

March
2020

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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**“Have mercy on us, Lord, and hear our solemn prayer.
We come to hear your living word; it saves us from despair.
Have mercy on us, Christ, and wash away our sin.
Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may begin.
Have mercy on us, Lord, make sin and shame depart.
Renew us with your saving pow’r; create in us new hearts!”**
(Kyrie, Setting Ten, Evangelical Lutheran Worship, pg. 203)

Dear friends in Christ,

The liturgy, which means, “work of the people”, of our Sunday worship has often been connected to the daily “liturgy” of life. Each day needs elements of confession, the study of God’s word and living in response to that word. The Kyrie opens worship with a prayerful litany that centers our time in worship in Christ. Remembering our baptism, it is appropriate to center each of our days in Christ.

During Lent we are using Setting Ten in our hymnbook that allows us to sing the above words for the Kyrie with a familiar hymn tune. When previewing the liturgy for Lent I reread these lyrics and while I have always thought of them as very appropriate for the Lenten season, I also discovered that there are five themes that fit very well with the five weeks of Lent. Expanding on this idea I have chosen to do a Lenten sermon series based on these the lines of the Kyrie.

Lent is a season of the Church year that gives some time to engage more fully with our faith as we “repent” or “turn back” to God and the gift we have received from Christ on the cross. Prayer, the study of scripture, the promise of baptism, the forgiveness of sin, and the call to a new obedience of faithful living in the shadow of the cross can center our lives in Christ and guide our ways during the Lenten journey and throughout the year.

On the First Sunday in Lent, As Jesus heads into the wilderness, (Matthew 4:1-11) we will look at prayer.

On the Second Sunday in Lent we hear the well-known John 3:16, as we remember the promise of the living word (John 3:1-17).

On the Third Sunday in Lent we trust in God’s mercy and are cleansed of sin at the well of living water (John 4:5-42).

The Fourth Sunday in Lent we shall hear the words of a man healed by Jesus, “ I was blind, now I see” (John 9:1-4) as we explore God’s grace and the new life we are given in baptism. The Fifth Sunday concludes the Lenten series as Lazarus is raised (John 11:1-5) and we talk about walking in the newness of life we have received.

I wish you a meaningful and blessed Lenten season.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Bob Zimmerman



Morning Prayer, Soup Lunch & Weekday Lenten Study

“Making Sense of the Cross”

Wednesdays during Lent
Morning Prayer at 11:30 am
Soup Lunch at Noon
Lenten Study at 12:30 pm

Please consider joining us for our Wednesday morning sessions. We will have Morning Prayer, Soup Lunch and Lenten Study. Come for one or for all. Every Wednesday during Lent.

In the “Making Sense of the Cross” study, whatever we say about the cross, we are also saying about God.

So what does the cross mean? What can it tell us about God? How can it help us approach, understand, and know God better? This six-session video based course will take us to the cross and beyond on Wednesdays beginning March 4th.

All Vestry Retreat Saturday, March 7 9:00 am – 2:00 pm

Our special guest presenter will be Pastor Melissa Stoller, Director for Evangelical Mission and assistant to the Bishop for the SWPA Synod.

We will spend time in worship, discussion and planning at Vesper Hall at St. John Specialty Care Center. All Vestry members should make every effort to attend.

First Communion Classes

For those who will be making their First Communion, we will have classes on the following Sundays – **March 1, 8, 22, 29 at 11:30 am**. Please make every effort to have your child attend these classes.



Congregational Meeting Sunday, March 22 One Worship Service at 10:00 am

The Congregational Meeting on Sunday, March 22 following worship, we will discuss the following motion that was passed by the Congregation at the January 26, 2020 meeting: “The Congregation will bring ideas to the Elders on how to grow the church and bring in new members.” In an effort to gather responses from the congregation, the Elders are asking members to prayerfully consider ideas on how we at St. John can promote evangelism and increase our membership. You may respond by placing your written and signed responses in Chuck Olescyski’s mailbox near the church office. Or you may email your responses to office@stjohnchurchmars.org or hand your written ideas to anyone of the Elders. Your responses will be shared with Council and the congregation. Thank you for your prayers and help.

Steward your soul for a fuller life

Jesus teaches, “What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?” – **Mark 8:36, 37** (NIV)

Instead of the superficial “How’s it going?” a wise colleague asks friends, “How is your soul?”

The question requires effort. To answer it I must plunge deep inside – below the constantly churning waters of everyday joys, hopes, ambitions, desires, anxieties and disappointments. These are so strong, especially our desires and ambitions, that if we are not careful they can absorb all our time and energy.

Jesus repeatedly warns us not to let our desires and our worries overwhelm us, keeping us from paying attention to the soul. Our soul is where we connect with God, the source of our greatest strength and truest identity. Without attention, our soul can wither like a plant without water. As with all the treasures God has given us, we must be stewards of our souls.

