

January
2018

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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420 Beaver Street
Mars, PA 16046

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

Dear friends in Christ,

The wrapping paper is in the trash; the pine needles are on the floor (who said artificial trees do not lose needles?) Decorations are being put away - including nativity sets until the next year. It seems like Christmas is over but the wonder of the Incarnation continues.

The week after Christmas I am leading worship at Overbrook Pointe, on the Lutheran Senior Life St. John Campus. It is the usual final Thursday of the month, which this year happens to be December 28th, the commemoration of the Holy Innocents. The account found only in Matthew of King Herod, unable to identify the newborn Jesus, sends his troops to slaughter all the children in Bethlehem under two years old. (Mat 2:13-18).

Coming so soon after we have heard the stories of angels singing, shepherds and an innocent babe in a manger, we have this jarring tale of ruthless power and heartache with the holy family fleeing to Egypt to escape tragedy. I have been thinking about this part of the birth narrative (that we rarely hear in worship) as the other side of the coin of Incarnation. Jesus born into the world, an innocent child is heartwarming and peaceful, an image to warm our hearts on these cold days. But the other side of the incarnation is that Jesus truly did come into this world in the very messy way of childbirth and immediately shared with humanity the experience of the "dark side" of humanity with all its self-serving, clinging to precarious power, and active resistance to the "new thing" God was and is up to in the world through Jesus.

At many different levels this text is a reminder of the ongoing struggle, as Luther put it against, "sin, death and the devil." Literally as I write this, reports are coming in of at least 40 people killed and dozens wounded in an Afghanistan bombing as the slaughter of innocents continues. It is a reminder of how Christianity is not a religion of power, but countercultural and a challenge to "powers and principalities." It is a reminder that Emanuel - God with us is with us in the midst of the worst that life and the world can throw at us - God's purpose will not be thwarted.

May the joy and peace of the nativity carry over into the difficult and messiness of your everyday life as the Incarnation of our Lord comes right into the midst of the human condition. Thanks be to God!

In Christ,
Pastor Bob Zimmerman

PS:

Thank you congregation for the generous Christmas gift and thanks for all the cookies, and gracious gifts from so many. They are a blessing and much appreciated! - PB

Annual Meeting – January 21, 2018

The annual meeting of St. John will be on January 21, immediately following worship. There will be only one worship service that day at 10:00 am. The agenda of the meeting includes receiving the annual report and voting on the 2018 congregational budget.

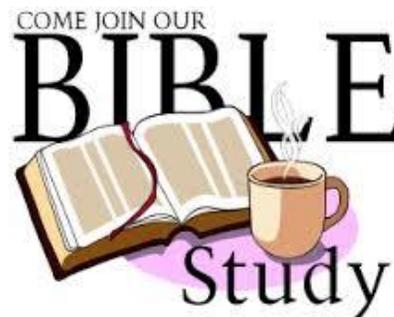


Weekly Spoken Morning Prayer Wednesdays – 11:30 am

Pastor Zimmerman leads 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.

Brown Bag Bible Study

Join Pastor Zimmerman on **Wednesdays at noon** for the lunchtime Bible Study. Bring your own lunch. We will meet in the fellowship hall.



Holiday Blood Drive at St. John's Fellowship Hall Sunday, January 7, 2018 - 8:00 am – 1:00 pm

Your blood donation matters. Every two seconds, someone needs blood. Each year, 4.5 million Americans would die without blood transfusions. A simple act of faith on your part can help a hospitalized patient survive.

To schedule your life saving appointment, log on to www.centralbloodbank.org and enter code G0030128 or call the church office at 724-625-1830.

All Vestry Retreat – February 10 9:00 am – 2:00 pm

We will gather at the "Cider House" at Treesdale for a day of discernment, planning, and worship. All members of the vestry, and congregation council are asked to attend.

Mission Emphasis – Camp Lutherlyn

During the first quarter of 2018, all Mission Emphasis gifts will be given to Camp Lutherlyn and the Mission Endowment and Outreach Committee will match all gifts received. Please consider helping this great organization to they may continue to share Christ's love and mercy with all who participate in their camps and activities.

