

September
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
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Mars, PA 16046

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Church Office: (724) 625-1830
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Pastor's Cell #: 412-585-1628

Dear Friends in Christ,

Exciting events and grace-filled days are happening here at St. John! Because of you, your family, and our congregational family, the gospel is being boldly proclaimed and the joy of God's grace in Christ is celebrated in marvelous ways. Indeed, through our ministry together, from our offerings to education and service, countless lives are being touched with the love of Christ.

As we look ahead to ministry as a family of faith at St. John, we are embarking on an initiative that will help us grow in ministry and ways we can bring connections with people and Christ. This initiative is a three-year discipleship and generosity growing opportunity for the whole congregation. Our ministry initiative is called ***"First, We Give of Ourselves."*** This emphasis will be a celebration of our ministry and growing in the delight of God's grace. As we consider the gift of grace in Christ, we will also explore the joy of our giving in grace.

This fall, the focus of ***"First, We Give of Ourselves"*** will be ***"Giving in Grace."*** We will explore together, the wonderful gift of God's grace in Christ and how it is the foundation of our discipleship and giving. In the fall of 2018, our focus will center around the second facet of our ministry initiative, ***"Giving in Gratitude."*** We will explore the spiritual nature of gratitude and how it encourages us to give of ourselves in response to God's grace in Christ. Then, in the fall of 2019, we will follow through with the focus of ***"Giving in Generosity."*** What does it mean to experience God's generosity and to give with generous hearts? These are questions that will engage our sense of discipleship and invite us to grow in the sharing of gifts for ministry. We are looking forward to this three-year period being a time of intentional growth in discipleship and generosity.

Our Kick-Off Sunday for ***"First, We Give of Ourselves: Giving in Grace"*** will be Sunday, October 8th. Our fall emphasis will culminate with a celebration of ministry and the sharing of commitments of how we can "give of ourselves" in ministry on Sunday, November 19th with one joint worship service and a celebration luncheon following.

Another important element of this emphasis is an **"all congregation" Bible Study entitled *"Giving in Grace."*** We are offering this study on multiple times and days beginning the week of October 15. Attend on Wednesdays at the regular brown bag bible study, on Thursday evenings with Pastor Bob at 7:00 p.m. or on Sunday mornings at 9:00 as part of the Sunday School Adult group. You are invited to be a part of these conversations.

Plan to be on hand in worship and join a "Giving in Grace" Bible Study this fall as we consider together how, ***"First, We Give of Ourselves"***. How exciting it will be to grow together in discipleship and the joy of generosity.

Rejoicing in God's Grace,
Pastor Bob Zimmerman



Weekly Spoken Morning Prayer Wednesdays – 11:30 am – beginning September 6

Beginning on September 6, Pastor Zimmerman will lead a liturgy of Morning Prayer in the sanctuary at 11:30 am on Wednesdays before the brown bag bible study. A feature of this contemplative time of worship is an opportunity to weekly pray together the entire prayer list as found in the bulletin each week, along with other prayer requests.

All are invited to come and participate, whether or not you stay for lunch and bible study. If you have joys or concerns you wish lifted up in prayer, but are unable to attend, please email them to pastor@stjohnchurchmars.org.



Six Week Revelation Bible Study Begins September 6 & 7

Two Separate Days – Sign Up Now!

Ever wonder about the Book of Revelation and the “end times?” Revelation is a book of the bible that seems to intimidate or confuse a lot of people. What is often misunderstood as a fearful ending, is the hope-filled promise of a new beginning.

A six-session study will explore this difficult book and compare what is really there next to popular interpretations of the end times.

Sign up now to join Pastor Zimmerman on **Wednesdays at noon beginning September 6 or Thursday evenings at 7:00 pm beginning on September 7**. We will meet in the fellowship hall so children can play in the nursery either time/day. There is a sign-up sheet in the greeting area, please indicate if you plan to attend so sufficient handouts can be available.



Sunday School Rally Day & Waffle and Ice Cream Breakfast! September 10, 2017

Join us as we kick-off a new Sunday School season with a delicious waffle and ice cream breakfast! All are welcome!

We hope the children of our congregation will take advantage of this Sunday School time each week to learn more about their faith.

