

March  
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  
PO Box 411  
420 Beaver Street  
Mars, PA 16046

Web site: [www.stjohnchurchmars.org](http://www.stjohnchurchmars.org)  
Church Office: (724) 625-1830  
Office email: [office@stjohnchurchmars.org](mailto:office@stjohnchurchmars.org)  
Pastor Bob's email: [pastor@stjohnchurchmars.org](mailto:pastor@stjohnchurchmars.org)  
Pastor's Cell #: 412-585-1628

Dear friends in Christ,

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, March 6<sup>th</sup>, and we begin this season of spiritual reflection and self-examination as we prepare for the celebration of Easter. Lent is a time to focus on our relationship with God, and I can find no better place to begin than reflecting on the promises of Baptism. The promise of God for us, and the promises made by or for us beside the font.

*"What then is the significance of...baptism with water?*

*It signifies that the old person in us with all sins and evil desires is to be drowned and die through daily sorrow for sin and through repentance, and on the other hand that daily a new person is to come forth and rise up to live before God in righteousness and purity forever."*

- Luther's Small Catechism

In Holy Baptism, God promises that you are a child of God, that your sin is forgiven, that you receive the Holy Spirit, you become a part of the body of Christ, and hear the promise of eternal life gifted to us by the Good Friday cross and empty tomb of Easter.

In baptism, and later in your affirmation of baptism (confirmation), the promise was made to continue in the covenant God made with you in holy baptism:

to live among God's faithful people,  
to hear the word of God and share in the Lord's supper,  
to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed,  
to serve all people, following the example of Jesus,  
and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth.

In our previous worship book, the green Lutheran Book of Worship, the baptismal liturgy concluded with a welcome from the congregation to the newly baptized. In unison the congregation would say, "**We welcome you into the Lord's family. We receive you as fellow members of the body of Christ, children of the same heavenly Father, and workers with us in the kingdom of God.**" This summarizes well that we have received new identity as children of God, are part of something bigger than ourselves, not just to be part of a club, but to be "about the work of our father" as we live out our baptismal call.

In these weeks of our Lenten journey may we daily "walk wet", remembering our baptism and thoughtfully and intentionally recall the promises we committed to. We live out our baptismal vocation in daily life as well as part of our church community and that can give shape and purpose to our lives as beloved children of God.

In Christ,  
Pastor Bob Zimmerman



## Ash Wednesday Worship and Imposition of Ashes March 6, 2019

12:00 Noon and 7:00 pm

On Wednesday, March 6, there will be a noontime spoken service of Confession and Imposition of Ashes.

A Soup Lunch and Bible Study will follow the brief service.

At 7:00 pm there will be a service of Holy Communion with Imposition of Ashes.

### Lenten Wednesday Afternoon Worship, Soup Lunch & Study Continues March 13, 2019

During Lent, there will be a weekly Noon time Worship each Wednesday that will begin at 12:00 noon with a simple soup lunch to follow. Those able to remain will have the opportunity to participate in a five-week study on our baptismal vocation as children of God, and the promises made in baptism.

### Live Online Bible Study to be Offered



As part of our mission to grow closer to God, Pastor Zimmerman will be offering an interactive live online video bible study so that you can participate from the convenience and comfort of your home. A pilot study will be held on five Wednesday evenings during Lent, as we look at our baptismal vocation as children of God and the five promises made in baptism (in conjunction with the daytime Lenten study). The tentative time will be at 7:30 pm, beginning on March 13.

If you are interested in participating, please sign up on the sheet in the greeting area or email Pastor Zimmerman at [pastor@stjohnchurchmars.org](mailto:pastor@stjohnchurchmars.org) and you will be contacted about details. To be a part of the group, you will need to have an Internet connection and download some free software for a free app if you are using a phone or tablet.

### Connections

*Do you ever feel lonely or disconnected from everyone?*

St. John would like to restart a program that we had years ago.

To participate, you need only to agree to make one phone call per week.

You would be partnered with another person from the congregation who also is looking for a friendly ear.

If you are interested, please call the church office 724-625-1830 and leave your name. We will connect you with a similarly minded person.

## ***Holistic Stewardship for Lent***

For centuries Lutherans have observed Lent with passionate devotion and prayerful attention to spiritual disciplines. These faith practices strengthen our souls and open our hearts to the resurrected Christ at Easter.

This year, try developing a sense of holistic stewardship for your life. Stewardship, of course, looks at how we use not just our financial abundance but all the blessings that God has given us – our health, our family and friends, our faith, our time, our intelligence, and so on.

Just as holistic medicine takes a “big picture” view of physical health as a dynamic interconnection of our body’s systems, holistic stewardship helps us see and appreciate all our gifts in relationship to one another.

For instance, how does your stewardship of time interact with your stewardship of your relationships or health? How might more-thoughtful stewardship of your time improve your relationships or your health? How might better stewardship of time, relationships and health improve your financial abundance?

When you examine your stewardship of these and all your gifts in dynamic interconnection with one another, you can find more meaning and purpose as a disciple of Jesus.

To get there, for the days of Lent focus on just five major categories of the blessings God has given you easily remembered by the shorthand word FAITH.

**Family and friends** – nurturing relationships.  
**Abundance** -- finance and material possessions.  
**Intelligence** – your mind and special talents.  
**Time** -- living fully 24/7.  
**Health** – physical and emotional wellness.

