

April
2023

St. John Lutheran Church



St. John Lutheran Church
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"The angel said to the women... Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead.'"

Matthew 28:5-7

Mission Statement

*St. John is a living witness to the **love of God** as shown in Jesus Christ.*

*We **gather** faithfully in God's name to **worship** and praise God; and we go forth in peace to **share the Good News** and to **serve** the world around us.*

Right in the Easter story we see an invitation to evangelism, an invitation to share the Good News of Christ's resurrection, the Good News of God's saving grace gifted to us in God's mercy. Before the women even processed fully what had happened, they were being told to go and tell of their experiences. While they were still reeling, they shared God's story of life and love; they shared their story of seeing the empty tomb and encountering God in that moment; and then they were off to invite others to tell their stories! Because that's what evangelism is. Evangelism is sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ as we have seen, experienced, known, and lived it. Evangelism is sharing how God's story intersects with our stories. And Evangelism is inviting other people to share where *their* stories intersect with God's story.

But before we can share our faith stories and how our stories connects with God's story, we must know our stories. To know our stories, I invite you to sit back and consider some questions: What are some major milestones of your faith journey? What themes or patterns are there in your faith journey? Who are the significant people in your faith journey? How have you experienced the Good News of Jesus in your life? Throughout the season of Easter, we will be considering how these, and other questions, can help us know our faith stories as we hear the stories of the early church as they experienced God's story unfolding after the resurrection.

And then, as we come to feel comfortable knowing and sharing our story, we will invite others to join us as we together continually explore and discover how God's story is connected and interwoven with our stories. And thus, we can practice evangelism, just like the women running from the empty tomb, going out to tell our story, and inviting others to share theirs.

Peace,
Pastor Katie

Online Sunday Worship

Join Zoom for service: <https://zoom.us/j/5663185411> Meeting ID: 566 318 5411 PW: Luther
Available on our YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC35PpgMPeMgDRNmKYKssxvQ>
and in the church Facebook group: [St John Lutheran Church Mars PA](#) later in the day

Worship News

Young Worship Leaders

We love having our young worshippers helping with worship leadership! If you are unable to be present for your scheduled service, please try to find someone to cover and tell the office of the change.

	Acolyte	Offering	Offering	Young Reader
2-Apr	Emma N	Jules K	Abigail C	
6-Apr (Maundy Thursday)	Anna K	N/A	N/A	
7-Apr (Good Friday)	N/A	N/A	N/A	
8-Apr (Easter Vigil)	Ava N	N/A	N/A	Emma N Abigail C
9-Apr	Abigail C	Anna K	Nathan K	
16-Apr	Anna K	Jules K	Ava N	
23-Apr	YOUTH LED WORSHIP at Mars United Presbyterian			
30-Apr	Ava N	Ella N	Emma N	Abigail C
7-May	Emma N	Luca K	Abigail C	

Adult Worship Leaders

	Greeters	Usher	Assistant Minister	Bread Baker	Counters
2-Apr	Cardinal Family	Missy K	Valerie C	Denise H	Mike S Denise H
9-Apr	Cardinal Family	TBD	Valerie C	Denise H	Mike S Denise H
16-Apr	Cardinal Family	Missy K	Valerie C	Denise H	Mike S Denise H
23-Apr	YOUTH LED WORSHIP at Mars United Presbyterian				
30-Apr	Cardinal Family	Missy K	Valerie C	Denise H	Mike S Denise H
7-May	Kim R	TBD	Missy K	Denise H	Cindy K Sherry D

Volunteers Needed

Please check the **sign-up sheets in the Greeting Area** for how you can serve on Sunday mornings! Because we have two entrances into the sanctuary, it's **helpful to have two Greeters** each morning.

Ushers make sure that lights are on and doors are unlocked before worship, bells are rung during worship, and lights are off and doors locked after worship. Training is available for all positions!

Holy Week Worship Schedule

Palm Sunday – Sunday, April 2, 9:00 am

Maundy Thursday – Thursday, April 6, 7:00 pm

Good Friday Community Lunch and Worship – Friday, April 7, 12:00 pm (at Mars United Presbyterian)

Good Friday – Friday, April 7, 7:00 pm

Easter Vigil – Saturday, April 8, 7:00 pm

Easter Community Sunrise Service – Sunday, April 9, 6:30 am (at Veterans Pavilion in Adams Park)

Easter Day – Sunday, April 9, 9:00 am

Easter the Week of Weeks

While the festivities are at their most pronounced on Easter Sunday, **Easter is a season that is 50 days long, lasting the full 7 weeks until we get to Pentecost Sunday** (Easter Sunday and Pentecost Sunday are both counted in the 50 days). This extended season gives us an opportunity to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus and all that this means to us. The date of Easter Sunday moves every year and was a point of controversy in the early church. **Currently the date of Easter is set as the first Sunday after the first full moon after the spring equinox.** This connects the celebration of Easter to the Jewish calendar, which is based on the lunar calendar. The Eastern Orthodox celebrates Easter at a different time than Protestants and Roman Catholics because they calculate the date using a different calendar system. In the 20th century, there was an attempt to have a fixed date for Easter, but no agreement was reached.

