

June
2015

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>

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Mars, PA 16046

Christopher

I was flying recently from New York to my home in Chicago. I sat back in the back row, in an aisle seat. A black man sat next to me, and a young black boy next to him. Across the aisle a black woman sat next to two girls, obviously her daughters. I was tired and didn't want to talk to anyone on this trip. However, when we began our approach into Chicago I asked the man a simple question, but his answer changed my life. I simply asked, "Are you visiting Chicago or is that your home?" He answered, "I have no home. I am a refugee. I am Christopher. This is my wife, Constance, and our three children."

I didn't know what to say or ask. So I listened to Christopher describe the terrorism in Burundi. The government killed thousands of its citizens and took their land and homes. Christopher said that he and his family got up at midnight and ran for their lives all night to escape from Burundi to Tanzania. They made it. They lived in one of six refugee camps in Tanzania, each holding 20,000 Burundian refugees.

Christopher had been a school superintendent in Burundi and his wife was a teacher, and they served in that capacity in the refugee camp. I assumed foolishly that he was making an OK living. That was not true. Refugee camp residents don't get paid anything. They just serve the community.

I wanted to ask Christopher about Tanzania, where our Lutheran Church is growing by leaps and bounds. Finally, I said, "I serve the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and I understand that the Lutheran Church in Tanzania is doing some good work. Have you ever heard of the Lutheran Church?" Christopher smiled for the first time and reached for his package of valuables, one envelope with five immigration and naturalization cards and a well-worn business card inscribed "Lutheran World Relief." He said, "Lutheran World Relief are friends. Lutheran World Relief gave us the money our family lived on every month, \$20 a month for the entire 11 years."

I was humbled to be where I was and I was proud to be a Lutheran. My offerings helped Christopher and his family live, without my even knowing it.

Sincerely,

Dr. Ed Kruse

(Ed is a lay person who lives in Chicago)

Results of Congregational Meeting

On Sunday, May 24 we held a special congregational meeting to vote on the call of Pastor Robert Zimmerman. A two-thirds majority was needed and received to call the Pastor.

Pastor Zimmerman is very excited to begin his journey here at St. John.

Call paperwork has been submitted to the Synod.

May the Holy Spirit continue to guide the congregation of St. John and Pastor Zimmerman throughout this transition period.



We would like to thank the members of the call committee for their time and dedication to the call process –

Denise Hager, Keith Cardinal, Sally Foster, Martha Ward, Christine Dishong, Matt Claus, Chuck Olescyski, Erik Holm, Larry Werner, Katie Nicklewicz, Jan Leikauf.



Two children from our congregation received their First Communion on Sunday, May 17.
We congratulate **Makenna Lydon and Dominic Cardinal**.

Makenna is the daughter of Marcia & Bill Shepard and Shawn & Jen Lydon. **Dominic** is the son of Valerie & Keith Cardinal.

We ask the congregation to keep these children in your prayers so they will always keep God in their hearts and lives.

Synod Assembly June 11-13, 2015

Thiel College, Greenville, PA – Presiding Bishop Eaton will be present.

Attendance Cards

Beginning in June, there will be an attendance card attached to the front of the bulletin each week. We ask that all members of the congregation fill out this card so that we may maintain an accurate record of attendance. You may place the cards in the collection plate. Please do not recycle the bulletins or not everyone will get a card to fill out.



Light Breakfast Sunday, June 7

Join us for great bagels, yogurt, coffee and juice!

Quilting Group



Monday, June 8
6:00 pm

If you are interested in learning to quilt or already know how, join us for our monthly quilting group!

Ladies Book Study June 24 – 7:00 pm

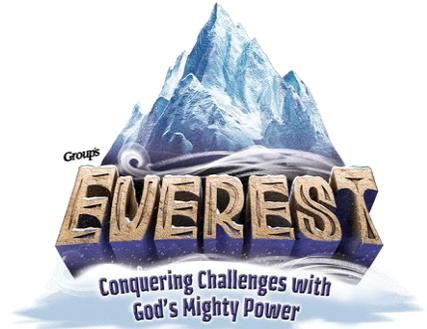
Our next selection is “The Orphan Train” by Christina Baker Kline. Between 1854 and 1929, “orphan trains” ran from cities on the east coast to the midwest farm country. Thousands of abandoned children faced adoption by a loving family or a life of hard labor and servitude.

A young Irish immigrant, Vivian Daly, was sent from New York City to an uncertain future a world away. As an adult she returns east to Maine where she leads a peaceful life, her memories blurred. But in the attic is a trunk with clues to a turbulent past.

Molly Ayer begins a community service position, helping an elderly widow clean out her attic to avoid juvenile hall. As they sort through Vivian’s possessions, Molly discovers they have much in common. Molly is a Penobscot Indian, raised in various foster homes and has questions about her past. Moving between Maine and depression era Minnesota, an unexpected friendship develops.

