

October
2024

St. John Lutheran Church



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

"There are different spiritual gifts but the same Spirit; and there are different ministries and the same Lord; and there are different activities but the same God who produces all of them in everyone."

1 Corinthians 12:4-6

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.*

While September is often considered the beginning of the academic year, October really kicks it into high gear! As the leaves change colors and we slide into fall, the church is bursting with life. So, I invite you to read this month's newsletter carefully as there is a lot happening in the coming month and months. Throughout this newsletter is a range of opportunities for you to be generous with your time, talents, and treasures through volunteering, giving, and participating. We have several key worship celebrations, multiple faith formation opportunities for people of all ages and all levels of connection with the church, evangelism and outreach community events, and of course opportunities to serve our neighbors near and far.

And in this variety of ministries and activities, there is ample opportunity to share hospitality and invite others to come and see that the Lord is good. Do you know someone who would like to learn more about the Bible and faith? Invite them to a Bible study or Sunday School! Do you know someone who is looking for an interactive, less formal way to connect with faith and the church? Invite them to Messy Church! Do you know someone looking to be generous? Invite them to one of our service opportunities! The list goes on and on! October is a busy month in the church, but I, for one, am excited for the way the church is bursting with life in this season. No one person can do it all, but together, as church, we can do incredible things. One of the beautiful things about being church is that we have a community comprised of many different spiritual gifts, a variety of ministries, and a diverse collection of activities, and in it all we are praising and worshipping the one Lord. Thanks be to God!

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 YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC35PpgMPeMgDRNmKsYKssxvQ>

Worship Notes

Young Worship Leaders

We love having our young worshippers helping with worship! 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
6-Oct	Carissa M.	Ava N	Lydia M	
13-Oct	Abby C	Luca K	Eva K	
20-Oct	Anna K	Jules K	Abby C	
27-Oct	Nathan K	Ava N	Ella N	
3-Nov	Ava N	Anna K	Nathan K	

Adult Worship Leaders

	Greeters	Usher	Assistant Minister	Bread Baker	Counters
6-Oct	VOLUNTEER	VOLUNTEER	Gene H	Denise H	Cindy K Chuck O
13-Oct	VOLUNTEER	VOLUNTEER	Denise H	Denise H	Cindy K Chuck O
20-Oct	VOLUNTEER	VOLUNTEER	Gene H	Denise H	Cindy K Chuck O
27-Oct	VOLUNTEER	VOLUNTEER	Denise H	Denise H	Cindy K Chuck O
3-Nov	VOLUNTEER	VOLUNTEER	Denise H	Denise H	John Tully Jamie Weaver

Flowers in Worship

Flowers are a beautiful addition to our worship space, and we are always grateful when people provide them! If you would like to **provide flowers for our altar during worship**, please sign up in the Greeting Area. If you have questions about the logistics of the flowers, contact the church office.

Adult Choir

For major festivals (like Reformation Sunday!), there is a **choir of dedicated singers** who prepare and offer a song for worship. If you'd like to be a part of this group, contact our Music Director, Maizy.

Worship Notes (continued)

Worship Leaders

We worship as the body of Christ, with many parts making up the one body. **One of the ways we express this is the many opportunities for leadership and participation.** If you like to read in front of people, if you like to help facilitate the logistics of worship, if you like to welcome people and offer hospitality, if you like to bake (or buy) bread, if you like to help with our younger worshippers... we need you to help with worship leadership! **Please see the sign-up sheets in the gathering area or [online](#) to see what openings we are still seeking to fill. If you have any questions about what a given role is responsible for, contact Pastor Katie or one of the Elders.** If you have a gift that you would like to bring to worship but aren't sure how it could fit in, see Pastor Katie!

Blessing of the Quilts – October 6

You have probably noticed that the Sanctuary is adorned with quilts again! **These quilts were lovingly stitched together to provide warmth and comfort and care to people around the world served by Lutheran World Relief.** Before the quilts make their journey, we will be praying over these quilts and for all who will receive them in our **annual Blessing of the Quilts during worship** on October 6. **Contact the office to find out how you can participate in this crafty ministry!**

Blessing of the Animals – October 6

Pets are beloved members of our homes. **To honor the special place our pets have in our lives, we will be holding a special service on October 6th at 3:00pm** on the lawn. Bring your furry, feathered, or scaly family members - on a leash or in a carrier please - to this brief **outdoor service.** This service is in October to recognize St. Francis of Assisi (feast day Oct 4), a 13th century saint who taught people about the goodness and holiness of all of God's creation, including the animals.

