

May
2017

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
PO Box 411
420 Beaver Street
Mars, PA 16046

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

Dear friends in Christ,

In February, the vestry spent a day of retreat in prayer and planning. One result of that day was the setting of three specific congregation goals for this year: Improve communication; Grow Stewardship; and Increase our Community Outreach. Over the next few months I will use this space to reflect on each of these important goals, beginning with improving communication.

As a congregation we exist as a large group of those that have been gathered as God's people in this place, but we are also sub-groups. We have two services, folks active with children and youth and others deeply involved with serving meals or worship or visiting our home bound. Some folks help with the needs of the building and grounds while others carefully see to the finances of the congregation. Often one group often has little idea of what ministry the other is up to. Communication is key to helping everyone to know what is going on and opportunities to participate, but also to allow each of us to be aware of the variety of activities and service St. John is doing in the name of the Lord.

In this Easter season, I am reminded of Matthew 28, as the women find the tomb empty and an angel sitting on the stone that had been rolled away from the entrance. Now the word angel means messenger, and the message delivered to Mary Magdalene and the other Mary was, "Do not be afraid...he is not here for he is raised...go quickly and tell the other disciple...he is going ahead of you to Galilee, there you will see him." (vs. 16, 17) They in turn, after their encounter with the risen Lord, rush off to fulfill their obligation, successfully we presume for "the eleven disciples went to Galilee." (vs.16) Without those women sharing what they experienced, somehow God's work would be accomplished (see Mark's account of the same events), but it was a lot easier with their participation.

It is important to share what we expect to experience, not just what will happen, but also where God has reached into our lives in a new way. Strategies to improve communication include more vestry involvement to expand our newsletter to include articles about what has happened as well as what is coming up - and include pictures! Also, to find ways to improve communication between Pastor, council and congregation so all are better informed. Any ideas you may have will be appreciated.

Communication - the giving and getting of information seems so basic it should be easy - but in the midst of busy lives and hectic times, things fall through the cracks. But to be God's people we need to continually share where each of us have seen the Lord in order to be equipped to share the Good News. I am reminded of what Paul writes in Romans that ties in with the footprints theme we have used this past year: "*And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!'*" (Romans 10:14b-15)

May we find new ways to bring the Good News!
Eastertide Blessings,
Pastor Bob Zimmerman

You're Invited:

Joint Lutheran and Catholic 500 Year Commemoration Comes to Us on June 29

An Evening of Witness and Thanksgiving – June 29, 2017 – Time: TBA

St. Kilian Roman Catholic Church, Mars

Theme: TESTIMONIAL AND THANKSGIVING

From a letter from the region's bishops:

Five centuries ago a movement known as the “Reformation” sought to bring reform to the Church. Tragically, one of the results of the Reformation was division among the followers of Jesus Christ. Happily, thru the grace of God, in the last 50 years, after ongoing official conversations between the theologians of our churches, we are enjoying growth in reconciliation, though we are not yet able to share together the Body and Blood of Christ in the Sacrament of the Altar.

As the Catholic and Lutheran bishops of southwestern Pennsylvania, we invite you to join us as we celebrate our growing unity in Jesus Christ. Together we commit ourselves, along with the people of our churches, to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. During this year of commemoration, we invite you to join us in allowing the gospel of Jesus Christ to transform us for a more visible unity through prayer, acts of mercy and common pursuit of peace with justice.

We, your bishops, who share a common commitment to a more visible unity as the body of Christ in the world, pledge our time, mutual prayers and actions in witness and service in this year of commemoration of the Reformation. We invite you to join us “on the way!” Become part of the ongoing conversations by joining us on Facebook: Lutherans and Catholics on the Way in Southwestern Pennsylvania!

The Rev. Kurt F. Kusserow
Bishop, SWPA Synod,
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

The Most Reverend David A. Zubik
Bishop of the Roman Catholic
Diocese of Pittsburgh

The Most Reverend William C. Skurla
Metropolitan of the Byzantine Catholic
Archeparchy of the Pittsburgh

The Most Reverend Edward C. Malesic
Bishop of the Roman Catholic
Diocese of Greensburg

This is my body.....

In the Use of the Means of Grace (1) it states that in accordance with the words of institution, this church uses bread and wine in the celebration of the Lords Supper. We therefore have the privilege of providing this bread.

There are 2 types of bread, leavened (made with yeast) and unleavened or flatbread. Leavened bread is a loaf that is broken and passed at table and can be baked by embers or purchased. The loaf is the most ancient practice of the church and suggests the connection between the Eucharist and ordinary life (1).

The use of unleavened bread has its roots in the Passover and is present in the accounts of the Last Supper (1).

We do not know what kind of bread was used at the last supper. Jesus and the disciples probably gathered for a Passover Seder meal of unleavened bread. The Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke refer to it as a Passover meal while John says it took place before Passover (1). In the early church, leavened bread was used.

