

October
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.

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St. John Lutheran Church
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Mars PA 16046

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Pastor Mark's email: pastor@stjohnchurchmars.org

Sisters and brothers in Christ,

As the leaves change colors and the crisp, cool winds of autumn arrive, we are reminded of the change of seasons. Perhaps more dramatically than any of the other seasons, the bright, fleeting colors of fall remind us that change is constant-and remind us of the coming winter. We must prepare-by raking and cleaning yards, by making sure that our furnace is working well, by getting sweaters and warm clothes out. We get ready for the long cold of winter.

After Adam and Eve, after eating the fruit of knowledge of good and evil, humans entered the winter of sin. We rebelled against God's desire and received the wages of sin, which Romans 6:23 tells us is death. It was a winter that humans could never adequately prepare for.

God saw us in our winter, in our bitterness, in the sorrow of our own making and decided that we needed help. The winter of sin was not a winter, but an endless ice age, a separation in darkness far from the light and love of God. It was not a season, but an eternity, where the rebellion and nature of humanity meant that we never knew God's love again.

So, God sent his son into the world to be born among us, live with us, laugh, cry, eat and die among us. He sent his son to us because we could not come to him. This fall, we hear the story of God's son, Jesus of Nazareth, going to Jerusalem and taking on the weight of sin's winter, so that we might know the warmth of God's eternal spring, so that we might taste the resurrection.

This fall, as you prepare for winter, as you rake leaves and bake pies, as you prepare for the coming of this winter, know that God rescued us from the cold embrace of sin to bring us his love. Hear the story of God's love, poured forth for us in worship and at bible studies.

Peace in Christ,
Pastor Mark

Pastor Mark will be away at Bishop's Theological Convocation October 14th – 16th, the topic this year will be on the emergent church (and generation y). Please pray for the Holy Spirit to be with the rostered leaders at this event.



FALL HAYRIDE – October 6th

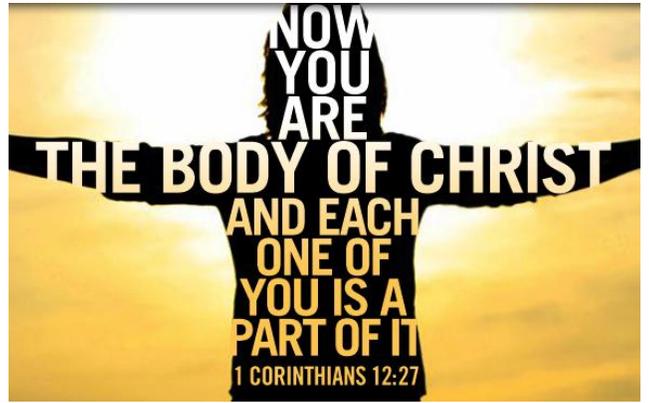
\$7 per person

Beacon Hotel, Renfrew, PA

Join us for St. John’s Fall Hayride!

A pizza lunch and drinks will be provided after late service and a small bus will be available for those who do not want to drive. Plan to leave from church around 12:30 pm. Please use the sign-up sheet in greeting area or let Pastor Mark know if you will attend.

HOPE YOU CAN JOIN US!



There are new families who are joining our congregation!

If you know of anyone looking for a church home, invite them to St. John!



Applefest Cookie Request..

Not to be greedy or taxing of your time, but can I ask for help again? As a way to reach out to the community, we will be having a bake sale table at Applefest on Saturday, October 5th. Each of us has a favorite dessert that we make are excellent at preparing. Can I exploit your talents and ask that if you are excellent at making Cinnamon Rolls, Apple Pie, Pumpkin Rolls, Cookies, Brownies or whatever your specialty is --- to please find it in your heart to use the sign-up sheet and donate either a dessert or your time helping to man the table. We will have a Cookie baking day on September 29th in the afternoon to prepare for Applefest.

**Hosanna Industries Work Day
November 9th**

Hosanna Industries is located in Rochester and helps provide homes for needy families in the area. Lutheran churches in our cluster are having a work day on November 9th and we invite you to participate at the Hosanna location in Rochester. Please contact Pastor Mark by Tuesday October 8th if you would like more information!

Theology on Tap

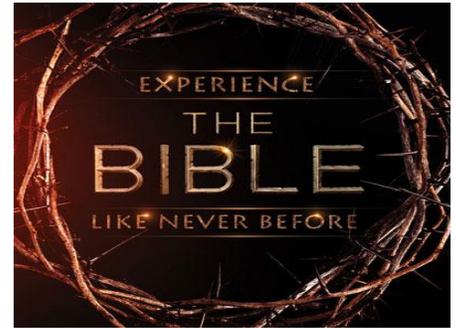
**Third Wednesday of the Month at 8:00
– October 16th**

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. Located at Piazza Plaza 20550 Rt. 19 N, Cranberry Twp., PA 16066. (724) 776-6455. Invite a friend for theology and a great gathering.

