

July
2014

St. John Lutheran Church

St. John Lutheran Church <http://www.stjohnchurchmars.org>

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Mars PA 16046

Pastor Mark's email: 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.

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Sisters and brothers in Christ,

This summer has been a lovely one at St. John Lutheran Church. Our worship has been warm and worshipful of God, Father and Son (attendance and giving have also been up, continuing a trend that has been true over the last few years). There have been a number of great events this summer – from our walk to Tanzania, to continuing tradition of breakfasts (thanks to Kim Richards for the first, and all who make the breakfasts possible).

Many of you, my sisters and brothers, have shared warm wishes of blessing for Vanessa, for our marriage, and for our upcoming move. Many have also shared a sorrow that in October I will no longer be a part of the community here at St. John.

First, a few words on that — we are joined in a community that extends beyond time and space. When we gather for communion, we gather with all of the saints who have gone before us and who will follow after us. The hymn “God Be With You Until We Meet Again” (# 536 in our hymnal) are words any Christian can say in certain hope in another, since we are all bound together in community in Christ and also because we can be certain that we will see all other saints in Christ again. We are a part of the only community that always lasts.

Secondly, what defines St. John Lutheran Church – and all Christian bodies – is not the building, or the pastor or the organist (or any other employees). The head of our congregation (and all churches) is Christ Jesus our Lord. And our bodies are defined not by the employees named above, nor the structure or location of their worship, but by the individual members. It is your community that invites and welcomes the outsiders, that teach what it means to be the body of Christ, that support each other, that provide continuity from one employee to the next.

So while I will be sad to be leaving, I am confident that what defines St. John – a warm and friendly family of Christ, welcoming to the stranger, celebrating joys, helping in times of want and need, gathering together to support each other in times of sorrow, that these attributes will continue to shine forth here.

St. John is blessed with a great group of lay leaders – such as our vestry and council and all of the people in unofficial roles who work behind the scenes. You will continue to share Christ's love with the community of Mars, Pine-Richland, Cranberry, Gibsonia, Butler and beyond.

Peace in Christ,
Pastor Mark



Picnic and Outdoor Worship – August 3, 2014 at 9:00 am

On August 3 we will have an outdoor worship service at Adams Township Municipal Park. This will be similar to last year's service with music in the glory of God's creation, celebrating the love that makes us one. There will be a picnic following the service and games (kickball, a piñata, and many more!) All of the church boards from St. John – the Elders, the Deacons, and the Trustees will be helping to make this a great success. This is a great event to invite family and friends to attend, to show them what the community of God in Christ Jesus our Lord is like here.

Outdoor Service at St. John on August 31, 2014

On August 31, we will be having another outdoor service, this time at St. John Lutheran Church facing our wonderful garden. This will wrap up our summer worship together.

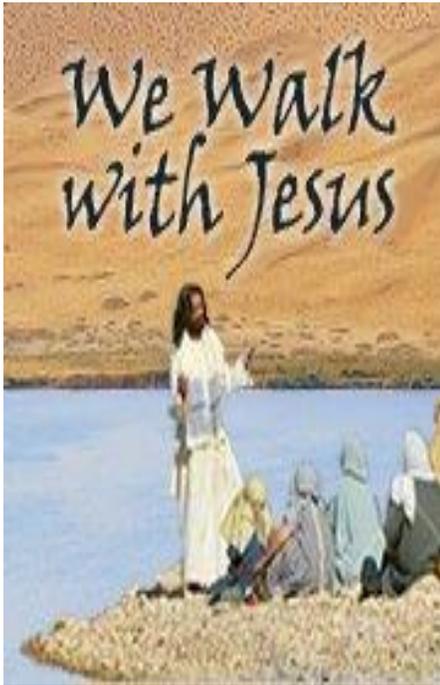


Davena and Jim Hopson would like to thank the congregation for the sympathy, kindness and generosity shown to their family in their recent bereavement. Thanks to all who prepared and served the food after the service. You are all a blessing!

Our thanks to all the volunteers who made Vacation Bible School possible again this year. Our partnership with Mars United Presbyterian Church shows that the community in Christ is much larger than one denomination. Together with sisters and brothers we do great and amazing things. Thanks also to all of the children who participated in this wonderful event.

Thank you Bill Schulz! Many of you have commented on how lovely the church grounds look. Bill has done an amazing job of mowing, weed whacking, and just generally taking care of the property. This is his third summer donating his time and effort to do this and he is saving St. John a tremendous amount of money that can be used for other projects and to give to organizations that support the needy. In addition, he is guaranteeing that our exterior will help to praise God's creation.

Thank you to Clarence and Marlene Strabel for the gift of paraments in memory of their son Wally. Clarence and Marlene are currently in Minnesota with Mission Builders but will be back here later on this summer.



JOIN IN THE FUN!

So far the mighty travelers have traversed 1,000 miles and counting! We have crossed the Atlantic Ocean and are in Ghana. Still 3,000 miles to go to Tanzania!