Reformation Sunday – October 27

October 27 is a celebration of the legendary night when Martin Luther nailed the 95 Theses to the Wittenberg Church door to inspire debate in protest of the selling of indulgences in 1517. Because this is remembered as the tipping point for the beginning of the Protestant Reformations, **we celebrate in church on the last Sunday of October by remembering reformations of the past and all the ways the church is continuing to reform.** To add to the fun, we invite you to **wear red to worship!**



All Saints Worship – November 3

Commemorating the saints of the church has been a practice since the 4th century. In the 8th century, the festival commemorating all saints was set on November 1st. Protestant churches (including Lutherans) believe that all Christian dead are saints, and there is no need for release from purgatory. In our bulletin on November 5, we will be remembering all of our loved ones who have died. **As we remember them, we recall the witness they gave through their lives, what they meant to us as fellow Christians, where they have led the way, and what they have left for us yet to accomplish.**

If you would like to remember a loved one, please submit names to the office or write them in the book of remembrances. **All information must be received by the office by Sunday, October 20th.** The red book of remembrances will be available in the Greeting Area beginning October 6th.

Serving Others

Fourth Quarter Mission Emphasis Project

Our fourth quarter (October, November, and December) Mission Emphasis project will be Mars Area Police Department. The Police Department works hard to maintain community safety in a variety of ways, but they need our support to be continue to do their good work. To contribute, **please mark your envelopes “Mission Emphasis”** so that we can be sure the funds are appropriately designated.

St. John Food Pantry

In the recent weather, the temperature in the outdoor pantry can get high. Unfortunately, not every shelf-stable item can be safely stored in these temperatures. Help us keep things in safe places. Check to see if there are any temperature notes on packaging. Help us to keep the things that need to stay inside in the indoor food pantry. But as you’ll notice, there are a lot of items that come and go through our little food pantry. So you can also help us by donating goods for others to make use of.

Consider bringing in an extra can of chili beans (a request) or easy to prepare meals (another request) or paper products (another request) or any other shelf-stable item. **Please be sure any donated items have not yet expired.** And whenever you have a few moments, keep the pantry hospitable by **checking expiration dates and reshelving things to keep everything tidy.** Thank you for your continued generosity in providing care to our neighbors in need.

From the Synod

Sharing Your Vision; Telling Your Story

“We need to know who we are as congregations, what we believe God is calling us to do, and how we can share what we are doing with other people. The clearer we are about these things, the more people will be willing to invest their time, talents, and treasure in our ministries. This event will encourage those who attend to participate in a visioning and storytelling process.” The Southwestern PA Synod of the ELCA is offering a workshop to invite congregations to “Find God’s vision, create a mission plan, tell your story, and invite investment in your congregation.” Pastor Katie will be attending, and it is wonderful for members of the congregation to join the conversation. If the cost of the workshop is a barrier, please [contact the office.](#)



Saturday, October 12: 9:30 AM - 2 PM

Harrold Zion Lutheran Church

671 Baltzer Meyer Pike, Greensburg

[>> swpasynod.org/calendar/visionstory2024 >>](https://swpasynod.org/calendar/visionstory2024)

\$15 includes materials, lunch, and refreshments.

Faith Formation

Confirmation Classes

In October we will be starting up our Confirmation Classes. Stay tuned for a more detailed schedule.

Faith Formation (continued)

Sunday Faith Formation Hour for All Ages

Faith formation classes for all ages begin at 10:15am to allow teachers time to prepare and transition from worship. Children in preschool through high school are invited to **meet their teachers at the front pew** in the sanctuary. Students will then move downstairs for their lessons, divided by age group.

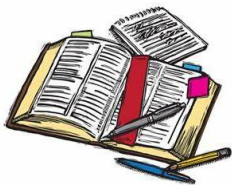
There is a discussion-based adult class. This class will dive more deeply into the readings from worship. We will meet in the basement at a table near the bathrooms.

Messy Church – Third Fridays (5:30-7:30pm)

All are welcome for this free, intergenerational, interactive worship. Messy Church is an intentionally intergenerational place for people to meet and experience fun and messy ways to engage in faith and worship, including crafts and activities, celebration, and a shared meal. Messy Church is Friday, October 18th, 5:30-7:30 pm.



Adult Bible Study

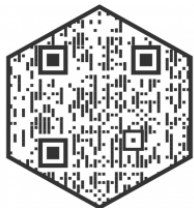


Starting October 16th and 20th, we will be diving into some of the parables Jesus told in our weekly Bible study gatherings on Wednesdays (7:00 pm) and Sundays (6:30 pm). Parables are deeply rooted in their context yet still offer timeless truths about God and what it means to be a follower of Christ. These short stories sometimes seem quite straightforward yet have a complexity to explore under the surface. Other times, the parables are hard to understand or even challenging to hear, and it takes a deeper dive to find the good news of Jesus Christ in them. **All are welcome to come and bring your curiosity as we explore together what we can hear in the parables Jesus told.**

Stewardship Corner

Robert Blezard in Living Lutheran invites us to understand stewardship as not just what we do with our money, but as something that lies at the very center of what it means to be a disciple of Jesus: **“How do you care for and use everything that God has given you—not just possessions and wealth, but relationships, creativity, special talents, intelligence, time, vocation: everything?** Using our gifts wisely and for godly purposes is what being a steward is all about. It’s the key to being a disciple.” See his stewardship study guide [here](#).