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 will have donuts, coffee and we invite you to join us!



Ladies Book Study

Beginning in October we plan to meet every other week to review and discuss a chapter. We will begin with “Bad Girls of the Bible” by Liz Curtis Higgs. Ten of the Bible’s best-known femme fatales parade across the pages with situations that are familiar and relevant even today. The stories are retold with humor and deep insight as we learn more about the nature of sin and goodness.

SKATING PARTY
November 3 – 12:30-2:00 PM
Skate Castle, Butler, PA

\$4.50 per person
\$1.25 Skate Rental
\$2.50 Blade Rental

Lunch provided after late service. Directions upon request. Please use the sign-up sheet or let Pastor Mark know you will attend.

All-Day Scrapbooking
To Benefit The Lions Club Charity Fund
October 19, 2013
9:00am to 8:00pm - \$25 includes lunch, dinner and workspace. School-age - \$10
Penn Glade Lions Club
150 Church Road
Butler, PA

Reservations due by October 12th. Make checks out to Penn-Glade Lions Club and mail to: Davena Hopson, 450 Airport Road, Butler, PA 16002 Ph: 724.586.7660

Brown Bag Bible Study - Tuesdays – eat at 12:00 p.m., Bible Study at 12:30

Our brown bag bible study group is (like the Adult Discussion group above), a no experience needed bible study. We gather on Tuesdays at noon bringing out lunch – that’s where the brown bag part comes in.

After eating and fellowshiping together for a while, we open up the Bible. In past year’s we’ve covered Christmas, the gospel of Luke and Isaiah.

This year our group is going to begin by looking at the book of Galatians, one of the

shorter letters of Paul, after that we will continue as folks in the group desire.

We’re a friendly group of folks and we want you to be a part!



Lutheran basics – the Solae – Solae Fidelis (Faith Alone)

In the Reformation (which we will say began on October 31st 1517 with the 95 theses)

Martin Luther and the other reformers spoke of *solae* (a Latin word meaning sole). These are ideas which they say are foundational to be Christian (certainly they are foundation for our faith). The *solae* that the Reformers spoke of principally were: grace alone, faith alone, scripture alone.

Key Bible Verses

Galatians 2:16 “We know that a person is justified not by the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ. And we have come to believe in Christ Jesus, so that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by doing the works of the law, because no one will be justified by the works of the law.”

The first and primary thing about what it means to be a Lutheran is that we are saved by grace through faith. Some Christians claim that we need to do good to get to heaven – that our works help show and prove our faith. They look to the book of James (which Luther called an epistle of straw – in other words it was worth animal feed) for the basis of this idea.

Plus, when you get down to it, there is something in human nature about wanting to earn what we receive. We like to think that we get what we deserve – and our impulse is to think that because we are hard-working, because we do that which God asks, that God will give us a place in heaven.

You can believe that – but not if you are Lutheran.

Luther said this in his commentary on Galatians (actually he wrote two 400+ page commentaries on a short book of the Bible). “This is the true meaning of Christianity, that we are justified by faith in Christ, not by the works of the Law. Do not let yourself be swayed here by the wicked gloss of [others], who say that faith justifies only when love and good works are added to it...we must conclude with Paul: By faith alone, not by faith formed by love, are we justified. We must not attribute the power of justifying to a “form” that makes a man pleasing to God; we must attribute it to faith, which takes hold of Christ the Savior Himself and possesses Him in the heart. This faith justifies without love and before love.” (Luther’s commentary on Galatians 1535)

It is our faith alone that saves us. God does not welcome us to heaven because we are good parents, or because we are loving to our neighbors or because we pray for our enemies or any other reason. We are saved because of our faith in Jesus Christ our Lord.*

The idea that drove the Reformation was that there was nothing outside of faith that could win our salvation. Not indulgences**, not good works, not giving our money to charity, not being a servant of others, not working hard. It does not come from following all the laws that God gives (that would be impossible). It comes through faith – which is itself a gift of God.

* Interestingly, while faith in Christ occurs frequently in our English translations, this may not be the best use of the Greek. The phrase: *pistis Christou* can be translated either “Faith in Christ” or “Faithfulness of Christ”. Considering Galatians 2:16 above: while we often want to emphasize our action, our faith, if we translated that phrase in the latter way, it would say that we are justified because of the faithfulness of Christ – because Christ is holy and pure we are made holy and pure.

** Writs that could be purchased to buy one’s way from purgatory. Purgatory is also not a part of the Bible...but is a part of what the Roman Catholic church professes.



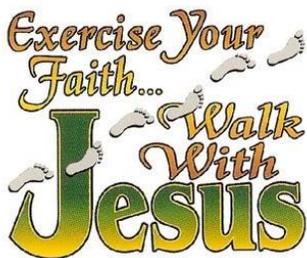
Our Annual Harvest Dinner – October 12th 4:00 – 7:00 pm
Adults - \$10 Children (Age 3-10) - \$5 – Under Age 2 – FREE

Mark your calendars for the 4th annual Harvest Dinner at St. John and it is going to be delicious! Invite family, friends and neighbors for a fantastic spread: a whole pig, coleslaw, desserts, halushki, sauerkraut and hot dogs (for the kids who come). ***Monetary donations for paper products and all desserts are welcome!***

Food Donations are requested...