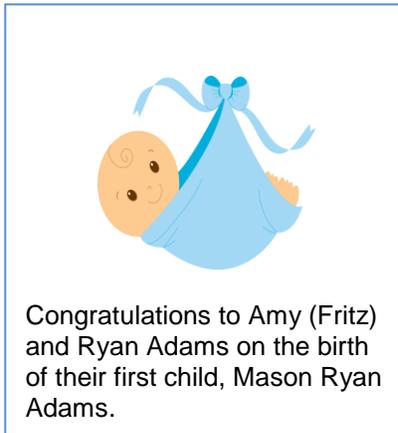
Along the way, we enjoy some Lutheran history, trivia, funny quips, points to ponder, and will have a delicious lunch at the end with various foods from the different areas travelled.

All physical activity counts, walking, running, gardening, bowling and swimming. Any 20 minutes of physical activity counts towards 1 mile. All you need to do is keep track of the number of minutes of activity and turn in the total at the end of the week. It's Fun and easy, and a great way to get us all up and moving towards a common destination. Group and Individual activity is strongly encouraged. Group walking will be on Tuesdays, Thursday and Sunday's at 6:30 pm at the Mars High School Football Field.

Ladies Book Study

July 21 & August 18 at
7:00 pm

Please read the assigned
chapter prior to the meeting.



Congratulations to Amy (Fritz)
and Ryan Adams on the birth
of their first child, Mason Ryan
Adams.



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 Mondays – Noon till 1:30 pm

We are now reading through St. Paul's letter
to the Romans. All you need is a willing spirit
(though you may wish to bring your own
Bible.) **No meeting on July 14 or August 4.**



Luther Club Thursdays – 11:30 am

A group of sisters and brothers continue to
read through the social statements of the
ECLA. We meet each Thursday at Christine
Dishong's house. Christine's home is located at
313 Meadow Dr., in Cranberry Twp.

Copies of the statements will be available.
Currently, we are working on Crime and
Justice. If you are interested, we would love to
have you join us.



Family Movie Day – Sunday, July 20

Join us after services on Sunday, July 20. We will be watching the movie “Frozen” and invite you to come and watch the movie with us and enjoy some pizza and a “frozen” treat! Come and chill out and watch “Frozen” and have a great time!

Pastor Mark will be away on the following dates:

July 13 (pm) through July 18 – He will be in the office and doing visits on Saturday, July 19. In case of pastoral emergency, please contact Pastor Dave Saylor of St. Peter’s Lutheran Church at 724-799-3743.

July 30 – August 2 and August 4 – 6 – Pastor Mark will be doing a backpacking trip during the first of these dates and visiting with family during the second dates. **Note that he WILL be here on August 3 for our outdoor service.** For pastoral emergencies during these timeframes, please contact Pastor Nathaniel Christman at 651-328-1072.



Wedding Invitation – September 27, 2014 at 2:00 pm

Dr. Vanessa Papalazaros and I invite the whole congregation to join us as we are joined together in holy matrimony. It is our hope that you can celebrate the joys of that day and the promise of God’s love with us. Please join us for coffee and cookies downstairs immediately following the ceremony.

Transition at St. John

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As you are aware, Pastor Mark will be writing several new chapters in his book of life in the months to come. He and Vanessa will be getting married, moving to a new state, buying a new home, and starting new careers. That is quite a lot of change in such a short amount of time. I encourage everyone to remember both of them in prayer for the blessings of new beginnings and safety of travel as they venture along life’s path.

What does this mean for St. John? The process of calling a new Pastor is a rather involved process, and like most things in life, takes some time to get a great end product. I have been asked to write an article in the newsletter about this process, as well as keeping everyone informed of the progress we are making.

The process starts with Council appointing a call committee consisting of six members of the church. This will be a part of the July Church Council Agenda. Once the call committee has been established, they will attend a training session with the Synod. This training session is designed to develop the skills to competently make informed decisions and gain valuable insight to the interviewing process.

Looking forward, there will be many changes coming to St. John. I encourage everyone to practice patience and pray about what blessings God has in store for us at St. John.

Your friend in Christ,

Jamie Weaver



JULY BIRTHDAYS

7/03 Amber Fritz
7/06 Chris Passione
7/08 Jane Smith
7/12 Victoria Lydon
7/12 Kathy Schnelle
7/12 Krystal Smith
7/13 Marcia Shepard
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
7/22 Paxton Bates
7/22 Jeff Ward
7/26 Ed Carbo
7/28 George Leikauf
7/30 Robert Dishong

First Breakfast – September 7 @ 9:15 a.m.

With the outdoor worship service and picnic on August 3, our next opportunity for a first breakfast is September 7. If you would like to help with this event, please speak to Denise Hager, Sally Foster, Keith or Valerie Cardinal, or Cindy Knauff, who help to coordinate these great opportunities for growth and fellowship at St. John.



AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

8/02 Emma Niklewicz
8/05 Leona Wills
8/05 Denise Hager
8/06 Gabrielle Baysek
8/08 Anne Olescyski
8/08 Fritz Bielo
8/13 Gretchen Baysek
8/14 Laura Greb
8/14 Ava Niklewicz
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

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.



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>



August 3 – Outdoor Service and Picnic at Adams Twp. Park

August 31 – Outdoor Service at St. John

September 7 – First Breakfast

September 27 – Pastor Mark's wedding

Worship Helpers for July & August

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

July

Ushers

9:00 am Cardinal

Assisting Minister

9:00 am Kelly Greb

August

Usher

9:00 am Sally Foster

Assisting Minister

9:00 am Missy Kramer

July/August Newsletter

Address service requested

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