

July/August
2016

St. John Lutheran Church

St. John Lutheran Church <http://www.stjohnchurchmars.org>
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Mars, PA 16046 Pastor Bob'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.

Dear friends in Christ,

*One bread, one body, one Lord of all;
one cup of blessing which we bless,
and we, though many throughout the earth,
we are one body in this one Lord. (ELW 496)*

This month begins a new ministry to connect with our homebound as teams of laypersons take the Holy Communion elements directly from the Table to distribute them to those unable to attend worship. Our guide to the Sacraments, *The Use of The Means of Grace*, describes how the sending of communion in this way is an extension of Sunday worship and strengthens the communal nature of Holy Communion by including those that are unable to be present in the sanctuary. The prayer we will use at the end of Holy Communion links the congregation gathered with those receiving the Sacrament later. The Sunday Scripture texts are shared, there is prayer the bread and wine are given, remembering the words of institution heard in worship. In addition to this lay distribution I will continue my quarterly pastoral visits to the homebound as well.

Having members bring the Eucharist to the homebound is a long-standing practice in the Church and provides congregation connections other than just the pastor. The homebound are reminded that more than the pastor remember them and connect more with the life of the congregation that they are still a part. Long time friends can visit and reminisce, young people meet the faithful who grew the church and hear the sacred stories that are a part of this congregation's legacy.

As we begin this ministry to our own; this "sending" from worship, I think of the words we hear and say each week, "Go in Peace, serve the Lord" and how those words invite us into sharing the forgiveness and grace we have received in worship. This "sending of communion" is one way we take Christ out into the world as we serve those that are part of our faith community living out that we are one body in the Lord. What ways may we share the grace and abiding presence of Christ with those that are not "our own"?

Blessings,
Pastor Bob Zimmerman



St. John Outdoor Service and Church Picnic

Sunday, July 24 – 9:00 am



Our annual outdoor service and church picnic will be on **Sunday, July 24 at 9:00 am at Adams Twp. Community Park**. Service is at 9:00 am followed by a picnic. Food, drink, games and plenty of fun for all! **The fee is \$5.00 per adult** to help defray the cost of food, etc. **There is no fee for children.** Please fill out the form below and return it to Denise Hager by placing the form and your payment in her mailbox outside of the church office. Please make all checks payable to St. John Lutheran Church.

Reservation Form for Church Picnic Deadline for reservations is July 17

Name(s): _____

#Adults attending _____ #Children attending _____

Ages of Children _____

Walking Out of Syria

This is a 12-week walking program designed to increase the physical, spiritual, and emotional health of participants. We will be exercising the spiritual body by praying, exercising the mind by learning about locations throughout the countries that we pass through leaving Syria to get to Mars, and exercising the body through our physical activity.

It is our hope that during this journey you will learn a little about the life of a refugee. The “imaginary” trip from Syria will be accomplished by individuals in the congregation logging their own walking miles each week. For those who do not enjoy walking, any 20 minutes of exercise: gardening, biking, swimming, etc. can count as one mile.

If you prefer walking with others, group walks will take place on Sunday evenings at 7 pm at the Mars High School track.

We ask that you turn in your mileage forms weekly so we can track our progress. Place your forms in the basket in the greeting area.

So lace up your sneakers and come along. Learn a little, enjoy the outdoors and the company of other members of St. John, and hopefully, get a little healthier in the process.



Biblical Advice for Cheerful Givers

We've been told this since our days in Sunday school: We want to give and we need to give gladly. A spirit of generosity isn't enough to guide us in our decisions. What else does Scripture have to say on the subject?

Three kinds of financial giving are mentioned in the Bible: offerings, tithes and alms. Understanding what they mean helps us achieve a thoughtful, balanced plan for our cheerful giving.

Offerings and Tithing

On the first day of every week, each of you is to put aside and save whatever extra you earn, so that collections need not be taken when I come (1 Corinthians 16:2).

The faith practice of making a regular financial offering to your congregation is grounded in a “first fruits” philosophy.

We might think of this giving as “business as usual.” You pay the rent, you buy groceries and you contribute regularly to help carry out God’s mission in the world. Your generosity isn’t an afterthought; it’s part of your day-in-and-day-out joyful response as a child of God.