As we give, so we live

Winston Churchill reportedly said that “we make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.” According to Churchill then, our lives are defined less by what we have gotten, and more by what we give away.

Our Lord’s life is defined in this way. He gave completely of Himself for us. He became man for us. He taught the truth of God’s Word. He healed those with many and various diseases. He died the death that we deserve because of sin. He gave of Himself in order to save us from sin, death, and hell. And so, it is that by giving completely of Himself, He got for Himself us, making us citizens of His eternal kingdom by grace.

As it was for Jesus, so it is also for us. We get more from giving than we do from simply getting. For giving softens our hearts and frees us from the grip which the worries of this world and making a living has on us. For when we are singularly focused on making a living, we are singularly focused on what we get. That mindset begins to bleed into all areas of our lives—our relationships with friends and family, with neighbors and coworkers, and with the Lord. It shifts our focus from asking the question—How can I be a friend, family member, neighbor, and servant to others?—to asking the question—what have they done for me lately? We become more selfish instead of selfless.

But when we give, we do not have less, we have more because when we give we join in the bond of friendship and family, the bond of service to those around us out of love for them. And love is the fulfillment of the Law. It is the nature of God Himself, for God is Love. Thus, we are reflecting the divine nature. As Jesus said, “It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35).

From the Stewardship Ministry of the Lutheran Church –Missouri Synod. Used by permission.



Biblical Botanical Garden

The Biblical Botanical Garden located at Rodef Shalom Temple, 4905 Fifth Avenue in the Shadyside are of Pittsburgh is free to the public and open for tours.

The garden displays more than 100 plants once grown in ancient Israel, all labeled with biblical verses. The garden is open during the day Sunday through Thursday from 10 am to 2 pm ***through September 15.***

There is one more guided tour available on Wednesday, September 6. For more information contact Rodef Shalom at 412-621-6566.

Join Us!
Saturday, September 16, 2017
9:00 am – 3:00 pm
God's Work. Our Hands.

Hosted by Glade Run Lutheran Services & Passavant, Zelienople.
Includes worship, lunch, and a variety of service projects on both campuses.

CHILI COOK-OFF



September 23, 2017
11 am – 2pm
St. John Lutheran Church

Do you make the best chili on the “planet?”
Well, prove it!

Bring your roaster of chili for judging on Saturday, **September 23, 2017 from 11am to 2 pm.** Bragging rights are at stake here! If you would like to enter your special chili recipe, **please fill out the form below and return to St. John's by September 9, 2017. Entry fee is \$25, tasters are welcome for a fee of \$5.** Taster tickets will be available at the door. All checks should be made out to St. John Lutheran Church.

All participants should arrive by 10am on the day of the cook-off to set up.

St. John Chili Cook-Off Entry Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____ Email: _____

Affiliation (church/business/individual): _____

Type of Chili (name or secret recipe): _____

Entry Fee of \$25 must be included with entry form.

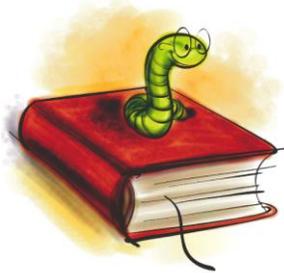
Checks should be made payable to St. John Lutheran Church.



Kid's Club – September 29
6:30-8:00 pm

Come and join us!

Our Kid's Club program at St. John is for kids age 4-10 (or if they attend Sunday School). This We will have music, stories, games, free play, a craft to take home and a snack. Come and join us! If you have any questions, please speak to Tanya Nagel, Sally Foster or Denise Hager.



Ladies Book Group
September 20 – 7:00-8:00 pm

Meetings are in the 'living room' section of the Fellowship Hall if you would like to join us. Contact Sally or Denise for upcoming book selections!

Quilting Group
September 11 – 6:00 pm

Are you interested in quilting or would you like to learn?
Our group meets on the second Monday of each month at St. John. The quilts currently displayed in the sanctuary were made by the group and will be sent to Lutheran World Relief to be distributed. If you are interested or would like to know more, join us!



Music Together Program
Fall Session Begins September 12 – 10 am

This program is for early childhood through age 5 and their parents/caregivers.

