – FREE babysitting – from 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm.

This Parent's Night Out babysitting service is available to the community, friends and family of St. John's members as well, so please invite others to take advantage of this opportunity to go out and enjoy themselves and leave the kids with us! There are fun activities, crafts, music (Mr. Olescyski brings his guitar ☺), and the children get a snack too.

It would be helpful, but not required, if you or other parents would please call the church office to register in advance, 724-625-1830. ** Please note that more helpers are always needed so PLEASE contact or see Denise Hager as soon as possible if you could help in any way !!



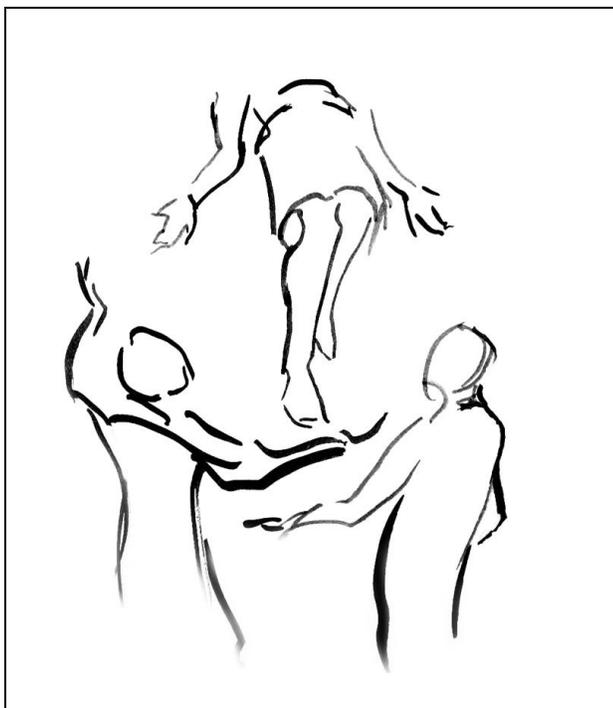


MISSION EMPHASIS

Members of St. John have the opportunity to support several mission opportunities throughout the year. The 3rd Sunday of each month is designated as Mission Sunday. Special offering envelopes are available to use to support a specific mission. Each quarter during 2013 there is a different opportunity to support God’s work in the world. during the second quarter of 2013, the mission emphasis is for [Mars Area Public Library](#)

Old Time Night at the Church May 4th 6 – 9pm

We will be watching old movies, playing some classic games, listening to classic comedies and having an ice cream social. We will be doing this while inviting our friends from area churches to join us for an evening of fun and fellowship. If you can help out with this event please speak with Kim Richards.



Ascension Service May 9th

On May 9th we will celebrate the Ascension of our Lord at English Lutheran Church in Zelienople. Ascension is always celebrated 40 days after Easter and remembers Jesus ascending to heaven and angels promising the disciples that he would return. Please join us for worship as we do the same. English Lutheran is located 200 E Grandview Ave Zelienople, PA 16063

Scrapbooking

Doing a Lion’s Club Fundraiser in April. Poster up in greeting area entry way.

(Davena is not having scrapbooking at SJLC in April...but will be having on Sat., May 18th 10am – 4:00pm)

Thank you to the Passavant Foundation Department..

for the donation of the spray hand sanitizers that are used in the back of the pews.

A Note on the Music Situation...

Last month we suffered a big loss when our organist of three years, Jacob Gordon, finished his time here at St. John. We are working on finding a replacement through the Pittsburgh branch of the American Guild of Organists or perhaps a student at Duquesne's School of Sacred Music. We also greatly appreciate one of our members, Matt Claus, who is helping to bridge some of the gap for us.

We will hope to get a new music director as soon as possible.

Vacation Bible School - July 8th through 12th

This year we will be doing vacation Bible School with Mars United Presbyterian Church again. This is a spirit filled time for kids and for volunteers.

Sunday, July 14th, 2013

Mark your calendars now for Sunday, July 14th for a special outdoor service and a fun picnic at the Adams Township Park. Be watching for more details.



