

August
2021

St. John Lutheran Church



St. John Lutheran Church
PO Box 411
420 Beaver Street
Mars, PA 16046

Web site: www.stjohnchurchmars.org
Church Office: (724) 625-1830
Office email: office@stjohnchurchmars.org

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.*



Upcoming Zoom Meetings and Worship Services

Sunday Worship – August 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 – 9:00 AM

Join Zoom for 10:30 AM service: <https://zoom.us/j/5663185411> Meeting ID: 566 318 5411 PW: Luther
Available on our **YouTube Channel:** <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC35PpgMPeMgDRNmKsXvQ>
and the church Facebook page: [St John Lutheran Church Mars PA](#) later in the day.
Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/5663185411> Meeting ID: 566 318 5411 PW: Luther

Trustees Meeting – August 1 – Following congregation meeting – In person & Zoom.

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/5663185411> Meeting ID: 566 318 5411 PW: Luther

Deacons Meeting – August 3 – 7:00 PM – In person & Zoom.

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/5663185411> Meeting ID: 566 318 5411 PW: Luther

Mission Endowment Meeting – August 8 – 10:00 AM – In person & Zoom

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/5663185411> Meeting ID: 566 318 5411 PW: Luther

Mutual Ministry Meeting – August 11 – 7:00 PM – In person & Zoom

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/5663185411> Meeting ID: 566 318 5411 PW: Luther

Elders Meeting – August 12 – 7:00 PM - In person & Zoom.

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/5663185411> Meeting ID: 566 318 5411 PW: Luther

Sunday School Planning Meeting – August 15 – 10:00 AM

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/5663185411> Meeting ID: 566 318 5411 PW: Luther

Council Meeting – August 17 – 7:00 PM - In person & Zoom.

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/5663185411> Meeting ID: 566 318 5411 PW: Luther

Digital Media Committee

Church Council has deemed a need to start a digital media committee. The responsibilities of this committee will be to provide input on redesigning the webpage, recording and distributing worship video, and maintaining the different media platforms we use such as the website, Facebook, YouTube, etc.

If anyone has interest in being on this new committee please contact Jamie Weaver at jweaver4020@yahoo.com or 412-629-0298. Thank you in advance.

Blessing of the Backpacks

There will be a special Blessing of the Backpacks during worship on **Sunday, August 22**. We ask that the children bring their backpacks to worship that day to receive the blessing for a safe and productive school year ahead.

Congregational Meeting – August 1

There will be a special congregational meeting after the 9:00 AM worship service on Sunday, August 1. There are important matters to discuss. Please plan to attend.

Dear members of St John Lutheran Church,

While we look forward to putting the challenge of dealing with COVID-19 behind us, new opportunities and challenges continue to present themselves.

In April, Pastor Bob retired. Since then, various church members have stepped up to help deliver God's message to us during the weeks that we were unable to obtain a supply pastor. A Call Committee was formed, and seven members have been actively working on filling out a Ministry Site Profile, the first step of the Call process.

Approximately one month ago, we were contacted by the Mars Borough about a hazardous condition that they've identified with the church's deteriorating front sidewalk along Beaver Street. We have been asked to fix this, as it presents a danger to the residents of the community and is a potential liability to the church. In addition to the front sidewalk, the supporting wall structure will also need to be replaced.

The estimated costs to repair the front sidewalk/wall structure far exceed the \$20,000 that we currently have in our Building Maintenance fund.

We are making appeal to every church member to prayerfully consider contributing to our Sidewalk Repair project. **Our goal is to raise \$40,000 during the month of August.** You can help us do this in one of several ways:

- Send a check to the church office in an envelope marked "**Sidewalk Repair Project**"
- Include an additional check or cash in your weekly offertory envelope with the amount designated to "**Sidewalk Repair Project**"
- Place a check or money into the collection box near the Thermometer Goal Chart that will be posted in the Side Narthex of the church

Every bit helps and we truly appreciate any support that you can give to achieve our need. While our church may be small, we remain strong and have always pulled together to meet the needs of the church and community.