Grades 6-12 Youth Group



The Mars Area Youth Group (a joint venture between St. John and Mars United Presbyterian for youth in grades 6-12) will be **starting on October 13! Meetings are on Sunday afternoons (1-2:30pm) and approximately twice per month. We will alternate between meetings in the church building and service-based and social-based events.** Meetings in the church building will be at Mars United Presbyterian (232 Crowe Ave). To sign up **to receive updates and the group’s schedule, please fill out the form** at <https://forms.gle/eQEjU43wXju4Agsk9> or scan the QR code.

Grades 2-5 Kids' Club

Our joint Kids' Club with Mars United Presbyterian (grades 2-5) will have its **first meeting on October 13! Meetings are on Sunday afternoons (1-2:30pm) and approximately twice per month. We will alternate between meetings in the church building and service-based and social-based events.** Meetings in the church building will be at St. John Lutheran Church. **To sign up to receive the group's schedule and updates**, fill out the form at <https://forms.gle/YXESKSj6jc9XiqA5A> or scan the QR code.



Around the Church

Online Sign-Up Sheets

There are a lot of ways to participate in the life of the church. Often these opportunities come with sign-up sheets. **To help facilitate the usage of these sign-up sheets, we are testing an online version!** The sign-ups received via the online portal will be merged with the paper versions prior to Sunday worship each week. This new online option will also send you email reminders before your sign-up and facilitate communicating any trades with the office. This is a beta test, which means there may be some bugs along the way. Let us know about your experience so that we can continue to improve it. **You can access the online signup board at <https://signup.com/go/cupoSLe>.**

Deacon's News

The next project on the Deacon's agenda is the booth at Applefest. We **really** need people to help set up the day before, man the booth in 2-4 hour blocks during the day, and to help break everything down at the end of the day. Along with that we are asking for "anything apple" for the baked goods sale. Applefest is Oct. 5th so please mark your calendars. At Applefest we will be advertising for a Chili Cook-off at St. John on November 2nd. If we have any people within the congregation that believe their chili recipe can't be beat, please see a deacon. We are hoping to draw cooks from other churches and in the community as well. More on that in the next newsletter!

Applefest – October 5

Applefest is a big deal in Mars, so this is a great opportunity to be an active presence in the community. It takes a lot of hands to get ready for the event as well as to sit at the booth and talk with people. We will have kids' activities, information about the congregation, and food for sale! It's a busy day! **Mark your calendars** and talk to one of the Elders, Deacons, or [Pastor Katie](#) if you'd like to help!



Fall Clean-Up – October 12

Will be Saturday October 12, from 9 till 12

Trustees are looking for Volunteers to help with yard, garden and garage clean-up. The biggest job will be on the left side of the church from fence line to the church. Removal of all kinds of overgrown vegetation. Gloves, long sleeve shirt, good shoes to work on hill side.

Yard rake, loppers, pruning shears, weedwhacker, etc. Will be needed to accomplish task.

Hope you can attend and give us a hand.

October 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 Deacon's Meeting 7:00 pm Elder's Meeting 7:00 pm	2	3	4 Applefest Prep	5 Applefest
6 20 th Sunday in Pentecost Worship: 9:00 am Blessing of the Quilts Sunday School, 10:15 Trustee's Mtg. 10:15 am	7	8	9	10	11	12 Fall Clean-Up 9:00 am – 12 noon
13 21 st Sunday in Pentecost Worship: 9:00 am Sunday School, 10:15 Kids Club / Youth Group 1:00 – 2:30 pm	14	15 Council Meeting 7:00 pm	16 Bible Study 7:00 pm	17	18 Messy Church 5:30 pm	19
20 22 nd Sunday in Pentecost Worship: 9:00 am Sunday School, 10:15 Bible Study: 6:30 pm	21	22	23 Bible Study 7:00 pm	24 Worship Planners 7:00 pm	25	26
27 Reformation Sunday Worship, 9:00 am Sunday School, 10:15 Youth Group / Kids Club Service Event 6:30 pm	28 Communion at Penn Mar 1:45	29	30 Bible Study 7:00 pm	31 Trunk or Treat	1	2 Chili Cookoff



10/07 Cherry Sauers
10/08 Lauren Schuster
10/17 Ruth Bielo
10/19 Jennifer Miller
10/20 Melissa Kramer
10/22 Charles Davidson Jr.
10/24 Kimberly Richards
10/27 Denise Julio



10/17 Frederick & Susan Bielo – 37 yrs.
10/20 James & Denise Hager – 45 yrs.
10/22 Charles & Anne Olescyski – 58 yrs.
10/25 Reed & Kimberly Richards – 21 yrs.

October Newsletter

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