

July/August  
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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### On-line Giving Website

[www.thrivent.com](http://www.thrivent.com)

**St. John Lutheran Church**  
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<http://www.stjohnchurchmars.org>  
(724) 625 - 1830

**Office email:** [office@stjohnchurchmars.org](mailto:office@stjohnchurchmars.org)

**Pastor Mark's email:** [pastormarkbringman@gmail.com](mailto:pastormarkbringman@gmail.com)

## My sisters and brothers in Christ,

May you be blessed this Pentecost season with the blessings of Jesus Christ our Lord.

In our Sunday morning worship this year, our gospel is coming to us from the words of the evangelist Luke. As we continue through Luke's gospel, we hear the story about how God continually reaches out to the lost, the least, the lonely. Already Jesus has healed the slave of a Roman centurion, restored a widow's son to life, has welcomed a prominent sinner and has taught those that no one else cares about.

As we continue through Luke, we too are challenged and welcomed. We are challenged because Jesus in Luke challenges the standard ways of thinking, the prevalent thoughts of his day. He doesn't want people to rest in comfortable conclusions – he challenges who the Messiah would come for, what it means to work on the Sabbath, how people should care for their neighbors, what responsibilities come with wealth and more.

Jesus, in Luke's gospel especially, challenges our comfortable conclusions. He also, more than anywhere else reaches out to those that one else cares about. Jesus shows again and again, that no one is beyond the reach of God's love.

There might be a time that you feel lost, least or lonely, when the love of God is not felt as strongly and warmly around you. Perhaps difficulties at work, or disagreements with people you care about, struggles with finances, concerns for the future or health are weighing on your.

The kingdom of God is open for all, is open for you. This day and all days may you feel comforted by Jesus' love. You are a beloved child of God.

Peace in Christ,

Pastor Mark

### Pastor Mark Away

#### Pastor Mark will be away the following dates:

July 29<sup>th</sup> – August 3<sup>rd</sup> – reachable via cell phone, in Deep Creek for a family reunion – will not have email.

August 28<sup>th</sup> – September 6<sup>th</sup> – backpacking in King's Canyon National Park; will not have cell phone or email.

During both times, Pastor Dave Saylor will be covering for pastoral care emergencies. Pastor Dave's cell phone is (724) 799 3743

## New Organist – John Thickey

After meeting with a number of qualified candidates, the organist search committee is pleased to announce that John Thickey has accepted the position of music director for St. John Lutheran Church. John played for us for the birthday of the church, Pentecost, and did a wonderful job celebrating the gift of the Holy Spirit for the church.

John brings with him almost 40 years as a director of music and a great familiarity with the Lutheran liturgy, which will be tremendous gifts to our ministry at St. John! His first Sunday is June 30<sup>th</sup>. On July 7<sup>th</sup> he already had a church commitment, but John will be joining us for our outdoor service on July 14<sup>th</sup>. I hope that you will help John Thickey and his wife Yvonne feel welcome here at St. John.

## Outdoor service Picnic reservations due by July 7th

Please see the yellow insert

We will be having an outdoor service on **Sunday, July 14, 2013 at 9:00 AM** at Adams Park. Church service will be followed by a picnic. There will be games for people of all ages. *We will be providing all food and drinks for the picnic.* We are charging **\$5.00 per adult** to help defray the cost. Please fill out the bottom portion of the **yellow registration form** and place it along with payment in Denise Hager's mailbox located outside of the office **by Sunday, July 7<sup>th</sup>**. Any questions, please call Denise @ 724-333-0274.

## Walk to Jerusalem!

We have 21 participants taking the step towards, physical, emotional and spiritual well being. After week 2, we have accumulated enough miles to walk from Mars, Pennsylvania to Atlantic City, New Jersey. Who would have thought we would be this far along? We are at mile marker 472. Great Job Walkers – keep those shoes laced up and keep on putting one foot in front of the other and we are step by step bringing our goal closer to reality.

**Walking times will be:  
Sunday, Tuesday & Thursday  
at 6:00 pm**

**We will walk the High School Track Field  
(If there is an event happening, we will walk the parking lot perimeter)  
Sunny weather only!**

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## Walk To Jerusalem Closing – Sunday, August 25<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m.

On Sunday, August 25<sup>th</sup> we will close the walk to Jerusalem with an outdoor service at St. John Lutheran Church. We will be worshipping out on the lawn (and seeking to avoid the acorns which made last year's lawn service so memorable). We will also be wrapping up with a closing for our Walk to Jerusalem following the service. We hope that you can join us. Roni Salsa, who grew up in the Holy Land, will be joining us to talk about what it means to be a Christian in the Holy Land. He will also be bringing carved olive wood from Holy Land Olive Wood for interested people to purchase.