Fall session will run from September 12 through November 14. Join us on **Tuesday, September 12 at 10 am** in the Fellowship Hall. We will continue each Tuesday if enough register. You may register online at:

<http://marylynnebennettpianostudio.weebly.com/music-together-registration.html>, email at mlobie1@gmail.com or 412-436-9579.

Walk to Wittenberg

In honor of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation, join us on a journey of faith through June 2018.

Congregations are invited to team up to walk (or run, bike, swim, etc.) 4, 203 miles over the year, the equivalent of the distance from Pittsburgh to Wittenberg, Germany. Wittenberg is the home of Castle Church where Martin Luther nailed the 95 Theses to the door.

There is a sign-up sheet and additional information in the greeting area.



News and Updates

An exciting year is planned with plenty of activities and opportunities to have fun and grow in faith.

Beginning on **Sunday, September 10**, there will be a new weekly Youth Group Gathering during the 9 am Sunday School hour. This will be a time of **Lifelong Learning** for youth in 6th grade and above. Ms. Ruth Ann Tully will be your guide as you continue to explore and deepen your faith using some dynamic materials. We invite you to be a part of this new opportunity to become a part of this new chapter in our youth ministry. For those in Confirmation (grades 6-8), active participation will be a required part of the program.

On **Saturday, September 16**, congregations in our area will take part in the church-wide “God’s Work, Our Hands,” Day of Service at Glade Run Lutheran Services and the Passavant campus of Lutheran Senior Life in Zelienople. This will be from 9 am-3 pm and will include worship, lunch, and a variety of service projects on both campuses. Save the date and stay tuned for more details soon.

This year we will also be getting together with the youth from Mars UP Church for certain activities in order to mix it up a bit and be part of a larger group. There will be a “get to know you” joint time of fun and fellowship on **Sunday, September 24 from 6 – 8 pm at Mars UP Church**. We will also participate with them in a service project on **Saturday, September 30**. Over the course of the year, there will be other exciting opportunities to do things together, including retreats and a ski trip!

Beginning October 7, we will once again be helping the monthly **Bowling League at St. John Specialty Care Center**. This will be on the **first Saturday of each month at 1:45 pm**. Your participation is needed as pin setters and helping hands to provide this fun program for the seniors.

This fall, we are looking ahead to return **to World Vision in Sewickley** to once again help with the goods they distribute around the world. More information on that soon.

Martin Luther (the movie)
October 15 – 5:30 pm
Strand Theater
Zelienople, PA

In commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, English Lutheran Church in Zelienople will present the movie. Seating is limited to 250. Tickets may be ordered by emailing: maxwelljk6500@gmail.com. Tickets will be emailed to you. Donations accepted.



Baptism

On September 3, we welcome **Ella Kay Niklewicz** into the community of faith of St. John through baptism. Parents are Katie & Todd Niklewicz, sisters Ava and Emma, and sponsors are Denise & Jim Hager.

Welcome, Ella Kay!



Upcoming Events

October 7 – Youth Group @ SJSCC
October 8 – Kick-off for ‘Giving in Grace’

Communion Bread Schedule

September – Carol Zimmerman

October – Denise Hager

Counters for September

Valerie Cardinal & Jamie Weaver



9/29 - Kelly & William Greb – 16 years

September

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.

SEPTEMBER

Assisting Minister

8:00 am Marlene Strabel

10:30 am Martha Ward

Usher

8:00 am Bob Dishong

10:30 am Jamie Weaver

Communion Assistants

8:00 am Ruth Ann Tully

10:30 am James Ward

- 09/02 Nicholas Claus, Jr.
- 09/02 Jacqueline Black
- 09/04 Larry Werner
- 09/06 Nick Claus
- 09/09 Angelina Passione
- 09/09 Sally Foster
- 09/10 Winifred Stefko
- 09/13 Clarence Strabel
- 09/16 Jamie Weaver
- 09/17 Kelly Greb
- 09/26 Geena Provenzano
- 09/27 Susan Fritz
- 09/29 Danielle Dishong
- 09/30 Matt Claus

September Newsletter

Address service requested

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