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 3 3lb. packages of kielbasa | 2 Jars of applesauce |
| 4 Quarts of Half n Half | 2 Gallons of Milk |
| 8 Bags of sauerkraut | 1 Can of Lemonade Mix |

Thanks to all who have already pledged to donate needed items or bake desserts!



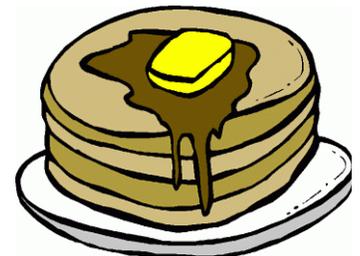
IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO EXERCISE – ST. JOHN'S IS CONSIDERING AN EXERCISE PROGRAM TO BENEFIT PEOPLE OF ALL AGES OR PHYSICAL LIMITATIONS. THE PROGRAM IS DESIGNED TO HELP IMPROVE OUR STRENGTH, FLEXIBILITY, BALANCE AND OVERALL HEALTH. PLEASE CONSIDER JOINING US FOR AN EVENING OF FUN & FELLOWSHIP. THERE WILL BE A SIGN-UP SHEET AVAILABLE OR YOU MAY CONTACT PASTOR MARK, KIM RICHARDS OR SHERRY

Save the Date

- November 3rd – Skating Party
- November 9th – Hosanna Industries Work Day
- November 27th – Thanksgiving Eve worship in Valencia

First Breakfast – The First Sunday of Every Month This Month October 6th @ 9:15 a.m.

The first Sunday of every month we have a first breakfast – a time for fellowship and eating together. These meals are a great time together and we invite you to join us for them



Parents of Young Children

We are so glad that you are here, and that you brought your children with you! Thank you! A few suggestions for your worship experience:

- Relax! God put the wiggle in children; don't feel you have to suppress it in God's house.
- It can be helpful to sit toward the front where it is easier for children to see and hear.
- Sing hymns loudly, pray, and voice the responses with enthusiasm. Children learn behavior by copying you. If you are excited about God, they will be too!
- There are Story Bibles in the pew—your child is welcome to read, look at, and use this Bible! (If you would like to take one home, talk to Pastor David).
- Teach children some of the basic prayers; being able to join in with the prayers helps them feel they are contributing too. Also, it can be helpful to explain to your child what is happening during the service.
- Attend worship often, children like and need routines where they can participate.

To those who are sitting near worshipping parents and children:

A smile of encouragement is always welcome to parents with small, active children!

Jesus welcomed the little children, and so do we. Whether talking, crying, laughing, or singing, the sounds of children in worship are joyful songs of praise.

Jobs for Life

Jobs for Life offers a unique solution to poverty and joblessness in communities and for individuals across the country.

**Tuesdays and Thursdays
October 8 – December 5th
7:00 – 8:30**

Attention Singers!

We have a choir that will be singing for church festivals (Reformation, Christmas, possibly Christ the King, etc.)

We hope that you can join us for this. If you are interested please speak to John Thickey about it. Most likely this choir/ensemble will be meeting between services to practice and help raise a joyful noise.

5k Run/Walk @ Brush Creek Park October 19th, 9:00 a.m.

Route 588 North Sewickley Township,
Beaver Falls PA 15010

Event Time: 5k Run/Walk begins at 9:00

Registration: at the gate 7:30 – 8:30

Preregister via the mail: by mailing a form
(on bulletin board)

Get registration via email at :
nchristman002Luthersem.edu

Registration Fee: \$15 by October 4th, \$20
after that

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. the ushers will be distributing pew pads today and in the coming weeks, during the announcements. Please sign the pads and pass them to your neighbors.

We're on the Web!

See us at:

<http://www.stjohnchurchmars.org>

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

- 10/3 Joshua Black
- 10/6 Rozlyn Ludloff
- 10/8 Lauren Schuster
- 10/9 Edward Bielo
- 10/11 Marlene Strabel
- 10/17 Ruth Bielo
- 10/20 Melissa Kramer
- 10/22 Charles Davidson Jr.
- 10/22 Amy Adams
- 10/24 Fred Smith
- 10/24 Kimberly Richards
- 10/24 Giovanni Sunseri
- 10/25 Andrew Knauff
- 10/27 Denise Julio
- 10/28 Michelle Litterio
- 10/28 Grant Werner
- 10/30 Karen Schultz

Worship Helpers for October

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

Here are the folks signed up so far...

Ushers

- 8:00 am Todd Niklewicz
- 10:30 am Matthew Claus

Assisting Minister

- 8:00 am David Knauff
- 10:30 am Sally Foster

Address service requested

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