2 Corinthians 9:7 Each one should give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or from compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

Sincerely,

Denise Hager, President of Church Council

Vestry News Corner



Trustees

The Trustees would like to thank those who helped with the Paint and Angel Day, along with a special thank you to those who donated money for supplies for the project.

As you know, we will be redoing both the wall and sidewalk at the church. There will be a need for volunteers to do some landscaping after the project is completed. The Trustees will set up a workday for this project. Information will be in the bulletin, newsletter and emails with a date and time.

Treasurer & Financial Secretary

Income for month of June:	\$ 13,483.50
Expenses for the month of May:	\$ - 7,108.69
Given to Benevolence	\$ - 555.95
Organ Fund	\$ - 50.00
Maintenance Fund	\$ - 350.00
Mission Emphasis	\$ - 126.00
Monthly net income:	\$ + 5,101.86

Elders

Summer is quiet. We had our Mini-Golf outing which was a fun time and was attended by the Cardinal's, Nagel's, Missy Kramer, and Kim Richards. Hot but fun! We made preparations for the Church Picnic on July 25 at Adams Twp. Park. We planned games and prepared gifts to celebrate our Graduates this year. We are looking forward to planning the upcoming fall events. Rally Day will be September 12 and on that day we will return to two services on Sundays.

Deacons



Ladies Tea

Saturday, September 18, 2021

Noon - 2 pm

Tickets: \$15

**St. John Lutheran Church
420 Beaver St., Mars, PA**

The Deacons are accepting basket donations for the basket raffle - please contact Missy Kramer.

For tickets or additional information contact a member of the Deacons or email the church office at office@stjohnchurchmars.org.

AAMPARO. For the 3rd quarter Mission Endowment project, a part of Lutheran Disaster Response, AAMPARO is a response to the humanitarian crisis in Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala that led almost 70,000 unaccompanied children and another 70,000 people in family units to flee to the United States. In 2015 after various government responses, the number of children arriving in the US decreased by 42%. But the number of deportations from Central America to Mexico increased sharply. The ELCA is very aware of the displacement of these families and children due to their connections with churches in the area.

The ELCA leaders and staff visited the US-Mexico border, Central America and Mexico. It was very evident that mothers and children must flee due to violence, poverty, and lack of opportunities. The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees study confirmed that most children have a need for international protection. Children need this protection due to fleeing domestic, gang or other types of violence, being a victim of human trafficking, or being targeted in other ways.

As vulnerable children make the treacherous journey, ELCA connections in the region and the U.S., give the ELCA a critical perspective to uphold and guarantee the protection of the children. With companions and partners the ELCA will focus on 3 interdependent principles: Accompaniment, Awareness building and Advocacy. We support compassionate survival assistance for refugees and international protection. The world community has a responsibility to aid nations that receive refugees and help change the situations from which they fled. We understand each person is created in God's image and have heard the call to serve the needs of our neighbor.

Forcibly displaced children are highly vulnerable as they journey to safety and despite these vulnerabilities, the US, Mexican and Central American governments have focused on border enforcement without taking steps to protect the children.

Currently, the ELCA has programs to accompany these children in Honduras and Guatemala through our global ministry and in the US through Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS). The AAMPARO strategy will support and expand the US work while advocating to improve systems that protect children.

ACCOMPANIMENT includes "enhancing the capacity of companions to develop alliances with organizations in the countries of origin that are working on issues of migration, detention, deportation, repatriation and reinsertion to develop plans of action and encourage congregations to develop service centers that focus on social services that focus on wrap-around services.

AWARENESS BUILDING includes encouraging building of web pages and other materials and conducting immersion programs and tours for ELCA members and seminaries with companions in Central America and Mexico.

