

November
2014

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.

St. John Lutheran Church <http://www.stjohnchurchmars.org>
PO Box 411 (724) 625-1830
420 Beaver Street Office email: office@stjohnchurchmars.org
Mars PA 16046

Hello St John Lutheran Church!

I am writing you as your Local Interim Pastor; which means that I am on call as your Pastor until you have a Full Time Interim or call your next Pastor!



A little about myself: I was born in Washington State (far north eastern part) in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains. Growing up, my Dad had one rule in the house, "You go to Church on Sunday morning!" So I went to church every Sunday and loved it. I did my undergraduate work in a small college called Trinity Lutheran College in Issaquah WA. Trinity had 101 students the year I graduated! At Trinity I met my wife (Tricia). We celebrated our 10 year anniversary on October 9th! We both earned a Master's Degree from Luther Seminary which is located in St Paul Minnesota. I was ordained at Oak Grove Lutheran Church in Zelenople in 2012 where I still serve as the full time solo pastor (and love it)! My wife and I have two children; Zachary is five years old and Bethany is two years old.

As you might imagine a full time call to Pastoral Ministry and a full time call as husband and father demand much of my time! That said, please know that I am available to you when you are in need of Pastoral care and am honored to serve God alongside of you.

I would encourage you all to stay active in the work and life of the church in this time of transition. Our corner of the world needs faithful people like you every day.

While you will not see me on Sundays please know that you will be in my thoughts and prayers, that I will be working with your leadership behind the scenes, and that I am only a phone call/text or email away!

Cell: 651.328.1072
Email: nchristman002@luthersem.edu

Blessings to you!
Pastor Nathaneil Christman

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

All of us, at some point in our lives, have heard the saying, “While the cat’s away, the mice will play.” Hearing it conjures up images of furry little mice scurrying around, eating cheese, and throwing a wild party because the ever watchful, big pawed cat isn’t sitting right outside the mouse hole. While these images are somewhat cute and playful, the real meaning of this saying isn’t quite so lighthearted. It really means that when no one of authority is present, the subordinates think they can do as they please.

Right now at St. John, we are facing this exact same situation. We are without a called and ordained minister for the second time in seven years, and if we aren’t careful, we could simply see this as a time of the cat being away, or perhaps as an opportunity to snuggle deeper under the covers and sleep in on these crisp, cool Sunday mornings. In reality, however, nothing could be further from the truth. Yes, we are entering into an extended period of time when different pastors or lay leaders, ones who barely know us as a congregation let alone as individuals, will lead us in worship each week. Yes, most of these pastors and lay leaders probably won’t know if we miss a few Sundays here or there over the coming months. For that matter, they probably won’t know if we miss every Sunday. As sad as this is, it is the true reality of our current situation.

In spite of this, however, it is critical for us not to view this period of time as the cat being away, for the cat or the one in authority is never away. He is always with us. He knows our every thought and he sees all that we do and don’t do. Thankfully, even with everything he knows, he still loves us and wants us to be in church come Sunday morning. In fact, it is so important for us to be there that he demands it of us in the Third Commandment; “Remember the Sabbath day, and keep it holy.” In *The Large Catechism*, Martin Luther addresses this commandment by asking, What is meant by ‘keeping it holy?’” He answers by stating, “Nothing else than devoting it to holy words, holy works, and holy living. The day itself does not need to be made holy, for it was created holy. But God wants it to be holy for you. So it becomes holy or unholy on your account, depending on whether you spend it doing something holy or unholy.”

Wow, what a powerful statement. If you read it closely, it clearly states that we, as individuals and as a congregation of fellow believers, hold the power to keep the Sabbath day holy. It doesn’t matter if there’s a different pastor there each week. It doesn’t matter if the sermon bores us or the music isn’t to our liking. It doesn’t matter if our lives are terribly hectic. What truly matters is God. As faithful believers, we have to stop thinking that going to church is about us and what we get out of it because it’s not. Going to church is about worshipping God, praising his name, and thanking him for everything he’s done for us during the previous week. When my 12 year old wakes up bleary eyed on Sunday morning and says that she’s too tired to go to church, I look at her and ask, “Was God good to you this week?” Her answer is always, “Yes,” so I tell her, “Well then, I think you can give him one hour of your time to say thank you.” Inevitably, she finds herself in church doing just that.

In closing brothers and sisters, I pray that we will continue to be faithful in our worship, our stewardship, our prayers, and our care of those in need. I pray that we will be patient, compassionate and understanding as we proceed with the call process. I pray that we choose to keep the Sabbath day holy and be together on Sunday mornings worshipping God, praising his name, and giving thanks for all that he has done for us!

Faithfully in Christ,

Christine Dishong

Book of Remembrance

As we celebrate All Saints Sunday, we remember those who have gone before us in faith. Throughout November, a Book of Remembrance will be available in the greeting area. You are encouraged to add to the book the names of those saints who were important in your life. Each of the remaining Sundays in November we will include the names added during the past week in our prayers. In doing so we remember the great cloud of witnesses that surround us on our journey, not just on All Saints Sunday, but every day of our lives.

Thanksgiving Holiday – Church Office Closed

Please note the church office will be **closed on November 27 and November 28** for the Thanksgiving holiday.

