

July
2023

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 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.*

St. John Lutheran Church
PO Box 411
420 Beaver Street
Mars, PA 16046
Office Hours: MWF 8a-1p

Web site: www.stjohnchurchmars.org
Church Office:(724) 625-1830
Office email: office@stjohnchurchmars.org
Pastor Katie email: pastorkmcneal@gmail.com
Pastor's cell #: 412-407-3166

I feel like I have become something of a pro at looking at houses. I have a "house hunting bag" that has lots of tools to help as I look at a house. There's a flashlight for those dark corners, a few different measuring devices, a tool to check the wiring of an outlet, snacks for those long days... and a few other things. This bag has grown as the house hunting process has continued. It all started when I went to look at a foreclosed house and the agent told me to bring a flashlight because there was no electricity. As I've discovered new things that might help me, I add them to my bag. Then whenever it's time to go look at a house, I can just grab my bag and know that I have everything I need, no matter what questions I have about the house.

Do we have a similar bag of goodies to help us in our faith journeys? Do we have tools and resources at the ready to help us maintain our wellness in mind, body, and soul? When we are well, when we feel like our faith is steady, is a great time to take a moment and take stock of the tools and resources we have to help when things are difficult. What are the tools and resources that can help us along our faith journey?

Maybe you have a Bible that you have written in and highlighted as you've explored the scriptures. Maybe you have a favorite devotional book that helps you focus your Christian living. Maybe you have a handful of trusted people to talk with when times get tough or the questions feel too big. Maybe you have hobbies that help you recenter yourself and give you balance in your life. Maybe you have spirituality practices that you do regularly. There are so many ways that we can fill our bags for our faith journeys. Sometimes we don't know what we'll need until we find ourselves without it. Sometimes it might feel like our bag is totally empty. But it is never truly empty. God is always there, waiting for us to call on God. The community of believers is there to lend a helping hand when needed. And as we continue in our faith journeys, we will continually find new tools and resources to add to our bags. The journey of faith is a long one. It is full of twists and turns. But we have so many tools and resources to help us be prepared for whatever it brings. What is in your bag? What do you wish you had available to you?

Peace,
Pastor Katie

Worship Services on Zoom

Join Zoom for Worship: <https://zoom.us/j/5663185411> Meeting ID: 566 318 5411 PW: Luther
Available on our YouTubeChannel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC35PpgMPeMgDRNmKkYKssxvQ>
and the church Facebook group: [St John Lutheran Church Mars PA](#) later in the day.

Worship Notes

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-July	TBD	Ava N	Ella N	
9-July	Ava N	Anna K	Nathan K	
16-July	Emma N	Luca K	Eva K	
23-July	Abigail C	Ava N	Emma N	Carissa M
30-July	Anna K	Jules K	Abigail C	
6-Aug	Nathan K	Ava N	Ella N	

Adult Worship Leaders

	Greeters	Usher	Assistant Minister	Bread Baker	Counters
2-July	TBD	TBD	Denise H	Denise H	Jill W Valerie C
9-July	TBD	TBD	Kelly G	Denise H	Jill W Valerie C
16-July	TBD	TBD	Kelly G	Denise H	Jill W Valerie C
23-July	TBD	TBD	Kelly G	Denise H	Jill W Valerie C
30-July	TBD	TBD	Kelly G	Denise H	Jill W Missy K

Campfire Worship – July 20



Thursday, July 20th, join us outside around a campfire on the lawn for singing and an evening worship service! Worship will begin at 7:00pm. S'mores will be available after worship. Bring your own chair/blanket and come for this brief worship service including several camp favorite songs!

Prayer List Updates

We would like the list of names we lift in prayer each Sunday to be as current as possible. We are therefore asking people to review the prayer lists and let the office know of any changes.

Serving Others

Third Quarter Mission Emphasis Project

Our third quarter (July, August, September) Mission Emphasis project will be Lutherlyn. **Lutherlyn is a God-given place to be accepted, challenged, and sent out into the world to make a difference.** In keeping with their mission, **Lutherlyn promises to never turn a child away from camp for financial reasons.** This year, Lutherlyn celebrates 75 years of camping and outdoor ministry as it takes on a capital campaign to fund some much-needed maintenance and growth projects in their Building for the Future Campaign. To contribute, **please mark your envelopes “Mission Emphasis”** so that we can be sure the funds are appropriately designated.

God’s Work Our Hands Sunday (Sept. 10)

We are going to be observing God’s Work Our Hands Sunday again this year! **On this Sunday we will restructure our worship to incorporate a service project as an integral part of how we worship.** This year we will be packing school bags for Church Wide Services (CWS). CWS helps people in need throughout the world through various kits and blankets.