Because we believe each person to be made in God's image – without distinction based on race, ethnicity, gender, economic class or country of origin – and have heard God's call to serve the needs of our neighbor wherever he or she may be, we recognize ourselves to be in ministry and mission together for the benefit of all God's people.

It is on this basis that this church now pledges to continue, intensify and sustain its response to the crisis faced by unaccompanied migrant children and families.

Of course, the true solution to this crisis is to improve conditions in the countries of origin, a monumental task, but these children need protection. We encourage aid to other countries that also provide safety and refuge.

2021 Graduates

We wish these members of St. John much success in their continued educational pursuits.



Danielle Dishong

After many years of hard work, Danielle graduated from Seneca Valley High School on June 1, 2021. During those years, her love and compassion for young children became very apparent. Consequently, she will pursue a Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education at Butler Community College and Slippery Rock University, then move into the challenging and rewarding career of teaching!

Laura Greb

Laura Ashley Greb graduated in May from Knoch High School with Highest Honors. She was a member of the National Honor Society and was Treasurer of the Class Cabinet.

When not in school, she is always on the tennis court. This past year, she led her high school tennis team to a state championship, and in September she became the only high school player to win four consecutive WPIAL Class AA singles championships.

Laura will be attending the University of Dayton in August and plans to



Gianna Julio

Gianna Julio is a graduate of Pine Richland High School. She will be attending Marist College on the Hudson River in Poughkeepsie, NY, where she has been accepted into the Honors Program. She will pursue her Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Science.

Alaina Nagel

Alaina Nagel graduated with honors from Butler Community College with an Associates in Arts degree in Early Childhood Education. She will be transferring to Slippery Rock University in the fall to further her education and continue her Early Childhood Education major with a secondary major of Special Education.



Stewardship of Our Leisure Time

I commend enjoyment, for there is nothing better for people under the sun than to eat, and drink, and enjoy themselves, for this will go with them in their toil through the days of life that God gives them under the sun. Ecclesiastes 8:15

Busy-ness keeps us from living with joy and peace in today's 24/7 world, but Scripture reminds us that this is hardly new. Ecclesiastes was written some 2,500 years ago! Ecclesiastes does not give license for mindless pleasure-seeking, but rather affirms that our hard work should be balanced with time for relaxation and enjoyment with friends and family.

Saints and mystics have long touted the need for rest and renewal. In the monastic tradition it's referred to as *otium sanctum* – Holy Leisure. Not just wasting our free time, but using it for renewal. As steward/disciples, we aim to use our leisure time wisely. Here are some ideas:

Keep the Sabbath: God actually *commands* us to stop working one day per week, as Exodus 20:8-11 makes clear. But there is no prohibition against leisure. (Why else would God give us a day off?)

Plan your vacation: Even if you're taking a STAYcation, *plan* your time for maximum rest and enjoyment.

Manage your schedule: Are you a slave to your appointment book, driven by *other people's* priorities? Put yourself first – scheduling in time for leisure. Even if it's just 30 minutes here and there!

Find an activity you like: What do you do just for you? Discover – or REdiscover – what brings you joy, then make time to do it.

Socialize: Friends and family make life enjoyable. Spend time with them.

Invest, don't waste, time: Many activities pass the time but don't give back much in renewal or refreshment. Choose activities wisely.

God expects us to work, but not work ourselves to death. Sabbath and leisure time provide means for us to find balance in our life, as well as friendship, love, renewal and purpose.

--Rob Blezard

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8/02 Emma Niklewicz
8/05 Denise Hager
8/08 Anne Olescyski
8/08 Frederick Bielo
8/14 Ava Niklewicz
8/14 Laura Greb
8/17 Kayla Julio
8/24 Beverly Crislip
8/29 Ralph Storm



8/04 – George & Janmarie Leikauf – 46 yrs.
8/25 – John & Susan Fritz – 42 yrs.

Assisting Minister – August

Missy Kramer

Counters

**Cindy Knauff
Katie Niklewicz**

August Newsletter

ST JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH
420 BEAVER STREET
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