Serving Others

St. John Food Pantry

Maintaining the food pantry is a community effort! Be sure **to invite people to make use of the food pantry as they need!** And please help us make sure nothing in the pantry is expired. **If you think something is no longer good, please feel free to dispose of it! Outdoor pantries can be tricky with the fluctuating weather, so we want to be careful of what we keep in it.**

Second Quarter Mission Emphasis Project

Our second quarter Mission Emphasis collection will be used to **support the family of Paige**, the girl who was hit by a car in November near the Mars Middle School. Paige recently started to go back to school for short periods of time, but she is still working through multiple rehab and therapy appointments each week. To **help the family deal with medical costs**, we will be directing our Mission Emphasis funds to this family. **Please mark your envelopes “Mission Emphasis”** so that we can be sure the funds are appropriately designated.

Lutherlyn Spring Work Day – April 29

Calling all volunteers to help get camp ready for CampBlast and Summer Camp. No skills required. 9am-4pm; lunch provided. Please RSVP at lutherlyn.com/workday.

Around the Church

NEW – Instagram Account



We have started an Instagram account for the church! It is still in its earliest stages as we plan for how to best utilize this social media platform, but if you're on Instagram, follow us **@stjohnchurchmars**. In today's world, **social media is a great way for people to learn about who we are and what we are doing**. However, for social media to help in this way, we need followers and likes and shares to increase the reach of our posts. So **like us on Facebook, follow us on Instagram, and keep sharing things!**

Spring Bible Study

We will be back to our regular Bible Study schedule **starting April 19th at 7:00 pm. For 6 weeks** we will study the **book of 1 Peter**. We will be hearing from 1 Peter in worship each week during the Easter season, so this study will give us an opportunity to dive more deeply into the letter. **1 Peter is a letter to new followers of Christ as they deal with how their new faith impacts their daily lives**. 1 Peter invites us to consider the challenge of suffering in the world and how we can maintain faith and hope in God through it all. As always, Zoom participants are welcomed to join us! (We will use the same link used on Sunday mornings. Contact the office to receive weekly emails with Bible Study materials)

Welcome Mugs

We love it when people visit our congregation on Sunday mornings! To help them know how much we enjoy their presence, we have **mugs to give to them when they first come to visit us!** Mugs are filled with goodies and the latest newsletter.

Office Hours

The church office is open Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, 8:30-1:30pm. If the door is locked when you arrive, **please ring the doorbell for assistance**. Occasionally, we need to leave the building during these hours, so **let us know if you are planning to stop by (weather and holidays also may affect office hours)**. Pastor Katie is typically in the office on Mondays and Wednesdays, 9:00am-1:00pm. However, because of the nature of ministry, there are many things that may interrupt the schedule; **please call Pastor Katie's cell phone in case of pastoral need**.

Thank You

From the Deacons

Many thanks to all who baked, cooked, served, ate, and cleaned up at the spaghetti dinner to help make it a success. A special shout out to Jaime Weaver for going above and beyond the call of duty. Thank you Jaime!!

From the Sauers

Mike and Cherry would like to offer a heartfelt thanks for the cards and notes of support. Each day brings continued healing and they are grateful for the support of their church family as they continue to journey through recovery.



Synod Notes

Synod Assembly – June 16 and 17

Synod Assembly registration is open! We **need 2 representatives** to attend this important annual meeting of the synod. This year's **theme is “Better Together.”** Assembly will begin with an evening of business conducted online via Zoom, followed by a day of gathering together in person at PennWest California (formerly Cal-U) to worship, work, and remember that we are better together. If you are interested in attending as a voting representative of St. John, please reach out to Pastor Katie.

Children and Youth

Worship Bags

We love having our children in worship with us! However, it's sometimes difficult for our youngest worshipers to stay engaged throughout the entire service. To help them, we have been adding to our worship bags. The goal is to have **items in the bag that invite children to be active with their hands while their minds can still take in what's happening around them.**

Rags Wanted!



The youth group and kids club will be doing a **car wash fundraiser** to help pay for some of the costs of events and meetings. To help get ready for the car wash, **we need lots of rags**, so start saving up those rags! You can also support this fundraiser by coming and **having your car washed on June 24 at Agway** (and start hoping for a sunny day!).

