

January/Feb.  
2014

# St. John Lutheran Church

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](mailto:office@stjohnchurchmars.org)  
Pastor Mark's email: [pastor@stjohnchurchmars.org](mailto:pastor@stjohnchurchmars.org)

## 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.*

## Sisters and brothers in Christ,

Epiphany is when the church remembers the coming of the magi to Bethlehem. The magi came bearing three gifts: gold, frankincense and myrrh, came from a far land to worship the king of kings. A few notes:

- 1) Magi were governors and advisors in the area of Persia (modern day Iran). There were also associations with illusion or fortune telling. This is where the word for magic comes from. We have emphasized that these men were able to look to the stars to see signs of the birth of the Messiah.
- 2) There is very little that we know about the magi however. The Bible doesn't say who they are, where they came from or even how many there were. Tradition passed through the centuries has given them these, but they do not show up in the Bible itself.
- 3) What do the magi represent? First off, even though Matthew's gospel (the only place the magi show up) focuses on the Jews, the magi are a reminder that Jesus came first to the Jews – but for the benefit of the entire world. In doing so he was fulfilling the promise God gave to Abraham “all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.”
- 4) Giving gifts or homage was a typical response to a king. The magi coming from such a great distance – at a time when travel was perilous – show that this is the king of kings and greater than any earthly monarch. It also is a reminder that we should give the Messiah the best that we have – which may not be gold or myrrh but instead means that we should offer our fealty and devotion to this king of kings.

Epiphany is the season of light, when magi following a star saw the promised future for all of us. I hope that you in this season are enlightened by the true light, the light that is the life of all peoples and that you are warmed by Jesus the Christ.

Peace in Christ,  
Pastor Mark

**The Church Office will be closed on Monday, January 20<sup>th</sup> for Martin Luther King Day.**

### Individual Highlights:

Sisters & Brothers in Christ	1
Cong. Meeting	2
Upcoming Events	2-3
Other News	4
Birthdays	5

## CONGREGATIONAL MEETING January 26 – One service at 10:00 am

Our 2014 Congregational Meeting will be on January 26. We will ask the Holy Spirit to guide us as we pray and envision together for the coming year at St. John Lutheran Church. 2013 was a wonderful and Spirit blessed year as we grew as a community and accomplished some great projects. We ask that you join us for our meeting as we plan for our next year together.



January 25<sup>th</sup> is Movie Night from 4-7:00 pm! Join us to watch the movie, **Rise of the Guardians**. We will be ordering pizza and having a great time. We hope you will join us for this fun and family-friendly movie!

## MEETING DATES CHANGED

Due to extremely cold temperatures, all of the meetings have been postponed for a week. The Board of Elders will meet on January 13. The Trustees and Deacons will meet on January 14, and Church Council will be on January 22. Please note these changes on your calendar.

## Worship Helpers

There is a sign-up sheet in the greeting area for all who may be interested in being a lector (the person who reads the lessons on Sunday morning, a communion assistant (someone who shares the presence of Christ on Sunday morning), or an acolyte (the candle lighter who also assists with communion). Your help is requested. Please consider signing up for services.

## Theology on Tap

**Third Wednesday of the Month  
8:00 pm – January 15<sup>th</sup> & February 19<sup>th</sup>**

Men from Lutheran churches in our area will be gathering for fellowship and to speak on matters of faith and life. We will meet at Domenico's Restaurant in Cranberry which is located at Piazza Plaza 20550 Rt. 19 N, Cranberry Twp., PA 16066. (724) 776-6455. Invite a friend for theology and a great gathering.

## **Men's Night Out – February 4 Beacon Hotel - 6:00 to 8:00 pm**

We are headed to the Beacon for a shrimp and crawdad boil – which they have the first Tuesday of every month. If you can join us, this event is for all the gentleman of the congregation and we always have a good time.

**The Beacon Hotel** is located at:  
231 Beacon Rd, Renfrew, PA

**The Bible Miniseries – Learn the Basics of the Bible – For Beginners and Experts Alike**

Sundays at 9:15 a.m. in Pastor Mark’s Office

One of the resolutions in the recent church-wide assembly was to continue connecting with the book of our faith, the Bible. We will be watching “The Bible” miniseries to start. As a part of that, our Adult Discussion Group will be meeting in Pastor Mark’s office on Sundays at 9:15 a.m. We invite you to join us!



**Ladies Book Study**

*In January and February we will meet on the third Monday of the month at 7 pm (January 20 and February 17) to review and discuss a chapter. Currently, we are reading “Bad Girls of the Bible” by Liz Curtis Higgs. Please read the assigned chapter prior to the meeting.*

**Exercise Program**



**Beginning January 21 – 6:30-7:30 pm**

St. John’s will be having classes to benefit all ages and physical limitations. The program is designed to improve strength, flexibility, balance and overall health. We will meet on each Tuesday and Thursday evening. Join us!



**Quilting Group**

The Quilting Group at St. John’s meets on the second Monday of each month from 6-8:30 pm. If you would like to join, please stop by the next meeting!

**Brown Bag Bible Study - Every Monday - Lunch at 12:00 p.m., Bible Study at 12:30**

**Babette’s Feast**

Our Monday Brown Bag Bible Study group will be watching Babette’s Feast throughout the month of January. This film is set in Denmark and touches on piety and good food.

