

December
2016

St. John Lutheran Church

St. John Lutheran Church
PO Box 411
420 Beaver Street
Mars, PA 16046

Web site: www.stjohnchurchmars.org
Church Office: (724) 625-1830
Office email: office@stjohnchurchmars.org
Pastor Bob's email: pastor@stjohnchurchmars.org
Pastor's Cell #: 412-585-1628

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.

Advent is upon us. On November 27th we gathered in worship for the first Sunday of Advent, beginning this time of waiting and watching for the coming of the Lord. The first scripture read in this season of the church was the Old Testament reading appointed for that Sunday, Isaiah 2:1-5. The text begins with, "The word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem."

Does anything strike you as odd about that sentence? How about Isaiah "seeing" the word? Most of the time we "hear" the word or "read" words, but the word of God received by Isaiah is "seen." This "seeing" of the Word of God grabbed my attention. How can you "see" the Word?

Where do we "see" the living Word that is Jesus Christ today? We gather as God's people in worship to equip us, prepare us, for Christ sightings the rest of the week as we hear the Word, we see touch and taste the Word in bread and wine. We then are sent to see the Word active in our community, at work and play, God active in the world. We can see Christ, the living Word active in the lives of people; in the helping hands of caregivers and healers, in the faces of those in need, in the work we do for others with our own hands. Can we return and share where and how we saw the Word?

This time of year we prepare for the coming of Christ, of the one called Emmanuel, which means God with us. We will soon celebrate that "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" and that Word is the second person of the Trinity, the Son of God, Jesus. Matthew's gospel concludes with the promise of Christ that he will be with us always, "to the end of the age." Let us be alert to Christ the living Word in our midst, as we daily are all "Word Watchers" as we "proclaim the wonders of his love." (ELW 267).

A blessed Advent and Joyful Christmas,
Pastor Bob Zimmerman

Vestry Election – Sunday, December 4

The election of the 2017 members of our church Vestry will be held following our 9:00 am worship service on this day. There is only one service this day. Please plan to remain for a few minutes and participate. There will be a light breakfast in the greeting area after.



A Service of Lessons and Carols for Advent **Sunday, December 4, 2016** **9:00 am**

Join us for one service at 9:00 am for readings and music celebrating the season of Advent, as we journey from darkness to light.



Christmas Worship Services

**Christmas Eve – Dec. 24 – Services at 3:00 pm
and 7:00 pm**

**Christmas Day – December 25 – One Service at
10:00 am.**

Church Decorating **Sunday, December 18 after 10:30am worship**

If you are able to help decorate the church for Christmas, please stay after the 10:30 am worship service. Your help will be greatly appreciated.



The church office will be closed on December 23 for Christmas.



**A Night in Bethlehem
Saturday - December 10, 2016
10 am – 2 pm**

Something new this coming Advent season at St. John. December 10, 2016. A Night in Bethlehem will be a unique experience for Moms, Dads, and kids alike as they discover Jesus in Bible-times Bethlehem!

During this 2-3 hour festive event, families will wander through the bustling Bethlehem marketplace and discover what life was like when Jesus was born. Unlike your typical “living Nativity,” each person will create unique keepsakes as they interact with local shopkeepers who share the Christmas story. Everyone will love talking to Mary and Joseph in The Stable, and hearing about the miracle of Jesus’ birth.

There will be crafts for all, including metal shop, writing Hebrew calligraphy, wooden Jesus signs, ornament painting, clay pot making, baking flat bread and acting out the Christmas story.

There is no fee to attend, but we ask that you register ahead of time so we may plan accordingly. There is a sign-up sheet in the greeting area, call the church office at 724-625-1830 or online at www.stjohnchurchmars.org.



Angel Tree

During this holiday season, we will be sponsoring an Angel Tree for the residents at Glade Run Lutheran Services in Zelenople. Do not wrap the gifts. Please put them in a gift bag with the tag attached to the outside. There is a list of gift guidelines. **Please return your gift by Sunday, December 4.**

Also collecting socks, underwear and toiletries for Glade Run Lutheran Services. If you purchase these, place them in the appropriate bins in the greeting area. Socks and underwear need to be adult sizes. The children prefer bikini or low-rise for girls and boxers or boxer briefs for boys. They prefer low-cut or no-show socks.

Hopefully you can find it in your heart this holiday season to help those who are less fortunate. Thank you for your participation, the kids will really appreciate it. If you have any questions, please contact Denise Hager.



Youth Group News *Food, Fun & Faith*

On Sunday, January 7, we will meet at St. John Specialty Care Ctr. at **1:45 pm** to assist the residents during their activity time with bowling.

There will be no regular Sunday meeting in January.



NOON BIBLE STUDY

The Brown Bag Bible Study Group will meet on December 7, 14, & 21. ***Please note there will not be a bible study on December 28.*** All are welcome to join!



Save the Date!

**White Elephant Bingo
January 14 – 4:00 – 7:00 pm
St. John Fellowship Hall**

Beat the winter blues and join us for a potluck dinner and Bingo!

Bring a covered dish (or not, there is always plenty) to share and a wrapped gift to trade. Suggested gift value around \$5.00. Fun time, Good Food, & Great Fellowship!

LIGHT BREAKFAST December 4, 2016

There will be a light breakfast in the greeting area after the 9am worship service and congregational meeting.

Quilting Group December 12 – 6:30 pm

Our group meets on the second Tuesday of each month. If you have an interest in quilting or would just like to learn, please join us!

Ladies Book Group December 28 – 7:15 pm

We are reading “The Little Paris Book Shop” by Nina George. Come and enjoy discussion as we begin our new “read.” New members are always welcome! If you have any questions, see Denise Hager or Sally Foster

**Please note there will be one worship service on
January 1 – New Year’s Day at 10 am.**



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 12/01 Dominic Cardinal
- 12/02 Cindy Wills
- 12/06 Jacqueline Kennedy
- 12/10 Wanda Weidner
- 12/11 Serafina Julio
- 12/12 Beth McElhinny
- 12/13 Reed McDonough
- 12/18 Tess Bielo
- 12/24 Christine Dishong
- 12/25 James Hager

Upcoming Events
January 1 – One Worship at 10 am
January 7 – Youth Group at SJSCC
January 14 – White Elephant Bingo

Communion Bread Schedule
December – Denise Hager
January - TBD



December Newsletter

December Worship Helpers

Please check the bulletin board in the greeting area for the new worship helper sign-up sheet for all worship helpers for each Sunday for the remainder of the year.

Assisting Ministers

8:00 am Christine Dishong
 10:30 am Martha Ward

Ushers

8:00 am Bob Dishong
 10:30 am Hager's

Communion Assistants

8:00 am
 10:30 am Denise Hager

Address service requested

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