

February  
2022

# St. John Lutheran Church



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

Web site: [www.stjohnchurchmars.org](http://www.stjohnchurchmars.org)  
Church Office: (724) 625-1830  
Office email: [office@stjohnchurchmars.org](mailto: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.*

## Enjoyment

by **Inspiration Ministries**

"There is an evil which I have seen under the sun ... A man to whom God has given riches, possessions, and honor ... yet God does not give him the power or capacity to enjoy them." – Ecclesiastes 6:1-2 AMPC

Ecclesiastes described a person who had been blessed yet was not able to enjoy these blessings as "evil."

What a perfect picture of life for many people! Despite all that God has given them, they are not able to appreciate His blessings. They don't rest or trust in Him or believe His Word! Instead, they are consumed by worry and anxiety. Many are skeptical and filled with doubt.

They spend their lives running after the "vapors" of life (James 4:14) – promises that cannot be fulfilled, pleasures that do not last, applause that quickly fades away.

The Bible talked about a man "who loves silver" but who "will not be satisfied with silver." The lesson was that "when goods increase, they who eat them increase also" (Ecclesiastes 5:10-11). Their only gain is what they see with their eyes.

People like this fail to realize that God holds the key to life. We can accumulate things, but only God can give us real joy. When we serve Him and seek first His Kingdom, He promises to bless us and bring us into new dimensions of blessing, a dimension of the Spirit.

Today, remember that God desires to bless and prosper you, take away your burdens and worries, and enable you to enjoy life and the things He has given you. What is the key? Seek first His Kingdom. Surrender your life to Him. Let Him give you real life! Real joy!



## Ash Wednesday Worship and Imposition of Ashes March 2<sup>nd</sup> @ 7:00 pm

At 7:00 pm there will be a service of Holy Communion with Imposition of Ashes.



### **Volunteers Needed**

The Elders are looking for volunteers for the Worship Planning Committee. This Committee chooses hymns and plans Special Services and is not a monthly commitment.

If you are interested in helping or would like more information about this committee, please see Matt Claus, Sally Foster or any Elder.

Volunteers are also needed for Counters and Ushers. Counters – see Martha Ward  
Ushers – see Martha Ward or Katie Niklewicz.



New Address for Clarence and Marlene Strabel is:  
1500 Catherine Street  
Apt. 407D  
Walla Walla WA 9936



I have a bad habit of looking at my feet when I walk. I don't often stub my toe or trip on uneven ground, but occasionally I run into something or someone I'm not expecting.

Our 2-year-old has the opposite issue. While we walk around our neighborhood, his head is always up and looking around. This means he often trips over his feet, but his view of the world is much broader than mine. As is the case with most toddlers, he might ask, "What's that?" or "What's their name?" or "What's that called?" His curiosity reminds me that a simple shift in perspective can engender wonder.

Whether I'm looking at my feet while I walk, hunching over my cellphone or resting my elbows on a desk at work, this posture of folding inward prevents me from truly seeing the expansiveness of God's good creation. This makes me wonder about the opportunities we miss simply because our posture doesn't allow us to see the world around us.

Epiphany marks the day and the church season when Jesus comes to be named and understood as God's own son, the living and breathing manifestation of God in our midst.

The Epiphany story begins with three magi noticing a new star and setting off on a journey. Arriving at their destination, these three people from distant places encounter a child born to a teenage mother in a little-known town, a birth heralded by livestock and ranchers. Jesus' birth story isn't what most imagine when they think of a newborn king. Yet the magi come to see and understand Jesus as God on Earth.

Most of us think of an epiphany as a flash of insight, but what if Epiphany is an invitation to notice the beauty and brilliance of what's already there?

The name Epiphany comes from the Greek *epiphaneia*, meaning "manifestation." Most of us think of an epiphany as a flash of insight, but what if Epiphany is an invitation to notice the beauty and brilliance of what's already there?

The magi found a new star in the sky. They bore witness to the presence of God within little Jesus. And during the time after Epiphany, we'll hear Gospel stories of Jesus growing in his understanding of who he is as God's child and of the kind of messiah he is called to be. Perhaps, then, Epiphany is less a sudden realization and more a growth in understanding.

When I realign my focus, when I notice how much I cast my eyes to the ground or hunch over, I can lift my head, straighten my posture and enjoy a new perspective. With my eyes up, I'm free to perceive and appreciate the beautiful diversity of the people and plants and creatures I encounter. I can truly see my neighbors, noticing when someone is having a rough day. I can even serve my neighbor who's reaching out for help.

Amid what's been a very challenging season for many, something as simple as letting someone know you've noticed them can produce a profound impact. We long to be seen by each other and God.

