

January
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 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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Pastor's Cell #: 412-407-3166

Lord God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Happy New Year!

I have admittedly never been one for New Year's Resolutions. I always figured that I could resolve to do something any time of year. But I **am** eager to sit down with my calendar and dream about continuing education opportunities, new ministry ventures, and better organizational tactics. I'm eager to think about new things I want to learn, skills I want to sharpen, and ways I can connect more with the community. And I'm eager to dream with each of you for the ways St. John can continue to grow and develop in 2023. What new faith formation opportunities will we create? What traditions will we continue to treasure and hone? What new ministries will we develop? What long-lasting relationships will we deepen?

And before I think of what could limit the possibilities, I spend some time just taking in the fresh canvas of the year before us, trusting the Holy Spirit to guide our dreaming and to light a fire in our hearts for what it would have us do with this new year. And then I trust God to sustain us in what we will do as we chase our dreams and get to the work of realizing the dreams we have in the newness of the beginning of the year.

Maybe the Holy Spirit will guide your dreaming and lead you to trying a new way of serving during worship. Maybe it will lead you to diving more deeply into beloved traditions. Maybe it will lead you to something totally new that we will encounter together. That's the fun part of dreaming and being open to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit! We never quite know where it will lead us. And as I think of the adventure that awaits us in 2023, I think of the prayer at the top of this page from the Lutheran Book of Worship. We do not know what 2023 will bring. But we know that no matter what comes, God is with us, Emmanuel.

Let us dream. Let us open our hearts to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Let us trust in God's abiding, sustaining presence through it all.

*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/UC35PpgMPeMgDRNmKkYKssxvQ>
and in the church Facebook group: [St John Lutheran Church Mars PA](#) later in the day.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING NOTICE

Annual Meeting - Sunday, January 22, 2023

We will review 2022, vote on a budget, and approve the congregational council for 2023. The congregational meeting will be held after the worship service on January 22.

Worship News

Service of Lessons and Carols – January 1

A service of Lessons and Carols is an opportunity to **dwelt in the richness of God’s Word** and the promise of God’s Word incarnate, Jesus Christ through scripture and song. **Worship is at 9:00 am.**

Young Worship Helpers

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
1-Jan		TBD	
8-Jan	Anna K	Luca K	Eva K
15-Jan	Nathan K	Jules K	Abigail C
22-Jan	Ava N	Luca K	Eva K
29-Jan	Emma N	Abigail C	Ella N
5-Feb	Abigail C	Ava N	Emma N

What is Epiphany?

Epiphany is **one of the oldest traditions** in the Christian church, dating back to the second century. From our liturgical resource, Sundays and Seasons: “The feast of Epiphany (“manifestation”) **concludes the Christmas season with a celebration of God’s glory revealed** in the person of Jesus Christ for all people. Like the light of the star that guided the magi to Jesus, the light of Christ reveals who we are: children of God who are claimed and washed in the waters of baptism. **We are sent out to be beacons of the light of Christ, sharing the good news of God’s love to all people.” Epiphany is celebrated on January**

6th, 12 days after Christmas. In worship, we will celebrate Epiphany on the Sunday following January 6th. Following the day of Epiphany, we observe the “**season after Epiphany**” until we begin our **Lenten journey** on Ash Wednesday, which this year is February 22nd.



Vestry Installation

We are so grateful to those who dedicate time and energy to **serve in various leadership roles** within the congregation. As we begin a new year, the vestry will be charged with leading the congregation through the coming year during **the installation of the vestry during worship on January 8th.**

Serving Others

St. John Food Pantry

Our food pantry has been seeing an increase in usage. If you notice that the outdoor pantry is looking empty, **please move stuff from the inside shelves**. As the weather drops below freezing more regularly, **please be aware of how any items might store in freezing temperatures**. People who use our pantries have asked that we focus our offerings on **toiletries, cleaning supplies, and paper products as well as easy-to-make meals** (e.g., soups or other microwaveable meals).

Mission Endowment Committee

Have you heard about the Mission Endowment Committee? This group meets a few times each year to **determine where to send the funds** earned as interest on a fund dedicated solely for this purpose.

The Mission Endowment Committee works to see that **our support includes organizations that serve local, regional, and global needs**.

Thank You!

Thank you to all those who helped to bake dozens upon dozens of cookies and goodies for the participants in the local Meals on Wheels program. The goodies were so appreciated throughout December!