Read the book and get the discussion questions from Sally. **Join us on June 24 at 7 pm** in the ‘living room’ area of the church basement.

Vacation Bible School at Mars United Presbyterian Church



July 6-10

6:00 pm – 8:30 pm

preschool thru 3rd grade – VBS
4th & 5th grades – Everest Adventures
Group

*This year’s theme is “Everest” –
Conquering Challenges with God’s
Mighty Power*

Kids will discover ways to face fear and overcome challenges with God’s help and strength.

Register online at www.mars-up.org, by calling 724-625-1835 or pick up one of the registration forms in the greeting area.

Brown Bag Bible Study

Our Monday Brown Bag Bible Study Group will be taking a summer break. See you all again in the fall!

Lost and Found Box

There is a lost and found bin on the short pew at the bottom of the basement stairs. We have gathered all belongings that have been lying around the church for quite some time. Please check the box to see if anything belongs to you.

Items will be in the bin until June 15, after that we will be disposing of them.

Autobiographical Information

The Rev. Robert F. Zimmerman

I graduated from Westminster College in New Wilmington, PA in 1979 with a BA in Elementary Education. After spending the summer working at a residential treatment center in New Jersey for emotionally disturbed children as a cottage counselor, I returned to western Pennsylvania as a District Executive for the local Boy Scout Council based out of Butler, Pa. We currently live, in our home of 30+ years, in Harmony Pennsylvania.

Carol and I met in college and were married in April of 1980. She works as a pension and benefits actuary. Our son was born in December 1982, and by the spring, I had resigned from the Scouts and began 18 rewarding years as a stay-at-home Dad. Our daughter was born in 1987.

As the children grew I kept my hand in things, serving as a leader in the local Boy Scout troop, delivering meals on wheels, and by offering my services providing computer tech support in the days before Windows. While the children were in pre-school, I dusted off my teaching credentials and substitute taught at the Zelienople Nursery School. I worked as a sales representative for an online travel agency marketing Christian tours and pilgrimages.

We were long-time members of English Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zelienople and have been active members there in many roles. Over the years I served as Sunday School teacher, Church Council member, chairperson of the evangelism and social ministry committees, and as the liaison between the congregation and its Boy Scout programs. I even filled in as church secretary for a month while the church was in the process of hiring a replacement.

As our children, Geoff and Christie grew older, I returned to working outside the home part time as a bookseller at Barnes and Noble. After a few years the opportunity to connect my faith with employment arose when there was an opening for a sales associate at the nearby Augsburg Fortress store. This coincided with the beginnings of my discernment of a call to full time ministry, and I was asked to serve as Synodically Authorized Minister at a local rural congregation (St. John "Stone" Lutheran) where I led worship and preached weekly and provided pastoral care and leadership. I treasure those years as the people taught me much about what it means to be a committed, caring Christian community.

In 2001 I resigned from Augsburg Fortress to begin part-time studies at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, while continuing as a lay minister for St. John "Stone." I left St. John to begin full time studies at the seminary at Gettysburg in August of 2004. I spent the summer of 2005 in Supervised Clinical Pastoral Education as a chaplain intern in the Pittsburgh Veterans Healthcare System. I served my internship year in 2005-2006 at Hope Evangelical Lutheran in Cranberry Township, Butler County. I returned to Gettysburg to complete my Master of Divinity Degree. Approved for ordination, I graduated in 2007 and was assigned to the Southwestern PA Synod. In December of 2007 I was called as pastor to St. Luke's Lutheran Church in West View where I have successfully served to the present.

My hobbies include swimming, sailing with friends, and reading. Carol currently is employed as an actuary for the U.S. Department of the Treasury, working in Pittsburgh. She is also an active amateur musician, playing clarinet and piano in several local groups and substituting for organists at a few area churches. Our son is married and living in Cranberry Township, our daughter lives in Leechburg. We have two grandchildren.



JUNE BIRTHDAYS

- 06/05 Bill Schulz
- 06/08 Cindy Knauff
- 06/12 Janet Senka
- 06/13 Laura Gold
- 06/14 Mason Adams
- 06/21 Francis Kratz
- 06/21 Katie Niklewicz
- 06/24 Reed Richards
- 06/26 Alaina Nagel
- 06/28 Henrietta Murray
- 06/28 Abigail Cardinal
- 06/29 Gabriella Julio

Upcoming Events

July 12 – Outdoor Service & Church Picnic at Adams Twp. Park

Communion Bread Schedule
June – John Tully
July – Kim Richards

Worship Helpers for June

Please check the bulletin board in the greeting area for worship helper sign-up sheets for acolyte, lectors, usher, or communion assistant for any Sunday in June.

Ushers

9:00 am Bob Dishong

Assisting Minister

9:00 am Christine Dishong

June Newsletter

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