### **Men's nights out**

**Tuesday, July 2<sup>nd</sup> @ the Beacon Hotel @ 6:30 p.m.**

The men of the church are going to hang out, eat some food, share in good conversation, perhaps drink a beer or two and gather for prayer at the end on **Tuesday, July 2<sup>nd</sup>**. We are going to the **Beacon Hotel** located at 231 Beacon Road, Renfrew PA 16053.

### **Ladies Night Out**

**Friday, July 19<sup>th</sup> @ Cindy Knauff's @ 6:30 p.m.**

**Ladies Night Out – July 19<sup>th</sup>**

It's been a while since the women of St. John have gotten together for a Ladies Night Out. Please mark your calendars for July 19<sup>th</sup> for an evening at the Knauff's house (469 Brown's Hill Rd., Valencia) from 6:30pm - ?? Plan to bring a side dish or a dessert to share. Check with Cindy by Monday, July 15th at [ValenciaKnauff@yahoo.com](mailto:ValenciaKnauff@yahoo.com) or 724-504-7871 to confirm your attendance and to check on what others are bringing.



### **July 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> in Mars**

**July 3<sup>rd</sup> at 7:00 p.m. & July 4<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m.**

On July 3<sup>rd</sup> we will be decorating a float for Vacation Bible School. On July 4<sup>th</sup> we will gather for the parade through the streets of Mars.

### **Movies after Church – July 7<sup>th</sup> and August 11<sup>th</sup>**

We will be watching "To Kill a Mockingbird" on July 7<sup>th</sup> and talking about inclusiveness in the bible. On August 11<sup>th</sup> we will be watching either "The Mill and the Cross", "Casablanca" or "The March of the Penguins" and connecting it to our faith and life. Please speak to Pastor Mark if you would like to join us one of those days.

### **Soup Kitchen**

On **Monday, July 15th at 3:00 p.m.** Pastor Mark will be going to the soup kitchen at Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church in Beaver Falls. He will be inviting youth/confirmands to join first - but if this is something that interests you and you would like to join in the future please let Pastor Mark know.

## Vacation Bible School

July 8<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> 6:00 – 8:30 p.m.  
at Mars United Presbyterian Church



This year we are going to be doing Vacation Bible School with Mars United Presbyterian Church. It's been a good partnership that has been going well for years and we are glad to continue it. **We will be looking for helpers** (guides, in the craft room, helping with the theater, etc.) Please speak with Denise Hager, Keith Cardinal, Kim Richards or Pastor Mark if you can help.

Vacation Bible School is always one of the great weeks of the summer for the children of our congregation – so please try to share the joy of Jesus with the young people in our lives. This year the theme is **KINGDOM ROCK**.

You can find a link to registration on our website or go here:  
[http://www.mars-up.org/index.php?option=com\\_forne&fid=1](http://www.mars-up.org/index.php?option=com_forne&fid=1)

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### Hiking on Sunday, July 21<sup>st</sup>

**5:00 p.m. at St. John for a picnic, then on to Adams Park**

We will be gathering at 5 p.m. on this day for a picnic here at St. John (every family bring their own food) and then heading to Adams Park to walk the trail there. If it rains (perish the thought) we will gather for games here (which will be fun on its own). The walking is a great opportunity to get in miles for the walk to Jerusalem, which will be continuing through the summer. Please feel free to bring your pets as well as they help us to celebrate the awesomeness of God's creation.

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## **Brown Bag Bible Study will take a break July 28<sup>th</sup> – September 3<sup>rd</sup>**

Due to Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA and Pastor Mark's vacations, the Brown Bag Bible Study is going to take a break during this period of time.

We will be starting anew on September 10<sup>th</sup> with a new focus – probably Galatians or Romans as we look at one of the books that are truly part of our Lutheran heritage.



**Sunday School**  
*for all ages*

## **Sunday School** will be starting with Rally Day on September 8<sup>th</sup>.

Keith Cardinal is going to be the superintendent. We are going to be using the Spark Rotation series. This series has lots of different activities as we really dig into some of the great stories of our faith. Look for more information to be mailed to students. If you could help teach please speak to Keith Cardinal or Kim Richards.

## **Mission Builders**

Two of our members, Clarence and Marlene Strabel, will be in Nebraska this summer with Mission Builders, a program of the ELCA that helps do repairs and work for congregations and camps throughout the ELCA.

## **Doors**

Thank you to everyone who has helped us raise over \$9,000 for the church's three sets of doors. The new doors will cost a total of \$12,667.

We are soliciting donations to help us get closer to our goal. Any donations for the doors should be indicated as such in the *memo line* of your check and on the envelope itself.

## **Synod Assembly 2013**

At Synod assembly in California University of Pennsylvania, we re-elected Bishop Kusserow, approved a budget for 2014, celebrated the ordination of new pastors, worshipped, prayed, ate, sang and studied the bible together.

## **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](#). – Jan Leikauf, Treasurer



## **First Breakfast First Sunday of the Month after the Service**

–  
**July 7<sup>th</sup> and August 4<sup>th</sup>**

The first Sunday of the month we have a breakfast – a time for fellowship and delicious food with our sisters and brothers in the faith.