The Use of the Means of Grace suggests a loaf of bread and a chalice are encouraged since they signify the unity which the sacrament bestows. We sing One bread, one body.....one cup of blessing which we bless.....we are one body in this one Lord (2). Read also hymn 465 in the ELW hymnal.

The bread can be made from scratch or purchased. Giant Eagle has a bread called English Toasting bread which is appropriate for communion. The pre-frozen loaves from the freezer section at the grocery store also work very well. Once partially thawed the loaf can be cut in half and then the directions on the package followed to make 2 good sized loaves. Or if you wish bread can be "from scratch". I looked at a web site, the Reluctant Gourmet (3) for some tips for homemade bread. Dough risen in a warm place gets done sooner while a cool, slow rise results in a better flavor. He also suggests to not use flour when kneading the dough but rather spray your surface with cooking spray. Sometimes it is very hard to judge how much flour to use when the recipe says use 4-7 cups of flour. What?? The reluctant Gourmet gives this bit of chemistry. The ratio of flour to water (or other liquid) is 2 to one. So, for every 4.4 oz. of flour use 2.2 oz. of liquid and even if the dough is sticky it will "be OK". Sometimes bread is crumbly because of too much flour so reduce by ¼ cup or add warm water by the teaspoon if the dough still seems too dry.

Fleischman Yeast (4) web site has lots of recipes and tips. To store bread keep it wrapped and stored in a bread box at room temperature. Keep it out of the refrigerator. For longer term storage, freeze it in an airtight plastic bag or wrapped in aluminum foil.

Baking our bread for communion is a gift we all share in and receive the gift in gratitude, trusting Christ's real presence in this sacrament. (1)

1. The Use of the Means of Grace: A Statement on the Practice of Word and Sacrament. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1997
2. One Bread, One Body, ELW page 492
3. The Reluctant Gourmet
4. Fleischman's Yeast

Reminder Summer Worship Schedule

We will revert to our summer worship schedule on **Sunday, May 28 with one service at 9:00 am.**

**Fellowship Breakfast
Sunday, May 2, 2017**



Join us between worship services for great food, conversation and fellowship!

**Bible Study
Wednesdays – Noon**

Bring your lunch and your bible and join us for bible study each Wednesday at noon. All are welcome!

**Quilting Group
May 8 – 6:00 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
May 24 – 7:00 pm**

The Ladies Book Club is currently reading “Sensible Shoes” by Sharon Garlough Brown. It follows four women who meet at a retreat center and begin a spiritual journey as their lives are interwoven. We meet to discuss the book and share our insights and learn from each other, and we laugh, which is equally good for the soul! Meetings are in the ‘living room’ section of the Fellowship Hall. If you would like to join us, the book is available from Amazon and Barnes & Noble.

Youth Group News

May 6 – Senior Bowling @ SJLCC – 1:45 pm

May 21 – Food, Fun & Faith – 11:45 am



**Camp Blast at Lutherlyn
FREE!**

Saturday, May 13, 2017 – 11am – 4:30 pm

Join us for a day of fun that highlights all that Lutherlyn has to offer. Horseback riding, crafts, campfire, gaga, archery, ropes course, zipline, hikes, nature activities, canoeing, kayaking, hayrides, sports and much more!

Great food, worship, presentations and the best part, **EVERYTHING IS FREE!**

**Mars New Year Celebration
May 4-6, 2017**

Celebrate the New Year on the planet Mars
in the town of Mars!

Highlighting exploration and innovation
by celebration.

A great family event with something for
everyone! See the borough web site for a
schedule of activities. <http://marsborough.com/>



**9th Annual Mars Band on the Run
5k, 10k, & 1k Children's Fun Run**

May 20, 2017

8:55am (10k)

9:00am (5k)

Mars Area High School



MAY BIRTHDAYS

- 05/05 Nick Brower
- 05/08 Erin Weaver
- 05/08 Amy Werner
- 05/11 Ruth Ann Tully
- 05/14 Valerie Cardinal
- 05/18 John Tully
- 05/20 Olivia Claus
- 05/23 Steve Schnelle
- 05/28 Janmarie Leikauf
- 05/31 Carolyn Jarrett
- 05/31 Grace Kratz

Hold the Date!

- May 6 – Stewardship Training – 9am-3pm
- May 13 – Camp Blast at Lutherlyn
- May 21 – Youth Group – 11:45 am

Communion Bread Schedule

- May – Cindy Knauff
- June – Sally Foster

Counters for May

Matt Claus & Valerie Cardinal

May

Worship Helpers

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

Assisting Ministers

- 8:00 am Ruth Ann Tully
- 10:30 am Valerie Cardinal

Ushers

- 8:00 am John Tully
- 10:30 am Cardinal's

Communion Assistants

- 8:00 am
- 10:30 am

May Newsletter

Address service requested

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 420 BEAVER STREET
 P.O. BOX 411
 MARS, PA 16046