We will conclude watching this film on February 3<sup>rd</sup> with a rich feast, the details of which are still to be decided. Please feel free to join us even if you have not participated previously. This can be a good way to meet some new people.



## Thank You

Thank you for the generous Christmas gift. Vanessa and I are saving money for our wedding – so it will be helping to defray wedding costs. Thank you for your generosity!

Pastor Mark

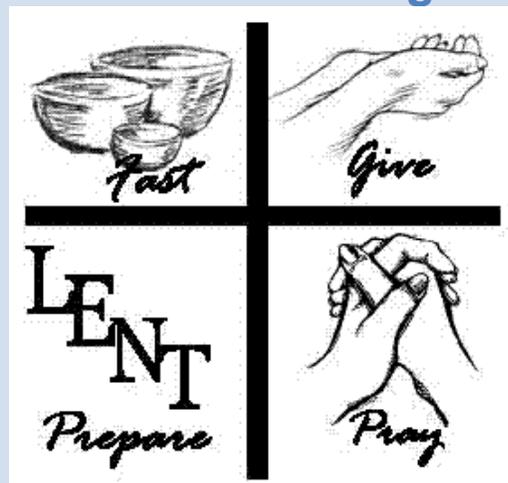
P.S. Vanessa and I got engaged in December, thank you for the support and congratulations.

Upcoming events this year include (many TBD):

- The Spaghetti Dinner
- Ash Wednesday Worship at 12:00 and 7:00 on March 5<sup>th</sup>
- An Elders event in February
- Exercise Class

If you are interested in helping Pastor Mark out at the Soup Kitchen in Beaver Falls on Monday afternoons from 2:30 – 6:30, that would be great. Pastor Mark would like to go to the soup kitchen – if there are other helpers on February 10<sup>th</sup>.

## Lent is Coming



Lent starts quite late this year – March 5<sup>th</sup>, however this season of reflection, fasting and preparation is a central one of the Christian year and it's good to prepare for this time of fasting, giving of our selves, preparation for the cross and prayer.

This year we will have services on Tuesdays and on Wednesdays. We will also be giving out a devotional book and encouraging members to respond on our facebook page to items there.

I encourage you this Lent to prayerfully consider what you could give up and/or what you could add? This can be as simple as committing to saying the Lord's prayer in the morning to as complicated as working through the service of the hours, living out a budget, etc. It could be working at VOICE or the Lighthouse or another agency. It could be giving more to LDR (Lutheran Disaster Response) or LWR (Lutheran World Relief).

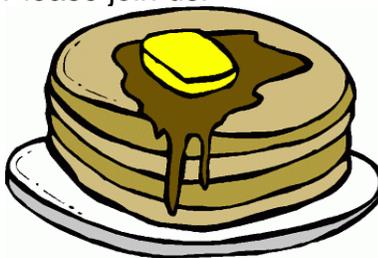
## January Birthdays

1/2 Mary Ella McCarthy  
 1/7 Justin Waibel  
 1/8 Francis Kratz  
 1/8 Thelma Smith  
 1/8 Stephanie Ceraso  
 1/11 Frederick Ludolff Jr.  
 1/16 Charles Olescyski  
 1/19 James Hopson  
 1/21 Kathleen Marshall  
 1/24 Madison Cardinal  
 1/27 Gianna Julio



## First Breakfast – February 2<sup>nd</sup> @ 9:15 a.m.

The first Sunday of each month we gather together for first breakfast. We take this time for fellowship and to enjoy a meal together. Please join us!



## February Birthdays

2/1 Kathryn Davidson  
 2/1 Helen Dewald  
 2/2 Joseph Meyerl  
 2/5 Herman Boehmig, Jr.  
 2/5 Lindsey Greb  
 2/5 Emily Greb  
 2/10 Robert Davidson  
 2/11 Geneva Hackworth  
 2/15 Susan McElheny  
 2/16 Roberta Mettus  
 2/19 Kelsey McDonough  
 2/20 Harry Cole  
 2/21 Laurie Passione  
 2/21 Keith Cardinal  
 2/23 Frieda Carbo  
 2/23 Kevin Connors  
 2/25 Elaine McConnell  
 2/25 Suzanne Berol  
 2/28 James Marshall

## Save the Date

January 25 – Movie Night

January 26 – Congregational Meeting

February 2 – First Breakfast

## **Pew Pads**

In an effort to get more visitors to use pew pads, to be more welcoming and to focus evangelism, as well as to make use of them for our annual reports, etc. Please sign the pads and pass them to your neighbors.

---

### **We're on the Web!**

*See us at:*

<http://www.stjohnchurchmars.org>

### **Worship Helpers for January**

Please look in the Greeting area for worship helper sign-up sheets for acolyte, usher or acolyte for any Sunday in December or January.

#### **Ushers**

8:00 am  
10:30 am

#### **Assisting Minister**

Dave Knauff  
Sally Foster

### **Worship Helpers for February**

#### **Ushers**

8:00 am  
10:30 am      Cardinal

#### **Assisting Minister**

Matt Claus  
Missy Kramer

Address service requested

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