Epiphany calls us to see our neighbors—our neighbor in need, our neighbor who's struggling, our neighbor who puts on a brave face at worship while suffering inside, as well as our neighbor who's rejoicing. It calls us to notice neighbors who don't look, worship, speak, vote or pray as we do. It calls us to recognize them, too, as God's children.

Amid what's been a very challenging season for many, something as simple as letting someone know you've noticed them can produce a profound impact. We long to be seen by each other and God.

How differently might we treat one another if the first thing we noticed about someone was their identity as a beloved child of God?

When we notice and focus on what draws us together rather than what drives us apart, we can approach our differences from a place of genuine care and concern for one another's well-being. By seeking to understand our neighbors, we can build the world God intends—a world ruled by peace, built upon equity and justice, and infused with the sweet fragrance of love.

During this time after Epiphany, let's commit to noticing and celebrating all the ways God appears in our time and place. You might create a list and write down every time you notice God in your world—from people, plants and animals to the movements of stars and other heavenly bodies.

Take a cue from my 2-year-old: Keep your head up and look around. Maybe you'll fill up your notebook with signs of God's presence so quickly that you'll need to buy another one. Notice your opportunities to bless and be blessed by others. Surely the Messiah is with us.



[Chris Michaelis](#)

Chris Michaelis serves as Pastor of New Hope Lutheran Church in Missouri City, Texas.

## Upcoming Zoom Meetings and Worship Services

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

**Trustees Meeting – February 6 – 9:15 AM In person and on Zoom.**

**Deacons Meeting – February 1 – 7:00 PM – In person and on Zoom.**

**Elders Meeting – February 1 – 6:30 PM - In person and on Zoom.**

**Council Meeting – February 15 -7:00 pm – In person and on Zoom.**

**Sunday Worship - February 6, 13, 20, 27– 8:00 AM & 10:30 AM  
In-person worship in sanctuary.  
Join Zoom for 10:30 AM service**

Available on  
our **YouTubeChannel:** <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC35PpgMPeMgDRNmKsXvQ>

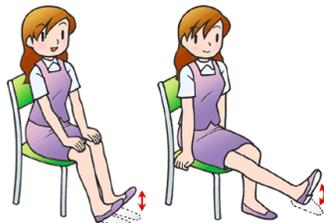
**Sunday Worship – January 23 – One Service at 10:00 AM  
Annual Meeting following service.  
Join Zoom for 10:00 AM service:**

Available on  
our **YouTubeChannel:** <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC35PpgMPeMgDRNmKsXvQ>

## **Old Wooden Tables & Bulletin Boards**

There are (2) old wooden tables (the kind with screw in legs) and (2) wooden bulletin boards in the Church basement that are available to anyone who wants them. Please see Dan Kramer by February 28<sup>th</sup> if interested. Phone: 724-625-6173

## **Chair Aerobics**



**Join us each Monday evening at 6:30 pm** in the Fellowship Hall as we get fit with gentle chair aerobics. See Kim Richards if you have any questions.



**Mission Endowment and Outreach Committee**

Do you like to give away money? If so, this committee could be for you!

The money would fund various missions and supporting advocacy issues, both locally and worldwide.

There are usually four meetings a year.

We have two slots to fill, if interested see Sally Foster.

**Sunday School Valentine Party  
February 9**

Sunday, February 13, will be our children's Valentine's Party. We hope that the congregation will join us for some fellowship, some refreshments and some fun.

The Sunday School children will be making a valentine collection box the Sunday prior. If anyone would like to bring a card for their box, I am sure they would appreciate it.

***The children's names are:*** Abigail, Emma, Ava, Ella, Nathan, Anna, Olivia, Nick, Wesley, Brentley, Finnley, Jules, Eva, Luca, Lillian, Sabrina, Gabriella, Mia, Landon, Hunter and Wyatt.





02/05 Emily Greb  
02/05 Lindsey Greb  
02/05 Herman Boehmig  
02/11 Geneva Hackworth  
02/20 Harry Cole  
02/21 Keith Cardinal  
02/27 Dorothy Delp

### Upcoming Events

Baptism: February 20<sup>th</sup> – late service  
Feb 13<sup>th</sup> - Children's Valentine Party  
Purple Pancake Breakfast

### Counters for February

Erin Weaver

### Ushers for February

Niklewicz Family-early  
Dan Kramer - late

### Worship Helpers February

#### Assisting Ministers

8:00 am 2/6 & 2/13

Valerie Cardinal

8:00 am 2/20 & 2/27

Matt Claus

10:30 am Melissa Kramer

# February Newsletter

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Address service requested

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420 BEAVER STREET  
P.O. BOX 411  
MARS, PA 16046