Contact Information for Joe Meyerl

Joe is currently convalescing at Cranberry Place since his fall a few months ago. The Deacons recently visited with him and he's coming along. If you would like to let him know you're thinking of him his contact information is: Room 371-D – Cranberry Place, 5 St. Francis Way, Cranberry Twp., PA 16066.

Note from Pastor Mark

Sisters and Brothers in Christ -- Thank you so much for the outpouring of love and support for Vanessa and I. We are so tremendously blessed by all of you. The cookie table blew us both away. The number of you who made vows for us in our wedding to pray for and support us gave us tears of joy. The memories and growth that come from St. John – all of the ways you have helped us, for all of this and more thank you so much. Peace in Christ, Pastor Mark

Note from John Thickey

With gratitude and thanks this note is written for the monetary gift and many words of appreciation and good wishes given to me on my last Sunday as organist at St. John. It has been a privilege to serve this parish and to be a part of your ministry team. Most certainly I will continue to keep you in my thoughts and prayers.



Harvest Dinner
St. John Lutheran Church
420 Beaver St., Mars, PA
16046
Saturday, November 8,
2014
4:00 – 7:00 pm
Adults - \$10
Child - \$5
Under Age 2 - Free



**GIVE BLOOD
SAVE LIFE**

Blood Drive
Sunday, November 16, 2014
8:00 am – 1:00 pm

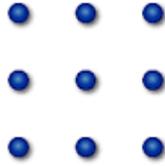
Together with Central Blood Bank, St. John's will be hosting a blood drive on November 16. This will be held in the Social Hall. All participating donors will receive a coupon for a free Chick-fil-A sandwich.

To schedule an appointment go to www.centralbloodbank.org and use Group Code G0030128, or you may use the sign-up sheet in the greeting area of the church. Walk-ins are welcome.

Connect the Dots

By Pastor Nathaneil

I was recently at a Continuing Education conference where I was given this puzzle by the Presenter (the Rev. Dr. David Lose, President of Philadelphia Seminary). The challenge is called “the nine dot puzzle” and you can find the answer online. The rules are as follows: connect all nine dots using four straight lines while never lifting the pen off of the paper.



I will give you a clue. What does the picture with the box and the word say?



It is possible!

The thought for the day: Some times we become so narrow-minded or limited by are perception of what is permitted that we miss the obvious answer. Are we willing to “think outside of the box” for the sake of the gospel?

☺ Enjoy!

Brown Bag Bible Study Mondays – Noon till 1:30 pm

Feel free to join us even if you haven't been coming previously. All you need is a willing spirit (though you may wish to bring your own Bible.)

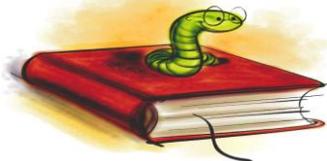


Ladies Book Group November 12 7:00 pm

We are now reading “Dear Life” by Alice Munro. It is a book of short stories and it includes a group reader's guide to invite discussion. There are several stories and we can do one or two at a time or however the group wishes to proceed.

We hope to have something special around Christmas – a dinner. All are welcome.

For additional information, see Sally or Denise.



Worship Assistants Needed

Please prayerfully consider if you would like to be an Assisting Minister during worship. As such, you are a representative of the people at the table. You would be responsible for reading the lessons, prayers, helping set the table, distribution of wine during communion, and sending. You must be a member of St. John, familiar with the liturgy, and be willing to serve for one month. Training will be provided. If interested or if you have questions, please speak to Sally Foster.



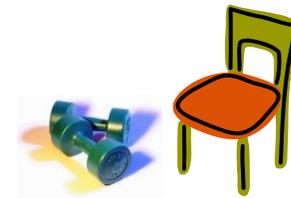
November Birthdays

- 11/02 Ariel (Buzz) Kelly
- 11/04 Christopher Knauff
- 11/05 Tanya Nagel
- 11/07 David Knauff
- 11/08 Robert Rigg
- 11/08 Lynn McDonough
- 11/14 Katie McCormick
- 11/16 Katherine Rinehart
- 11/17 Lynn Sabbagh
- 11/17 Cheryl Davidson
- 11/19 Shirley Kelly
- 11/21 Jilian Wolfe
- 11/22 Brooke Claus
- 11/23 Nancy McCormick
- 11/26 John Roberts
- 11/29 Joseph Baysek

First Breakfast Sunday, November 2, 2014 9:15 am



Join us on the first Sunday of November for good food, fellowship and conversation!



Chair Aerobics Tuesdays and Thursdays Through November 20

6:30-7:30 p.m.

All ages welcome!
Improve strength, flexibility, circulation, balance, boost your mood and improve your overall health.

Get up – get stretching and join us!

Help Make a Change!



Please drop your loose change in the water jug in the greeting area to make a **"CHANGE"** in a young person's life. All donations collected will be turned over to the Glade Run Lutheran Services in the spring to make a life **"Change-ing"** impact. No amount is too small, it all adds up to making a difference!!!



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>

Upcoming Events

December 6 – Gingerbread House Decorating

December 7 – First Breakfast

Worship Helpers for November

Please look in the greeting area for worship helper sign-up sheets for acolyte, lectors, usher, or communion assistant for any Sunday in September.

Ushers

8:00 am

10:30 am

Assisting Minister

8:00am Nov. 2 Dave Knauff

8:00 am Kelly Greb

10:30 am Carolyn Jarrett

November Newsletter

Address service requested

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