

January  
2019

# 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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Dear friends in Christ.

The Christmas season we just celebrated is all about God active in our midst, Emanuel, God with us. God's activity is found in worship, as the Word is read and proclaimed, bread broken and wine poured. God has been active in the ministry we do for the sake of others: through our regular offerings; with the angel tree gifts to children; our support of the food bank; the help we have given the Daini family, the refugees from Nigeria living in Pittsburgh; cookies baked for Meals on Wheels; and more. God present in our care for one another: cards sent, phone calls and visits made, Advent bags shared.

I also believe God has been active in the hearts of faithful members who left substantial financial bequests to this congregation over the past year. As many are worried about the financial sustainability of the congregation, seemingly out of the blue we receive a significant gift that has been set aside to relieve the pressure of some pending major building and maintenance issues, while a portion was designated by the donor to build up our Mission Investment Fund to serve others. Unexpectedly, at the end of December another generous estate gift arrives in our mailbox, easing end of year financial worries. While long term financial concerns continue, ministry here at St. John has been sustained in an extraordinary way and I firmly believe God has something to do with it, just as we have been called by God to be the church in this place.

As we begin the New Year, two scripture verses resonate in my head. First, from Luke 12, Jesus tells the disciples about faithful living. After describing how you need not worry, God will provide, Jesus tells the parable of the unfaithful servant who knows what is expected, but does not do what is required while his master is away. Jesus concludes this section by saying, "From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required; and from one to whom much has been entrusted, even more will be demanded."

The other verse is one that is heard at baptism as the candle is lit, "...let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5:16) God provides in astounding and marvelous ways, and calls us to use the gifts given us for the sake of God's mission and work in the world, not simply to survive.

In 2019, may we continually remember that God has placed this little piece of Christ's Church here in this place. The Mission Planning Task force, with the help of your input this fall will be completing its recommendations and the Vestry will be able to use this resource as we continue (as our mission statement declares), to **worship**, **serve** and **share** for the glory of God.

In this Epiphany time, let the light of Christ shine on you- and may we let it shine for others.

Blessings,  
Pastor Bob Zimmerman

## Annual Meeting – January 20, 2019

The annual meeting of St. John will be on **January 20**, 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 2019 congregational budget.

### **Stewardship of time**

*O God, teach us to count our days that we may gain a wise heart.- Psalm 90:12*

What does it mean to count our days? Certainly, the poet who wrote Psalm 90:12 was thinking of more than arithmetic, which may not necessarily gain us a wise heart. Wisdom comes from perspective, from painful introspection and prayerful deliberation.

We count in order to know not only how many days we have *lived*, but to ponder how many days we might have *left*. Counting, we remember that we are finite creatures whose lives march forward in steady 24-hour steps, carrying us from birth to death. Knowing, then, that our days are numbered, we appreciate each one more fully.

We count our days to gain the wisdom that every day is sacred; every day presents opportunities to live more fully in relationship with God and our neighbors; every day is for love and joy and peace and fulfillment. Yet it's all too easy to let the days slip away.

This month consider a focus on stewardship of your time – how you spend every day God gives you. Here is a “to do” list for making the most of every day:

- **Pray:** Begin each day communicating with the creator of the universe, meditating on Scripture or a wise Christian author. Even 10 minutes. End by praying Psalm 118:24: “This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.”
- **Care:** Convey through word or deed how much you care about someone in your life. Call up an old friend or relative. Invite a co-worker to lunch.
- **Help:** Look for some way to assist someone. Volunteer. Hold a door open for someone entering a store behind you. Stop for a pedestrian who wants to cross the street.
- **Enrich:** Find something that will deepen your knowledge, understanding or appreciation of the world. Read a poem or book. Listen to a sermon podcast or educational news program.
- **Stop.** That's right, do nothing. For at least 10 minutes (use your smart phone timer) sit quietly, breathe deeply and try to clear the busy thoughts from your mind. Open your spirit to God's presence.
- **Be healthy:** Do something to increase your physical health, such as eating a nutritious meal or taking a walk.
- **Pray:** End every day thanking the creator of the universe for another wonderful day. A day you have counted and that you have made count.

Focus on stewardship of time and see how your own life will change. Make it a permanent part of your discipleship.

--Rob Blezard

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**2019 Vestry**  
**St. John Lutheran Church**

**Deacons**

Jamie Weaver, Chair  
Jan Leikauf, Secretary  
Anne Olescyski, Representative to Council  
Karen Collins  
Ruth Ann Tully  
Kim Richards  
Erin Weaver

**Elders**

Chuck Olescyski, Chair  
Matt Claus, Secretary  
Valerie Cardinal, Representative to Council  
Keith Cardinal  
Jeff Ward  
Sally Foster  
Missy Kramer

**Trustees**

Bob Dishong, Chair  
John Tully, Secretary  
Dave Knauff, Representative to Council  
Bill Greb  
Todd Niklewicz  
Larry Werner

**Church Council**

Missy Kramer, President  
Keith Cardinal, Vice President  
Ruth Ann Tully, Secretary  
Jan Leikauf, Treasurer  
Christine Dishong, Financial Secretary  
Jamie Weaver, Chair of Deacons  
Anne Olescyski, Representative of Deacons  
Chuck Olescyski, Chair of Elders  
Valerie Cardinal, Representative of Elders  
Bob Dishong, Chair of Trustees  
Dave Knauff, Representative of Trustees  
Rev. Robert Zimmerman, Pastor



## White Elephant Bingo & Potluck Dinner

January 19, 2019 – 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!

## Ladies Book Group



Check weekly announcements for further information concerning a January meeting.

## Kid's Club

January 25 – 6:30-8:00 pm



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 Chuck Olescyski or Valerie Cardinal.

This program at St. John is for kids age 4-10 (or if they attend Sunday School).



**Saturday - January 5**

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

## Morning Prayer, Brown Bag Lunch and Bible Study on Wednesdays

All are welcome! Morning Prayer begins at 11:30 am, Brown Bag Lunch (bring your own) at Noon, and Bible Study at 12:30 pm.

We meet each Wednesday at the times listed. One exception for January, ***we will not meet on January 16 since the pastor will be away.***

## Save the Date!

**Family Game Night and Potluck Dinner  
Saturday, February 2, 2019**



**January Birthdays**

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

**Upcoming Events**  
**February 2 – Family Game Night**

**Communion Bread Schedule**  
 January – Martha Ward  
 February – Karen Collins

**Counters for January**  
 Todd Niklewicz & Valerie Cardinal

**January  
Worship Helpers**

**Assisting Minister**  
 8:00 am           **Dave Knauff**  
 10:30 am       **Valerie Cardinal**

**Usher**  
 8:00 am           **Bob Davidson**  
 10:30 am

**Communion Assistants**  
 8:00 am  
 10:30 am

# January Newsletter

Address service requested

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 MARS, PA 16046