We need volunteers to help make some bags before worship. Patterns can be picked up in the Greeting Area at church. We will also be collecting the requested school supplies to fill them. The list of items for each bag is also in the Greeting Area.

“God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday



September 10, 2023

Lutherlyn Campaign – Building for the Future

The Lutherlyn Board of Directors has authorized the **Building for the Future capital campaign to provide the funding necessary to retain Lutherlyn’s capacity for year-round programs and increase the number of youths, adults, and congregations served by this ministry for generations to come.** Through this campaign, Lutherlyn is raising money to cover several key projects to carry Lutherlyn into the future. **The well-used Shaulis cabins have deteriorated beyond repair,** so the old cabins will be removed and new cabins

will be built to continue to serve campers year-round. **The beloved amphitheater has also deteriorated over the years, sinking into the dirt below it;** a second project is to secure the structural integrity of the space so that it can be enjoyed for years to come. Other projects to ensure the safe, hospitable, and welcoming atmosphere at camp are also included in this project. **Stay tuned for details about how you can support this campaign!**



St. John Food Pantry

Maintaining the food pantry is a community effort! Help us to keep it stocked with items with a long shelf life, especially **personal hygiene, cleaning, and paper products.** And be sure **to invite people to make use of the food pantry as they need!** Outdoor pantries can be tricky with the fluctuating weather, so we want to be careful of what we keep in it. **Items that will not last in hot summer weather can be kept in the indoor pantry.**

Around the Church

Synod Assembly Recap

The theme of this year's synod assembly was "Better Together," emphasizing that **we are better able to serve God and our neighbors when we do so together**. From the synod: **"Communities who collaborate achieve more, stress less, energize their creativity, and deepen their care... we're just better together."** We hear this idea in many places, including scripture: "Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor. If either of them falls down, one can help the other up," (Ephesians 4:9). In this year's Synod Assembly video, Bishop Eaton reflected on the ways we are called together into the mission we share. **There is no individual Christian; we are members of Christ and members of one another.** So let us continue in our work of ministry as a community, in community with other communities, and we are better together!

Annual Church Picnic – July 23



Our **annual church picnic will be on July 23rd**. This year we will be back at our regular **park pavilion, the Township Pavilion**. We will have worship, picnic food, and games. **Worship will begin at our regular 9:00 am**. To find us, enter at the main gate, go straight past the new splash pad, drop down a right slight grade, turn left into the parking area by the playground.

Adult Education Forum

We will be looking to start up a new series for our adult education forum! **Our new series will explore the voices who influenced Luther and his theology. If you'd like to participate in this series, please contact the office.**

Contemplative Walks

The idea is to **enjoy nature with a shared intention of being in the present moment, harvesting joy and creating connectivity**. Along with other churches in the area, we will be hosting contemplative walks in North Park, taking time to pray and connect with God and creation. **Participants are welcome to walk in solitude or together, with kids or pets, or just the grown-ups**. These walks will be **every other Thursday through the summer, beginning June 29**. We will start our time together by **meeting at the Pie Traynor Parking Lot at 6:30p**.

Mailing Preferences Update

Each week copies of the bulletin are sent out via email and regular mail. Each month copies of the newsletter are sent out via email and regular mail, and copies are placed in the greeting area. Electronic copies of both are available on the website. **If you would like to update how you receive or do not receive anything, please contact the office.**

Community Garden

Herbs are ready for the picking if you need any! As the garden grows, **feel free to weed and harvest as you like!** Let Pastor Katie know if you'd like to help water too. If you have any questions about the garden, check out the signs throughout the garden or contact Pastor Katie.



Children and Youth

Mars July 4 Parade

Join us in the annual Mars 4th of July Parade! We will be promoting VBS and increasing awareness of St John and Mars United Presbyterian churches' youth programs. If you'd like to participate or help prepare, contact Tanya Nagel or the church office.

Vacation Bible School – July 9-13



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! Register your child today on the Mars United Presbyterian website (mars-up.org)! **We still need volunteers** to make this incredible event happen, so please consider volunteering! Contact Tanya Nagel for more information.

Congrats Grads!

We are so proud of the students who graduated from their programs this past spring! Join us for worship on July 9 as we offer prayers for the transition from high school to college for Madison.

Kids Club and Youth Group Summer Schedule

We still have several times to gather and have fun during the summer! Stay tuned for details.