These offerings first help to support local ministries, outreach and more. Your congregation then shares a portion of your offering—mission support—with your synod and the churchwide expression. *Stories of Faith in Action* is filled with examples of how mission support enables us to do God’s work with our hands.

Many Christians talk about their regular contribution as a tithe. This helps them to differentiate between their financial commitment to their congregation and the special offerings they designate to specific causes. Such causes may include ELCA World Hunger, a program of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, your congregation’s building fund or a pan-Lutheran organization such as Lutheran World Relief.

We encourage your designated support of these worthy causes. But we also recommend that these offerings are given above and beyond, and never in place of, your commitment to your regular congregational offering.

*Each of you must give
as you have made up
your mind, for God loves
a cheerful giver.*

(2 Corinthians 9:7)

Alms

Sell your possessions, and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailling treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys (Luke 12:33).

Alms are our compassionate, heartfelt response to the people Jesus mentioned in Matthew 25: those “least” of our sisters and brothers who are “less” than we in circumstance only and always our equal in their humanity.

This is our most personal and spontaneous kind of giving in response to people in need. Think about the homeless man you see everyday by the bus stop or the family in your congregation whose home was lost during a fire. Your outreach makes God’s love for them feel very real and very immediate; your kindness reveals Christ’s presence within them as well.

Time and Talent

It’s also important to remember that when we focus exclusively on giving in terms of money alone, we lose sight of the bigger picture. God calls us to be generous in all areas our lives and invites us to explore the many opportunities to share ourselves through our time and talent.

When we ground our giving in a biblical context, our financial generosity becomes an expression of our love for God, for our neighbor and for ourselves. We are new people in Christ: compassionate and eager to share.

We give cheerfully because God has given us so much.

JULY BIRTHDAYS

07/03 Amber Fritz
07/06 Christopher Passione
07/12 Kathleen Schnelle
07/12 Krystal Smith
07/12 Victoria Lydon
07/13 Christopher Julio
07/13 Marcia Shepard
07/14 Katie Richards
07/15 Davena Hopson
07/19 Jean Claus
07/19 Larry McDonough
07/20 June Siembieda
07/20 Luca Julio
07/22 Jeff Ward
07/26 Chester Carbo
07/28 George Leikauf
07/30 Bob Dishong



AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

08/02 Emma Niklewicz
08/05 Leona Wills
08/05 Denise Hager
08/06 Gabrielle Baysek
08/08 Anne Olescyski
08/08 Fritz Bielo
08/13 Gretchen Baysek
08/14 Laura Greb
08/14 Ava Niklewicz
08/16 Rylee McDonald
08/17 Todd Niklewicz
08/17 Kayla Julio
08/24 Beverly Crislip
08/29 Ralph Storm
08/29 Paulina Scherrer

JULY ANNIVERSARIES

07/12 Dave & Cindy Knauff
07/14 Todd & Katie Niklewicz
07/20 Chester & Freida Carbo
07/21 Larry & Amy Werner
07/23 Nick & Tatiana Brower



AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

08/04 George & Jan Leikauf
08/25 John & Susan Fritz

Lutheran Day at Kennywood Monday, July 18, 2016



For additional information, go to www.kennywood.com or see the poster in the greeting area of the church.

If you would like to take advantage of the discount ticket price, some people from St. John's are planning an alternate day on **August 9** when the discount tickets will be honored.

Quilting Group July 11 & August 8 – 6:30 pm



If you already know how to quilt, or would like to learn, join us as we make more quilts to be distributed to LWR and other worthy causes. We meet in the

**St. John
Third Quarter Mission Emphasis –
Mars Public Library**

**Ladies Book Group
July 27 & August 31 – 7:15 pm**

**Mars 4th of July
Celebration**

Fun for the whole family!
Parade begins at 5 pm.

Fireworks begin at dark.



September 13 & 14 – Directory Picture Days

Communion Bread Schedule

July – Jan Leikauf

August – Gretchen Baysek

September – Jamie Weaver

REMINDER

The second Sunday of each month is Food Bank Sunday.

Please bring your donation of a non-perishable food item to worship on that day.



**July/August 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.

JULY

Usher

9:00 am Clarence Strabel

Assisting Minister

9:00 am Kelly Greb

AUGUST

Usher

9:00 am Cardinal family

Assisting Minister

9:00 am Missy Kramer

July/August Newsletter

Address service requested

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