The mystics of old and modern prophets (such as Richard Rohr, Marjorie Thompson, and Howard Thurman) teach us to employ prayer, holy silence, and other spiritual disciplines to tend our souls and keep worldly worries and desires from drowning us.

This month, begin a daily practice of caring for your soul. You might begin with five minutes of spoken prayer followed by five minutes of silence. Or reflect deeply on a Scripture passage. Or try prayerful yoga. (Your pastor might be able to give you some resources or ideas.)

With a little practice and attention, you can become stronger, more centered, and more spiritually resilient.

How is your soul?

--Rob Blezard

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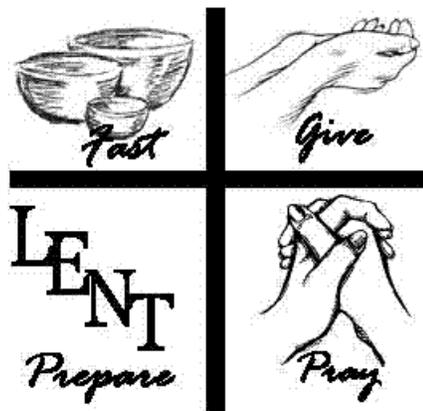


A reminder that St. John has established a special confidential fund with it's own bank account and specific guidelines called the “**Good Samaritan Fund**” for those in need in circumstances where local agencies are unable to help.

The fund is sustained only by designated giving to the fund. Currently, the fund is running low, and your gracious help to sustain it would be appreciated. If you wish to give a special offering please designate it on the memo line of the check.

Help Needed – Bowling at St. John Specialty Care March 7

On the first Saturday of each month from 1:45-3:00 pm, we assist the residents of St. John Specialty Care Center with their “Bowling League.” It has been a rewarding and fun time for some of our youth and their parents, but they need more help! Adults and children alike are needed to assist to provide a helping hand, setting bowling pins, etc. The residents have a good time and appreciate our being there. If you can spare an hour on one Saturday a month to make a difference in a senior’s life, join us in the lobby of SJSCC at 1:45 pm.





Lucky Leprechaun Bingo March 14 – 4:00 pm

Do you have the luck of the Irish? Join us for a wee bit o'fun!

Come and play bingo on Saturday, March 14th at 4:00 pm. Join us on "Pi Day"! \$5.00/pp for Pizza Pi, soda and ice cream.



Please bring a white elephant gift or two for the bingo prize table. Everyone wins/no charge for bingo games.



Saturday, March 21 4:00 pm

Join us for an evening of fun! Bring a card or board game to play and share.

\$5.00 to cover cost of pizza and ice cream. Any questions, see contact Kim Richards.



Ladies Book Group To be announced

Our group chooses a book to read and discuss at our monthly meetings. If you are interested in joining us speak to Sally Foster.



Family farm

Help a family break the cycle of hunger and poverty — for good. A cow, a couple of goats, a dozen chicks, two pigs, farming tools, seeds and agricultural training can create a world of opportunity for a family living in poverty. With eggs, milk and meat to eat and sell, and tools and training to increase the harvest, this gift can make all the difference.

Family farm \$715

1Q20 Mission Emphasis

During the first quarter of 2020, all Mission Emphasis gifts will be used to purchase **Family Farms through the ELCA Good Gifts Catalog. The cost of one farm is \$715.00, and it will "help a family break the cycle of hunger and poverty — for good.** A cow, a couple of goats, a dozen chicks, two pigs, farming tools, seeds and agricultural training can create a world of opportunity for a family living in poverty. With eggs, milk and meat to eat and sell, and tools and training to increase the harvest, this gift can make all the difference." What a wonderful way to share Christ's love and mercy with families in need. If you would like more information, please speak with a member of the Mission Endowment and Outreach Committee. Thank you!

Quilting Group March 9 – 6:00 pm



We meet on the second Monday of each month to make quilts for Lutheran World Relief. Newcomers are welcome! Speak to

The second Sunday of each month is Food Bank Sunday



03/01 Pr. Robert Zimmerman
03/01 William Greb
03/05 James Ward
03/11 Janet Ford
03/13 Ellen Hrach

Upcoming Events
April 5 – Palm Sunday
April 10 – Good Friday
April 11 – Easter Vigil
April 12 – Easter Sunday

Communion Bread Schedule
Carolyn Zimmerman - March

Counters for March
Jamie Weaver & Mike Sauers

Worship Helpers
March
Assisting Ministers
8:00 am Dave Knauff
10:30 am Keith Cardinal

Ushers
8:00 am Larry Werner
10:30 am Carolyn Jarrett


03/26 – Jim & Martha Ward – 54 yrs.

March Newsletter

Address service requested

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