July 14 – Pool Party

August 19 – Ohiopyle Trip for all ages

Coming Soon – A New Ministry Opportunity

We have a wide variety of ages in our church, and we have ministries to support some of them. We have a youth group for middle and high school students; we have Kids Club for elementary school students... but what about everyone else?! We are looking to try a new ministry opportunity within St. John that will give people of all ages a different way to gather, explore, and worship. **Following the model of Messy Church, our time together will include science, craft, and game activities, eating together, and worship that is designed to be accessible to people of all ages and of all levels of connection to church.** We are anticipating starting this ministry in October, meeting once a month for a few months as we gauge interest and response. **If you would like to help dream or plan or prepare for this ministry, contact Pastor Katie.**



Sponsor a Bible

On September 10, we will be kicking off the 2023-2024 Sunday School year! **As a part of this kick-off, we will be giving Bibles to students moving into a new class.** Our youngest class will receive a copy of the Frolic Preschool Bible, our middle class the Whirl Story Bible, and our oldest class the Collaborate Study Bible. **Bibles cost \$15-25 depending on the specific version.** And after missing a couple of years, we have lots of students in need of a Bible! To supply the Bibles for this year as well as to have some on hand for future students, **we have a goal of 14 Bibles.** To sponsor a Bible, simply mark your offering as for a Bible!



Thank You!



Harvest Street Mission Follow-Up

A very heartfelt "THANK YOU" to all who took the time to roast off the donated turkeys. We provided meals to approximately 80-100 people in the park when we served. We had excess turkey left-over, and it was donated to the Light of Life mission for them to serve as

dinner later that evening. Our efforts probably fed 200 people that day!

Thank you to the volunteers that donated their time on Sunday to serve in the park. Each person left with a different experience and a new perspective on our sheltered lives that we live.



GREAT JOB!

I want to extend an additional "THANK YOU" to all of the volunteers that donated their valuable time on Saturday to help pack necessity bags and to finish preparing the meal. We prepared 100 bags and handed out about 90 on this particular Sunday. Last year we ran out of bags and had to turn individuals away. To us, these are just basic items that we take for granted. To a homeless person, these are a lifeline that shows that someone cares.

Meal:

10 26 lb. Frozen Turkeys
Gravy
35 loaves Cellone's Bread
125 Salads
15 lbs. Buttered corn
20 lbs. Mixed Veggies
50 lbs. Mashed Potatoes
100 cups Pudding
Cookies
Bottled Water
Iced Tea/Lemonade

Toiletries:

Body Wipes
Shampoo/Conditioner/Lotion
Toothbrush/Paste
Combs
Razors /Shaving Cream
Deodorant
Lip Balm
First Aid Kits
Towels
Socks
Rain Ponchos
baseball caps
Umbrellas

Other Items:

Gum/Candies
Canned Tuna
Fruit Snacks
Crackers
Oatmeal
Slim Jim
Bottled Water
Prayer Card
Shopping Bag

In the collect jar, we collected \$150.00 towards the deodorant. THANK YOU! All of the above items were solicited and/or donated. I have St. John Lutheran Church signed up again on November 12th to serve again. If you would like to become involved or to donate any items, please contact Pastor Katie or Kim Richards.

July 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2 Worship 9:00 am	3	4 Mars Parade	5	6	7	8
9 Worship 9:00 am Trustee's Meeting 10:15 am Deacon's Meeting 10:15 am VBS 5:00 pm	10 VBS 6:00 pm	11 VBS 6:00 pm	12 VBS 6:00 pm	13 VBS 6:00 pm Contemplative Walk 6:30 pm	14 Kids Club / Youth Group Pool Party	15
16 Worship 9:00 am	17	18 Council Meeting 7 pm	19	20 Campfire Worship 7 pm Newsletter Articles Due	21	22
23 Outdoor Worship and Church Picnic 9:00 am	24	25 Pastor Katie Penn Mar 1:45 pm	26	27 Contemplative Walk 6:30 pm	28	29
30 Worship 9:00 am Birthday / Anniversary coffee hour.	31	August 1 Elder's Meeting 7:00 pm Deacon's Meeting 7:00 pm				



7/12 Victoria Lydon
7/12 Kathleen Schnelle
7/13 Christopher Julio
7/13 Marcia Shepard
7/14 Katherine D'Amico
7/19 Jean Claus
7/20 Luca Julio
7/20 June Siembieda
7/22 Jeff Ward
7/26 Chester Carbo



7/12 – David & Cynthia Knauff – 48 yrs.
7/14 – Todd & Katherine Niklewicz – 16 yrs.
7/21 – Larry & Amy Werner – 44 yrs.
7/25 – Michael & Cheryl Sauers – 59 yrs.

JULY NEWSLETTER

ST JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH
420 BEAVER STREET
P.O. BOX 411
MARS, PA 16046