If you would like more information, please speak to one of our committee members. Thank you!

**2018 Vestry
St. John Lutheran Church**

Deacons

Kim Richards, Chair
Karen Collins, Secretary
Erin Weaver, Representative to Council
Denise Hager
Cindy Knauff
Anne Olescyski
Ruth Ann Tully

Elders

Tanya Nagel, Chair
Kelly Greb, Secretary
Valerie Cardinal, Representative to Council
Katie Niklewicz
Chuck Olescyski
Jessica Schneider

Trustees

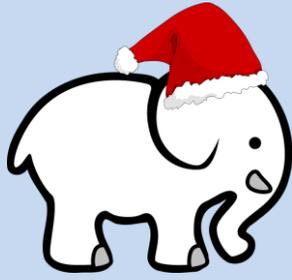
Jamie Weaver, Chair
Dave Knauff, Secretary
Larry Werner, Representative to Council
Bob Dishong
Bill Greb
Todd Niklewicz
Reed Richards

Mission Endowment

Christine Dishong, Chair
Valerie Cardinal
Sally Foster
Missy Kramer
George Leikauf
Tanya Nagel

Church Council

Denise Hager, President
Katie Niklewicz, Vice President
Ruth Ann Tully, Secretary
Jan Leikauf, Treasurer
Christine Dishong, Financial Secretary
Kim Richards, Chair of Deacons
Erin Weaver, Representative of Deacons
Tanya Nagel, Chair of Elders
Valerie Cardinal, Representative of Elders
Jamie Weaver, Chair of Trustees
Larry Werner, Representative of Trustees
Rev. Robert Zimmerman, Pastor



White Elephant Bingo & Potluck Dinner

January 6, 2018 – 4:00-7:00 pm
St. John's Fellowship Hall

Please bring a wrapped gift (\$5 value) to use as a bingo prize and a covered dish to share (not required, always lots of food and snacks).

Family friendly! Bring the kids, friends, grandkids or neighbors!

Sunday School Project January 7 Project – Baby Kit

January 7 project will be Welcome Home Baby Kit – Help the women in the Light of Life Mission welcome home their babies with a basket filled with bottles, baby blankets, bibs, baby shampoo, wipes and diapers.

Ladies Book Group January 24 – 3:00 pm

Our next selection for the book group is "Where'd You Go, Bernadette?" by Maria Semple. This book is quite different from our usual choices and is quoted by the New York Times as "divinely funny." We will meet **January 24 at 3 pm at the home of Denise Hager.**

Kid's Club

January 26 – 6:00-8:00 pm

Our Kid's Club program at St. John is for kids age 4-10 (or if they attend Sunday School).

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.

Quilting Group - The Quilting Group will not meet in January.



January 6 Assist with Bowling League at St. John Specialty Care Center – meet in lobby at 1:45 pm.

Don't forget Lifelong Learning with Ms. Tully on Sunday mornings at 9:00 am!

Music Together Free Demo Class at St. John January 9, 2018 10:00 am

Join Mary Lynne Bennett for her music class for early childhood through age 5 and their parents/caregivers.

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



January Birthdays

- 01/07 Justin Waibel
- 01/08 Francis Kratz
- 01/11 Frederick Ludloff Jr.
- 01/16 Chuck Olescyski
- 01/21 Kathleen Marshall
- 01/24 Madison Cardinal
- 01/27 Gianna Julio

Upcoming Events

February 10 – Vestry Retreat
February 14 – Ash Wednesday

Communion Bread Schedule

January – Reed Richards
February – Karen Collins

Counters for January
TBD

**January
Worship Helpers**

Assisting Minister

8:00 am Matt Claus
10:30 am Valerie Cardinal

Usher

8:00 am
10:30 am Jamie Weaver

Communion Assistants

8:00 am
10:30 am

January Newsletter

Address service requested

ST JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH
420 BEAVER STREET
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MARS, PA 16046