We invite you to join us for these breakfasts as they are always a blast (after all who doesn't enjoy eating). If you would be willing to help, please speak to Jim or Denise Hager. See you Sunday!

## **We're part of the ELCA – what does that mean?**

In the beginning of September, the ELCA will be turning 25. It's the denomination that St. John belongs to: the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Each of the initials has specific meaning that is important to our identity.

The last of them, America, notes that we are mostly united in one country (a few small Caribbean countries such as the Bahamas also have ELCA churches as they are not large enough to have a body on their own).

Church notes that we are a Christian body that affirms the creeds – the Apostles, Nicene and Athanasian as true, that recognizes the 66 books of the Hebrew Bible and New Testament as scripture, that affirms the Trinity and believes Jesus is the way truth and life.

The Lutheran tells us particular emphasis we put on scripture – that we emphasize grace as what saves us, that grace is a gift of God poured out on all people, that all are undeserving of that grace but receive it as the free gift of God. Other elements of being Lutheran are the sola's (Latin for only): only grace, only faith, only scripture, the Augsburg Confession, Small Catechism, etc.

Finally the Evangelical comes from the Greek word εὐαγγέλιον (the transliteration is euangelion) which means good news. This is because it is the job of every Christian to share the good news with the world around them. Lutherans are often shy about that – we invite someone to church roughly every 25 years!

What are some of the ways you can live out your identity in the ELCA?

## **Churchwide Assembly**

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 come together.

Worship at these assemblies is an incredible experience and highly recommended, visitors are welcome. Pastor Mark and Sally Foster are both volunteering at assembly.

## **COOKIE TABLE FOR THE CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY**

Last year at the WELCA Annual Convention Bishop Kusserow requested that the Women of the ELCA provide cookies at the Churchwide Assembly. The Assembly will be held at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center and we are asked to help provide cookies on AUGUST 12-16, 2013. The Assembly Hospitality Committee contacted us to organize the collection of and delivery of the cookies to the Assembly. We are asking each cluster/conference to help and already have some volunteers who are willing to assist with getting the cookies on trays and delivering them. This information is going to all the synod churches via mass email through the synod office. We have churches within each cluster/conference that will be a central location for you to take your cookies for delivery to Pittsburgh. We need approximately 200 dozen each day and the response from the women at the Annual Convention this year has been overwhelming. Please call the contact person for each cluster/conference so that they will have a better idea of how many cookies that they will have. Cookies need to be covered and on trays when brought to the Convention Center. This information is ongoing and we are giving you information as it becomes available to the Women of the ELCA from the Assembly Hospitality Committee.

**Please deliver your cookies to Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Glenshaw Tuesday, August 13. Call Pam Kusserow at M-F after 5 pm at 412-486-0267.** (The cookies will be delivered the following day to the Churchwide Assembly at the Convention Center.) For further information, please contact Alice Hilty, cell 724-525-1864 or via email [hilonhil@windstream.net](mailto:hilonhil@windstream.net) Let's get baking!

## **Volunteering for Churchwide Assembly**

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

The 2013 Churchwide Assembly planning committee would very much appreciate your help in volunteering (technology support is particularly needed – but all areas of help are appreciated). Please see the flyer on SJLC's bulletin board in the greeting area for more detailed information regarding the help needed. Other volunteers are needed as well.... Go to the website listed above, and then 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.

## **Pew Pads**

In an effort to get more visitors to use pew pads, (and us to be more welcoming), as well as to make use of them for our annual reports, etc. the ushers will be distributing pew pads 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>

## **July Birthdates**



7/3 Amber Fritz  
7/6 Chris Passione  
7/8 Jane Smith  
7/12 Victoria Lydon  
7/12 Kathy Schnelle  
7/12 Krystal Smith  
7/13 Marcia Lydon  
7/13 Christopher Julio  
7/14 Katie Richards  
7/15 Davena Hopson  
7/17 Audrey Manerino  
7/19 Jean Claus  
7/19 Larry McDonough  
7/19 Anthony King  
7/19 Nicholas King  
7/20 June Siembieda  
7/20 Luca Julio  
7/22 Jeff Ward  
7/26 Ed Carbo  
7/28 George Leikauf  
7/30 Robert Dishong

## **August Birthdates**



8/2 Emma Niklewicz  
8/5 Leona Wills  
8/5 Denise Hager  
8/6 Gabrielle Baysek  
8/8 Anne Olescyski  
8/8 Fritz Bielo  
8/13 Gretchen Baysek  
8/14 Laura Greb  
8/17 Todd Niklewicz  
8/17 Kayla Julio  
8/18 Joshua Zimmerman  
8/19 Bill Rinehart  
8/24 Beverly Crislip  
8/29 Rev. Ralph Storm  
8/29 Paulina Scherrer

Address service requested

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