Once again, St. John took on the challenge of 85 tags on the Angel Tree... and once again, every single tag was taken and replaced with a gift under the tree for a child under the care of Glade Run Services! Thank you to all who

helped make Christmas special for these children and youth!



Around the Church

Thank You!

A personal thank you from Pastor Katie and Diane for the generous Christmas gifts!

Time Capsule Additions

If you have any **ideas or items that you'd like to contribute** to the time capsule that we will "rebury" in the altar for St. John's 150th anniversary, contact the Deacons or the office. **All suggestions are due by the Annual Congregational Meeting.**

2023 Church Directory

It's time for us to **update our church directory!** There will be a copy of 2022's directory in the Greeting Area for the first few weeks of January. Please go through the directory and **add or edit any information you would like included in the 2023 directory**. If you have contact information that you do not want in the directory but would like to make sure is **updated for the office's records, please contact Pastor Katie or the office directly with that information.**

Newsletter Mailing List Update

We are **updating our Newsletter Mailing preferences**. Each month, we **email** a PDF version of the newsletter, **mail** physical copies, and have **copies available in the Greeting Area**. If you would like to be added to or removed from either the electronic list or physically mailed list, please contact the office.

Serving the Church

As we enter a new year, we are looking to fill out worship volunteer schedule. **Training is available** for any position. You are welcome to **sign up for just one week to give it a try or multiple weeks** to practice and get comfortable! Sign-ups are available in the Greeting Area.

Assistant Minister

Help lead worship by reading scripture and prayers and assisting in the distribution of communion.

Usher/Greeter

Greet people as they enter for worship and hand out bulletins; ring the bell before and during worship.

Counter

Serve in a team of two to count the offering after worship.

Bread Baker

Bake or purchase bread to be used for communion during worship.

Eucharistic Minister

Visit and take communion from our Sunday celebration to those unable to be physically in worship.

Altar Guild

Set up for and clean up after worship; change the paraments to match the color of the day.

Member Updates

Welcome to David Dreher and Beth Fitzgerald! Beth and David joined as new members on Dec. 4th.

Rest in Peace. Our member, Ralph Storm, died on December 7th at the age of 92.

Rest eternal grant him, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon him.

Fellowship Opportunities

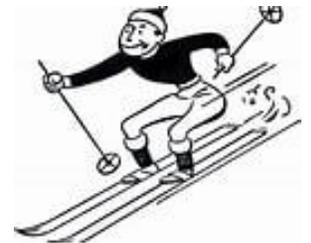
Kids Club and Youth Group Schedule

Youth Group (Grades 6-12) meets at Mars United Presbyterian Church

Kids Club (Grades 2-5) meets at St. John.

Meetings (1-2:30p): January 8, January 22, February 5

Ski Trip to Peak N Peak: February 11 (details coming)



White Elephant Bingo

Friday, January 6, 6:30-9:30p

The rules are simple. Everybody brings a **wrapped white elephant gift**.

Everyone can **play as many cards** as they wish. **When you get a Bingo**, you **choose a gift** from those on the table, or you can take a gift from someone else.

Each participant is asked to **contribute \$5 for pizza and drinks**.



Faith Formation

Bible Study – Meeting the Minor Prophets

There are twelve books in the Bible that are grouped together and called the “Minor Prophets.” The name does not in any way reflect on the importance of the message they have for us. Join us on **Wednesdays during the Season after Epiphany (Jan 11-Feb 15) at 7:00pm** for an **introduction to some of the “minor” prophets, their stories, and the message they have for us today**. As always, we will **also have a Zoom option** available for those unable to join us in person. Contact Pastor Katie if you would like to be on that email list.

Adult Sunday School Class

In the new year, we are offering a new re-branding of the Adult Sunday School class. Given Pastor Katie’s presence during the children’s opening time for Sunday School, the adults are often left sitting and waiting. In the new year, **Pastor Katie will have printed materials to guide conversation on either that Sunday’s gospel or epistle (second) reading. Interested adults are invited to go directly downstairs after worship, grab a cup of coffee (or tea or hot cocoa!) and begin conversation!**

Lutherlyn Youth Winter Retreat – January 20-22

4th-12th graders are invited **to experience camp in the winter!** Campers will be divided by age groups and stay in cabin with cabin leaders from the summer staff. There will be GAGA ball in the snow, Bible study, the bouldering room, songs, worship, friends, indoor and outdoor games, lots of your summer camp favorites, and fun in the wonderful winter weather! **(Registration Deadline is January 11)** For more information, visit lutherlyn.com/winter.



