

February 2013

St. John Lutheran Church

St. John Lutheran Church
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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.

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My sisters and brothers in Christ,

We are entering into the season of Lent, a time of prayer and reflection. In the ancient church, when the church was illegal and underground throughout the Roman Empire, Christians would gather at all times – but especially during the season of Lent – to worship together as the body of Christ. They came and gathered illicitly in house churches, in maze like catacombs, in caves, to hear the Word of God for them, to worship, to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen. Imagine for a moment the scene, land owners and slaves, singing hymns from the depths of the earth proclaiming God's majesty, surrounded by sputtering torches singing of the Light of the World, stirred by the Spirit despite the threats of the entire Roman government, because they know that the word of God is true, because they affirm the promise that Jesus made to the disciples and crowd:

“The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.” *John 6:63b*
In the ancient church, Lent was in particular a time to focus on baptism. New candidates for baptism would have an intense time of prayer and fasting, culminating in the Easter Vigil (and this was an all night affair) and baptism just before the dawn of Easter morning and resurrection. In the modern church, Lent is a time when we consider our faith and the journey to the cross. Many give up something for Lent as a part of their spiritual journey, such as meat on Fridays (or during the entire season), many others add something such as intentional prayer or Scripture reading, some do both. As we enter into this season of our life together, I encourage you to consider how God is stirring in your life, to consider what you might give up this Lent and what

spiritual practices you might add. It could be prayer, it could be a fast, it could be volunteering at VOICE or another worthy cause or giving to a foodbank, it could be giving up desserts or exercising more or a thousand other things. Whatever we do, let this season be a time for us to consider the promise God made for us in our baptism, that we are his children, let this be a time that we prepare for life together.
**Peace in Christ,
Pastor Mark**



Doughnuts and the Burning of Palms February 12th - 4:00 - 7:00 p.m. @ St. John

In many European cultures, there is a tradition on Mardi Gras (literally fat Tuesday) to use the fat or lard in one's pantry before the fasting of Lent. In the German heritage of Pastor Mark, this meant making Fasnachts (doughnuts). You're invited to join Pastor Mark as he makes doughnuts during this period of time. We will also be burning the palms from Palm Sunday last year to prepare the ashes for Ash Wednesday. Thus this will be an afternoon/evening of doughnuts, fun stories and preparation for our Lenten Journey.



Ash Wednesday services February 13th at 12:00 noon and 7:00 p.m.

Lent begins with a solemn call to fasting and repentance as we begin our journey to the baptismal water of Easter. During Lent the people of God will reflect on the meaning of their baptism into Christ's death and resurrection. The sign of ashes suggests our human mortality and frailty but what seems like an ending is really an invitation to make each day a new beginning, in which we are washed in God's mercy and forgiveness. Our service will have both the imposition of ashes and holy communion.



Lenten Worship Series Tuesdays at noon, Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m.

We will be gathering for worship in Lent, to hear the words of spirit and life for us. Our Lenten worship will be centered around being *Beneath the Cross of Jesus*, these worship services will help remind us of the power of the cross. They will be a brief liturgy that also includes communion, so we can gather around the table for the meal of salvation.

Parent's Night Out – Free Babysitting

**Don't forget Friday evening, Feb. 8th
6:00 pm to 8:30 pm.**

This Parent's Night Out babysitting service is available the second Friday of each month to the community, and St. John's members, friends and family... 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 !!



Spaghetti Dinner

It's that time of year! That time of the year when you step in the back door of the church and the wonderful aroma of **spaghetti sauce** wafts up from the basement! Yes, it's the **Spaghetti Dinner** and we need to start planning.

Spaghetti Dinner

March 9th

4:00-7:00

\$8/ adults, \$5/ children, 2 and under free



It takes many hands to make the spaghetti dinner a success. Some of the needs are: people to help set up the tables, make the sauce, serve, bus tables, and clean-up after. Those things are obvious. But there are many ways that you can be involved if you are physically unable to help in those ways. You can:

- organize a bunch of friends or family to come and eat that night
- make a monetary donation to purchase food ahead of the event
- put up signs
- sell tickets before the dinner
- make centerpieces for the dinner
- order take-out the day of the dinner
- make a dessert to share at the dinner

Please prayerfully consider how you can be involved in this project.

While the Deacons are happy to get things organized, the success of the dinner *depends on the participation of all church members.*

The following is a list of food stuffs that are needed. If you are donating please have all items (except for the desserts) at the church by Wednesday, March 6th.

There are sign-up charts in the greeting area.

- 25-30 regular sized jars spaghetti
- 5 lb butter
- 14 heads lettuce
- cherry or grape tomatoes
- 8 cucumbers
- 4 lb grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 gal. French dressing
- 2 pts Thousand Island dressing
- 1 gal. Ranch dressing
- 1 gal. Italian dressing
- Bring your dessert specialty

****Please prayerfully consider how you can be involved in this project.***

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:

ELCA Disaster Response – The ELCA responds to disasters in the world by providing a wide variety of resources. Last October, millions of people from the Caribbean to the North Atlantic Coast were impacted by Hurricane Sandy. The storm left dozens dead, thousands homeless and millions without power. Even now, a few months later, there are still people whose lives remain disrupted due to this tragedy, and response efforts will continue for some time. During the first quarter of the year, your offerings designated for mission emphasis will be used entirely (100 percent) to help families whose lives and livelihoods have been impacted by this disaster.

Mars Area Public Library – Located in downtown Mars, the library serves our local community by providing a variety of programs and resources for all ages. Electronic resources have been added recently, including music and eBook downloads. Other activities include book groups, reading programs, wellness programs, live video conferencing and even a crochet group. During the second quarter of the year, your offerings designated for mission efforts will be sent to this local community organization.

