

January  
2017

# St. John Lutheran Church

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

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Pastor Bob's email: [pastor@stjohnchurchmars.org](mailto: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.*

Dear friends in Christ,

The appointed Gospel reading for January 1<sup>st</sup> is:

<sup>13</sup>Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." <sup>14</sup>Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt... <sup>16</sup>When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. <sup>17</sup>Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah: <sup>18</sup>'A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.'" (Matthew 2:13-14, 16-18)

This passage, describing Jesus and family running for their lives and the slaughter of the innocents in Bethlehem, seems so jarring as just a week before there were angels singing, "Peace on earth and good will to all!" It would be nice to spend more time around the manger blissfully viewing the new baby. But in telling this horrific story Matthew shares with the reader that God does not come just in the times of bliss and warm fuzzies. I think that threat and tragedy is an appropriate companion to peace and goodwill, as it speaks honestly to the full reality of our lives.

As the year 2016 fades away and the New Year of 2017 comes in with the drop of a sparkly ball and fireworks, there is a lot of reflection on the past year. My Facebook feed has already asked me to share photos to remember 2016. Newspapers and magazines will reflect on the year that was. It has been a year of delight, but also a year of tragedy in places with names like Orlando, Dallas, Nice, Brussels, St. Paul, Aleppo, Berlin, and Chicago where the slaughter of the innocents is a present day horror, and also in our own small-town everyday lives.

There have been the celebrations of births of grandchildren, baptisms, confirmation and the welcoming of new members into the congregation. But we also feel the loss of those that have moved away. There have been joyous celebrations and exciting events over the past year; but we also grieve the deaths of family and friends. We struggled with illness and injuries for both old and young as we enjoy each day that has been given us. The honest reality of life is that there is both joyful singing and inconsolable weeping.

(continued)

Jesus was not born just for the good times of starlit nights. Emmanuel, God with us, comes also in the tension, fear, violence, horror and grief of our fallen world. If we are delighted that God is with us in Christmas Eve moments of celebrations, how much more important is it to know that God is with us in the very real times of fear, grief, and loss. It is the promise we find in the Isaiah text for Epiphany, that in the mist of the threats and tragedies of life: "...the glory of the Lord has risen upon you." (Isaiah 60:1)

As we move from the serenity of the manger into the uncertain future of a new year we trust in the guiding presence of God with us. May we know that in the joys and delights of the new year and in the inevitable sorrows and challenges that God is with us. I close with the Prayer of the Day for Epiphany, January 6<sup>th</sup>. Let us pray,

"O God, on this day you revealed your Son to the nations by the leading of a star. Lead us now by faith to know your presence in our lives, and bring us at last to the full vision of your glory, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever." Amen.

Blessings this new year.  
*Pastor Bob Zimmerman*

### **Annual Meeting – Sunday, January 22, 2017**

There will be one worship service on Sunday, January 22 at 9:00 am. Our annual meeting will immediately follow. We encourage all members of the congregation to attend. There will be a light breakfast in the greeting area following the meeting.

# Thank You

*Dear congregation of St. John,*

*Thank You very much for the generous gifts you gave to us on Christmas.*

*They are much appreciated and will find some very good uses.*

*With gratitude we wish you a blessed New Year*

*Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Bob Zimmerman  
Jacob Gordon, & Margie Baker*

## **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.



## **Save the Date!!** **Youth Pizza & Bowling**

**Sunday, February 12 following  
worship**

**For all youth age ten and up  
More information soon**

### **Elders Meetings - 2017**

The Elders will now meet on the second Sunday of each month at 9:00 am.

**LIGHT BREAKFAST**  
**January 22**

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

**Quilting Group**  
**January 9 – 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**  
**January 25 – 7:00pm**

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



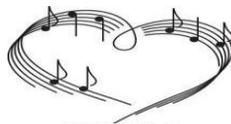
**Save the Date!**

**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 is around \$5.00. Fun time, Good Food, & Great Fellowship!

**Music Together Program**



The next session begins on Wednesday, January 4 at 10 am in the Fellowship Hall, and will continue each Wednesday through March 8.

You may register online at <http://marylynnebennettpianostudio.weebly.com/music-together-registration.html>, email at [mlobie1@gmail.com](mailto:mlobie1@gmail.com) or 412-436-9579. This program is for early childhood through age 5 and their parents/caregivers.

The Second Sunday of each month is  
Food Bank Sunday.

**2017 Vestry**  
**St. John Lutheran Church**

**Deacons**

Missy Kramer, Chair  
Ruth Ann Tully, Secretary  
Erin Weaver, Representative to Council  
Jan Leikauf  
Denise Hager  
Cindy Knauff  
Kim Richards

**Elders**

Tanya Nagel, Chair  
Kelly Greb, Secretary  
Katie Niklewicz, Representative to Council  
Martha Ward  
Sally Foster  
Gretchen Baysek  
Valerie Cardinal

**Trustees**

Jamie Weaver, Chair  
Bill Greb, Secretary  
Matt Claus, Representative to Council  
George Leikauf  
Todd Niklewicz  
Bob Dishong  
Reed Richards

**Mission Endowment**

Christine Dishong, Chair  
Tanya Nagel  
Valerie Cardinal  
George Leikauf  
Jacob Gordon  
Missy Kramer

**Church Council**

Denise Hager, President  
Sally Foster, Vice President  
Martha Ward, Secretary  
Jan Leikauf, Treasurer  
Christine Dishong, Financial Secretary  
Missy Kramer, Chair of Deacons  
Erin Weaver, Representative of Deacons  
Tanya Nagel, Chair of Elders  
Katie Niklewicz, Representative of Elders  
Jamie Weaver, Chair of Trustees  
Matt Claus, Representative of Trustees  
Rev. Robert Zimmerman, Pastor



### JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 01/07 Justin Waibel
- 01/08 Francis Kratz
- 01/08 Thelma 'Jane' Smith
- 01/11 Frederick Ludolff, Jr.
- 01/16 Chuck Olescyski
- 01/24 Madison Cardinal
- 01/27 Gianna Julio

**Upcoming Events**  
**February 5 – Food, Fun & Faith (Youth)**  
**February 12 – Youth Group Bowling**

**Communion Bread Schedule**  
**January – Kim Richards**  
**February - TBD**

## JANUARY

### 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 Matt Claus

10:30 am Valerie Cardinal

#### Ushers

8:00 am

10:30 am

#### Communion Assistants

8:00 am

10:30 am

# January Newsletter

Address service requested

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