Lutherlyn Summer Camp Registration

Mark your calendars: Lutherlyn Summer Camp Registration opens on **February 1!** Many of the camps fill quickly, so plan to register early! If your child would like to attend Lutherlyn, but finances are standing in your way, please contact Pastor Katie. **Finances should never stop a kid from being able to experience the life-changing adventures in faith at Lutherlyn**, a place where each child is accepted, challenged, and sent out into the world to spread the love of Christ.

Trip Opportunity



Hope Lutheran in Cranberry is exploring the possibility of taking a bus trip to see **Moses at Sight and Sound Theater in Lancaster, PA in October 2023**. The cost is estimated to be around \$500 per person. The typical trip has an overnight, breakfast at the hotel, dinner, and a show one night, lunch and time for shopping, and another dinner and the big show the next night. **If you are interested in this trip, please contact Pastor Katie.**

December News and Updates

Live Nativity at Mars United Presbyterian

Thank you to all who braved the cold to join us for this live-action retelling of the Christmas Story alongside the people of Mars United Presbyterian!



Youth Group/Kids Club Christmas Party

Fifteen children and youth came together for games and snacks celebrating the Christmas season! A good time was had by all, especially during the indoor snowball fight!

Christmas Worship

A Blue Christmas Service at Mars United Presbyterian, two Christmas Eve services, a Christmas Day service, and a Lessons and Carols service. Christmas was celebrated in many ways. Thank you to all who helped support all these worship opportunities.



2023 Vestry

Below is the 2023 Vestry as elected in our December Congregational Meeting. At the December Vestry Meeting, chairs, representatives to council, and secretaries were selected for each board. The Vestry also elected officers to council. Council is comprised of the officers (president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer) and the chair and representative to council from each board (Deacons, Elders, Trustees).

Council President – Denise Hager
Council Vice-President – Mike Sauers
Secretary – Jamie Weaver
Financial Secretary – Kelly Greb
Treasurer – Beth Fitzgerald

Deacons

Sherry Davidson – Secretary
Kelly Greb
Denise Hager
Cindy Knauff – Representative to Council
Laura Kramer
Jill Wilkes
Erin Weaver – Chair

Elders

Valerie Cardinal
Matt Claus – Chair
Tanya Nagel – Secretary
Katie Niklewicz
Chuck Olescyski – Representative to Council
Kim Richards
(1 vacant seat)

Trustees (*Chair and representative pending*)

Dan Kramer
Todd Niklewicz
Mike Sauers
Jamie Weaver – Secretary
Larry Werner
(2 vacant seats)

Board and Committee Meeting Schedule

Deacons: Monthly, 1st Tuesday at 7:00 pm
Elders: Monthly, 1st Tuesday at 7:00 pm
Trustees: Monthly, 1st Sunday after worship
Council: Monthly, 3rd Tuesday at 7:00 pm
Mission Endowment: Quarterly, as needed
Mutual Ministry: Quarterly, as needed

Other Standing Committees

Mission Endowment

Beverly Crislip
Beth Fitzgerald
Missy Kramer
Dave Knauff
Janet Senka
Ruth Ann Tully

Mutual Ministry

Keith Cardinal
Matt Claus
Ruth Ann Tully

January 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Worship 9:00 am Trustee's Mtg 10:15 am	2	3 Deacons Meeting 7 pm Elders Meeting 7 pm	4 Worship Planners 7 pm	5	6 White Elephant Bingo 6:30 - 9:30 pm	7
8 Worship 9:00 am Sunday School Youth Group 1 pm Kid Club 1 pm Vestry Installation	9	10	11 Bible Study- Meeting the Minor Prophets 7 pm	12	13	14
15 Worship 9:00 am Sunday School	16	17 Council Meeting 7 pm	18 Bible Study- Meeting the Minor Prophets 7 pm	19	20 Newsletter Articles Due	21 Tentative Vesty Retreat 9:30 am - 2:00 pm
22 Worship 9:00 am Sunday School Congregational Meeting 10:15 am Youth Group - 1 pm Kids Club - 1 pm	23	24	25 Bible Study- Meeting the Minor Prophets 7 pm	26	27	28
29 Worship 9:00 am Sunday School	30	31				



- 1/07 Justin Waibel
- 1/11 Frederick Ludloff
- 1/16 Chuck Olescyski
- 1/21 Kathy Marshall
- 1/24 Madison Cardinal
- 1/27 Gianna Julio



January Newsletter

Address service requested

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