Christian Concert - Sat., April 6th, at 6PM

Location: Mars High School Auditorium

Artists: Chris Bray, Nolan Fox, and others

Tickets: \$5 adults / kids 10 or under FREE

This concert is some big names in Christian music and is sponsored by the ministerium as a great night out with the family. Where else can you take out your family for at most \$15. The Presbyterian Church has been excited about setting this up, we look forward to you being able to join us.

-Thank you to Jim& Denise Hager and Sally Foster for a wonderful breakfast to start the month of March with!! The food was excellent and a great turn out! Thank you, Gretchen Baysek

- Thank you to Reed and Kim Richards for making lunch for the gang going bowling. That was a nice surprise, we thank you for feeding us!! Thank you, all the bowlers.

Pastor Mark Vacation – April 18th – 22nd

Pastor Mark will be backpacking with his father and meeting his newest niece or nephew April 18th through 22nd. Pastor Storm will be leading worship on April 20th. If you have a pastoral emergency, please contact Pastor Dave Saylor who is on call during this time. Pastor Saylor's number is (724) 799 3743.

Looking for Representatives for Synod Assembly June 13th – 15th

We are looking for two people to help represent St. John Lutheran Church at the synod assembly June 13th through 15th in California Pennsylvania. If you are willing to serve as a representative to synod assembly, which meets to pray, worship and be guided by the Holy Spirit how the congregations of Southwest Pennsylvania in the ELCA can serve God together, please speak with Pastor Mark.



Volunteering for Churchwide Assembly

<http://www.micahscall.org/elca2013/>

Once every two years the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America elects voting members from all of our 65 synods to gather for a week, worship and be guided by the Holy Spirit on how we are called to serve the body of Christ together.

This year the theme is "Always Being Made New" in celebration of 25 years together in the ELCA. And for the first time, the Churchwide Assembly is being held in Pittsburgh (in previous years assemblies were held in Orlando, Minneapolis and Chicago). It will be downtown at the convention center as thousands of Lutherans from all over the country.

Worship at these assemblies is an incredible experience and highly recommended, visitors are welcome.

We are also looking for volunteers at the assembly. If you go to the website above you can create an account, note when you can volunteer and then on another page note your skills.

Please figure out a way that you can help.

Friends In Christ Schedule - 11:30am – 1:30pm

April 11 th	St. John Lutheran, Mars
May 9 th :	English Lutheran, Zelenople
June:	no meeting due to ELCA synod assembly
July 25 th	Seaman Mem., Passavant Retirement Center (may change due to construction)
August 15 th	Picnic at Zion Lutheran, Middle Lancaster Twp

Foreign exchange student housing needed –

OPEN YOUR HEART AND HOME
to a German or French Lutheran exchange student
for the coming 2013-2014 school year

Volunteer host families (with or without children) are needed to provide food, a bed and a loving home for the coming school year, one or two semesters, starting in August. We have 17 Lutheran students from Germany and France that would like to come for the 2013-2014 school year and are waiting for their match with a volunteer host family. EMF (Educational Merit Foundation) students have medical insurance, spending money for their personal expenses and expect to share their host family's daily life including household responsibilities. They speak English, are well-screened and eager to experience life in America. Their stay here is sponsored and supervised by EMF, a non-profit, educational exchange program. We are a small non-profit, foreign-exchange student organization looking for caring host families in your community, and we need your help! Sharing the life of an American host family and going to school contributes to a better world understanding and is an unforgettable experience for both the student and the host family. For more information on EMF students, please call Marie-Claude Dijoud now at 1-800-467-8363 or visit our web site at www.emfusa.org

April BIRTHDAYS

4/02 Joseph Meyerl
4/06 Robert Ward
4/07 John Fritz
4/07 Zachary Claus
4/11 David Hrach
4/11 Todd McCormick
4/13 Nicholas Schnelle
4/13 Jonathan Brower
4/16 Ray Hackworth
4/20 Martha Ward
4/22 Ben Knauff
4/24 Susan Bielo
4/26 Karen Kramer

Chili Cook Off at Mars High School *Saturday April 6th 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.*

The Mars Rotary is sponsoring a chili cook off at Mars High School. If you like good chili this is a great event to go to.



SJLC is on the Web!

See us at:

<http://www.stjohnchurchmars.org>

Address service requested

ST JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH
420 BEAVER STREET
P.O. BOX 411
MARS, PA 16046