Lutherlyn – A year-round Christian camp and a ministry of the ELCA, Lutherlyn offers opportunities for God's people of all ages and groups. Lutherlyn serves over 15,000 people each year through a variety of programs and activities, including summer camp, retreats and rentals, adventure programs and environmental education. During the third quarter of the year, your offerings designated for mission emphasis will be sent to this ELCA sponsored organization.

The Lighthouse Foundation – Founded in 1985 and supports our local families and communities facing employment and emergency needs. This organization provides transitional housing and emergency shelter, operates a food bank and provides community meals to more than 6,000 clients annually. The end of the year, and especially the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays, can be especially challenging times. During the fourth quarter of the year, your offerings designated for mission emphasis will be sent to this organization which serves people in Butler and Allegheny counties.

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

Feb. 21st – Hope Lutheran, Cranberry Twp.

March 21st – English Lutheran, Zelienople

April 18th – St. John Lutheran, Mars

May 9th – English Lutheran, Zelienople

June – no mtg. due to ELCA synod assembly

July 25th – Seaman Mem., Passavant Retirement Center (may change due to construction)

August 15th – Picnic at Zion Lutheran, Middle Lancaster Twp,

First Breakfast

The First Sunday of Every Month at 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.

Mars Ministerium Marriage seminar - Fri. & Sat., February 8-9, 2013

Lifelong Love Affair, a live simulcast led by Jimmy & Karen Evans of the Dallas-based ministry Marriage Today will be held at Dutilh Church- Cranberry Campus at 1270 Dutilh Road on Friday, February 8 from 8 p.m.-10:30 p.m. and Saturday, February 9 from 10 a.m. -1:30 p.m. Cost is \$20.

Visit www.dutilhumc.org by February 4 to register. Cost for the seminar includes all seminar materials, snacks on Friday evening, breakfast snacks and buffet lunch on Saturday, and child care for toddler through grade 6 if needed. Doors open 30 minutes prior to event each day.

Couples will discover the keys to restore a broken marriage and make a good marriage even better. Dutilh Church, Little Hill & Blackburn United Methodist Churches, and the churches of the Mars Ministerium are sponsoring the event. Additional questions can be answered by contacting Pastor Jim at jgascoine@dutilhumc.org or [724.776.1094](tel:724.776.1094).

Book Review - Black History Month

Taylor Branch, over the course of 24 years, wrote a trilogy totaling more than 3000 pages titled Parting the Waters, Pillar of Fire, and At Canaan's Edge, titles from the book of Exodus. I have not read the last 2 books but fortunately he had the wisdom to pen a compact volume presenting what he calls the 18 pivotal turning points of the movement. Much easier to read, *The King Years* was just published this January.

Chief Justice Earl Warren struck down segregation in schools, 14 year old Emmet Till was killed and then Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a bus sparking a protest at which Dr. King, a newcomer, gave his first speech in Montgomery in 1955. Some of the pivotal events are Freedom Rides, SNCC, the 1963 March on Washington and Birmingham Church Bombing, Selma, Viet Nam to his final speech in Memphis which was likened to Moses who was permitted to see Canaan across the Jordan River. The hymn he requested for the evening, which he never heard, was "precious Lord, take my hand" It is an easy to read book which to some is history and some of us lived through it. The Declaration of Independence calls 'all men are created equal' a self evident truth but it has been a controversial political struggle of slavery and segregation. Dr. King, to the end, resisted violence and cynicism and was nearly alone among his colleagues. They had grown weary of the sacrifice.

Mission Quilts

From families in Haiti to hospitals in Palestine and Sierra Leone to the quilting room of Lutheran churches across the U.S., LWR Mission Quilts connect people to God's call to love and care for one another. To a person receiving a quilt, the message is clear—you are not alone, you are not forgotten, someone cares for you.

For those who make quilts, they represent community and sharing and love. Lutheran World Relief has set a challenge of 500,000 quilts for the year 2013. **Will you help??** *If you have never quilted before it is not a problem.* We'll teach you. Our quilting group meets on the **second Monday of each month from 6:30 until 8:30.**

Other ways to help would be to donate fabric (maybe you used to sew and have some in a box somewhere), or old blankets (we can use those for batting between layers), sheets (for the backs of the quilts), and embroidery floss (to tie layers of the quilts together).

Please consider joining us in this effort. For questions and more information, please contact Cindy Knauff at 724-473-1198 or email her at valenciaknauff@yahoo.com

**PURPLE PANCAKE
BREAKFAST
Sunday, Feb. 10th**

**Please see details in
enclosed Sunday
School newsletter.**

*I want to thank you all
so kindly for the
monetary gift.
Please know how much
I appreciate your
generosity, kindness
and support.*

*God bless,
Barb*

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS



2/01 Helen Dewald
2/01 Kathryn Davidson
2/01 John Kramer
2/02 Joseph Meyerl
2/05 Herman Boehmig
2/05 Emily Greb
2/05 Lindsay Greb
2/10 Bob Davidson
2/11 Geneva Hackworth
2/19 Kelsey McDonough
2/20 Harry Cole
2/21 Laurie Passione
2/21 Keith Cardinal
2/23 Frieda Carbo
2/25 Suzanne Berol
2/28 Jim Marshall

**FEBRUARY
WORSHIP HELPERS**

Assisting Ministers

8:00 am - Matt Claus
10:30 am – Missy Kramer

Ushers

8:00 am:
Clarence & Marlene Strabel
10:30 am:
Keith & Valerie Cardinal

Counters:

Feb. 3, 17, 24th –
Jamie Weaver & Jim Ward
Feb. 10th –
Jamie Weaver & Sally Foster

SJLC is on the Web!

See us at:

<http://www.stjohnchurchmars.org>

Address service requested

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