Vacation Bible School – July 9-13

Warmer weather means that Vacation Bible School is coming soon! Mark your calendars for **July 9-13** and start inviting friends and neighbors to join us for a **STELLAR** week. **Our out-of-this-world 2023 VBS theme is Shine Jesus' Light** as we explore God's word through a space theme! **We need a lot of volunteers** to make this incredible event happen, so please consider volunteering! We need people to help prepare for the week as well as help during the week. Contact Tanya Nagel for more information.



Kids Club and Youth Group Summer Schedule

Starting in May and throughout the summer we will not have regular meetings of Kids Club and Youth Group, but we will have several times to gather and have fun during the summer! Stay tuned for details.

May 19 – Mini Golf and Ice Cream

June 3 – Packing for Harvest Street Mission

June 24 – Car Wash Fundraiser

July 9-13 – VBS

July 14 – Pool Party

August 19 – Ohiopyle Trip

Upcoming Events

Easter Egg Hunt – April 9

Please join us for a fun time with the children for the Easter Egg Hunt during our normal Sunday School time. If you'd like to help stuff or hide the eggs, please reach out to one of the Elders.



Youth-Led Worship – April 23 (at Mars United Presbyterian)

We love supporting the faith formation and growth of our young people in worship! One way we can support them in their growth is by giving them leadership opportunities and inviting them to design and lead worship for us! Our spring Youth-Led Worship will be **April 23 at 10:00 am at Mars United Presbyterian. Please note the different time and location of worship!**

Family Game Night – April 28

We had so much fun at our last family game night; we're doing it again! We have lots of games, but feel free to bring your own! Join us around 6:00 pm, then we'll order pizza and stay until we're done!

Youth Group and Kids Club Year End Party – April 30

To celebrate the end of a great school year at Kids Club and Youth Group, we will be gathering at Mars United Presbyterian for a joint Year End Party! The party will take place 1-2:30 pm.

Spring Clean Up Day – May 6

Many hands make light work! And **there is a lot of work to be done outside and inside the church building to keep it looking great.** We will be concentrating our cleaning efforts on **May 6.** Mark your calendar and cross your fingers for a good weather day!

Ladies' Tea – May 13

Mark your calendar for this year's **Ladies Tea on May 13th from 12-2:30.** This is an event we have been doing for more than 20 years. It's a lot of fun to share a few hours with family and friends. If you are interested, please see a deacon as **tables fill up quickly.** **The cost is \$20.** If you are able to create a basket for our **basket raffle we ask that you bring it to the church basement by April 30th.** Thank you.



Lutherlyn CampBlast – May 13

Mark your calendar for a day of FUN that highlights all that Lutherlyn has to offer. The best part... **EVERYTHING IS FREE!** Learn more at lutherlyn.com/campblast.

Faith at Home

Easter Walks

Easter is a springtime season, when the world around us is bursting with renewed life after a season of dormancy during the winter months. **For the 50 days of Easter, go for regular walks, looking for signs of renewed life:** new buds, singing birds, more wildlife, fresh gardens, etc. As you find things, **thank God** for the renewed life all around us **and pray** that God keep the joy of Christ's resurrection fresh in your heart. And we invite you to **share images with us on social media or by email!**

April 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	Office Hours M, W, F 8:30 am - 1:30 pm		Indoor Pantry Hours M & W 9 am - 1 pm *Other times by appt.			1 Confirmation Class 9:30 am
2 Worship 9:00 am Sunday School Trustee's Mtg 10:15 Youth Group 1 pm Kids Club 1 pm	3	4 Deacons Meeting 7 pm Elders Meeting 7 pm	5	6 Maundy Thursday Worship 7 pm	7 Community Good Friday Luncheon Worship 12 noon Worship 7 pm	8 Easter Vigil Worship 7 pm
9 Easter Community Sunrise Service 6:30 am Worship 9:00 am Egg hunt	10	11	12	13	14	15
16 Worship 9 am Sunday School Mission Endowment 10:15 am Youth Group 1 pm Kids Club 1 pm	17	18 Council Meeting 7 pm	19 Bible Study 1 Peter 7 pm	20 Newsletter Articles Due	21	22
23 Combined Joint Worship 10:00 am (MUP)	24	25 Pastor Katie Penn Mar 1:45 pm	26 Bible Study 1 Peter 7 pm	27 Worship Planner Meeting 7 pm	28 Family Game Night 6 pm	29 Lutherlyn Spring Work Day
30 Worship 9:00 am Sunday School Combined Year End Party 1 pm (MUP)	May 2nd Elders 7 pm Deacons 7 pm	May 3rd Bible Study 1 Peter 7 pm	May 6th Clean Up Day			



04/07 John Fritz
04/07 Zachary Claus
04/11 Anna Kramer
04/11 Todd McCormick
04/20 Martha Ward
04/22 Benjamin Knauff
04/24 Karen Collins
04/24 Susan Bielo

April Newsletter

Address service requested

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