Spend 15 minutes every day to prayerfully ponder and meditate on these FAITH blessings. A prayer journal or notebook may help you process and connect.

- Take stock of your blessings in each category, thanking God for them.
- Reflect on how they interrelate to give you joy and purpose and meaning.
- Ask God to help you use these gifts more wisely and fully for God’s purposes.
- Imagine God blessing and enriching your life as you learn to steward these gifts in a way that they will support and enhance one another.

This Lent, let holistic stewardship help you envision your gifts and life more fully in God’s reality, the reality called the Reign of God. It’s the Reign that Jesus preached and proclaimed, and that he brought to fulfillment with the victory over death that we celebrate at Easter.

*--Rob Blezard*

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*Pastor Blezard works as content editor for [www.stewardshipoflife.org](http://www.stewardshipoflife.org) and serves as an assistant to the bishop of the Lower Susquehanna Synod, ELCA. He blogs at [www.thestewardshipguy.com](http://www.thestewardshipguy.com).*

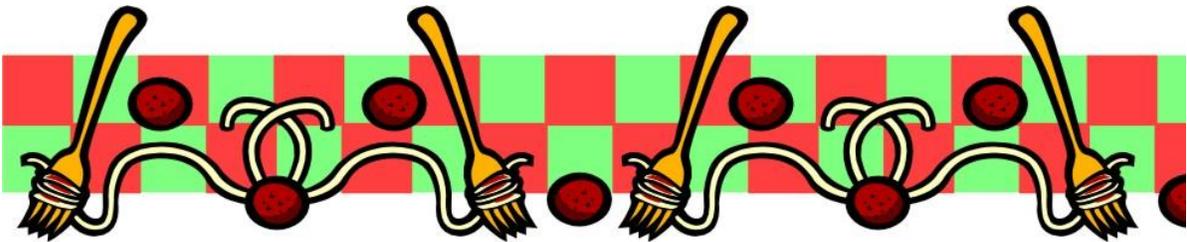


## **Purple Pancake Party Sunday – March 3**

Join us for our traditional Purple Pancake Breakfast Party  
as we celebrate before the beginning of Lent.

This will be held between services on Sunday, March 3.

If you wish, you may wear purple to be even more festive!



# **SPAGHETTI DINNER**

**Saturday, March 2, 2019**

**4:30 – 6:30 pm**

**St. John Lutheran Church**

**420 Beaver Street**

**Mars, PA**

**Price: Adults - \$8 Children - \$5 (Age 6-12)**

**Children Age 5 & under - FREE**

**Take-out available**

**A portion of the proceeds will benefit Bethesda Lutheran Services**

The Second Sunday of each month is Food Bank Sunday.

## **Using your talents.....**

Our church liturgy (service) is divided into the word and meal and we need your talents for both. The word is all the Bible readings to open the service –generally the Old Testament reading, the psalm, the New Testament reading and the Gospel read by the Pastor, and some of the prayers. There are also special services where more reading is needed. We need more people to volunteer and training will be provided.

The meal is the sharing of bread and wine, the body and blood. We need your talent in each aspect of the service as assisting minister, lector (reader), and communion assistant.

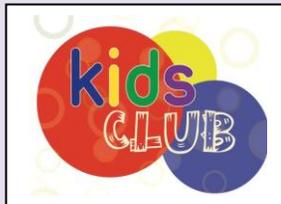
Before the 8AM service or 9AM in the summer the communion is set up, refreshed after the first service. At the close of worship the items used for communion are washed and put away till needed again.

Missy Kramer and Cindy Knauff have been doing this for decades with occasional help. We need to have more people involved with this absolutely vital part of the service. Please consider helping out. We will be glad to teach you how to do any or all of the things. There will be a calendar sign-up sheet in the greeting area. Margie can remind you when she does the bulletin. Missy, Cindy or I can do it with you until you feel comfortable. Please consider signing up for this honor.

We also need children to serve as acolytes. See Sunday school teachers to be on the schedule.

Thank you so much  
Sally Foster

### **Kid's Club March 29 – 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).

### **Quilting Group Monday – March 11 at 6:00 pm**



Join us on the second Monday of each month to make quilts for Lutheran World Relief. Newcomers welcome!



### **Saturday – March 2**

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



**March 2 – Spaghetti Dinner**  
**March 6 – Ash Wednesday**  
**March 13 – Lent Worship/Soup Lunch**  
**March 13 – Online Bible Study**  
**April 6 – Family Game Night**  
**April 7 – Fellowship Breakfast**



***Birthdays***

- 03/01 Robert Zimmerman
- 03/01 William Greb
- 03/05 James Ward
- 03/11 Janet Ford
- 03/11 Tatiana Brower
- 03/13 Ellen Hrach
- 03/22 Patricia Smith
- 03/24 Sydney Brower



03/26 James & Martha Ward – 53 yrs.

**Communion Bread Schedule**

March – Cindy Knauff

**Counters for March**

Chuck Olescyski & Carolyn Zimmerman

**March  
Worship Helpers**

**Assisting Minister**

8:00 am Matt Claus

10:30 am Keith Cardinal

**Usher**

8:00 am Todd Niklewicz

10:30 am Leikauf's

**Communion Assistants**

8:00 am

10:30 am

**March Newsletter**

Address service requested

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 P.O. BOX 411  
 MARS, PA 16046