

June
2023

St. John Lutheran Church



St. John Lutheran Church
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“Train children in the right way, and when old, they will not stray.”

Proverbs 22:6

Kids are distracting during worship. But not in the way you think! Throughout worship, I see the kids do all kinds of things. Sometimes they are eating a snack or playing with a toy, expressing their joy or displeasure, or wandering around and getting wiggly. But they are always absorbing everything we do in worship. Everything.

I have also seen kids place scribbles in the offering plate and the prayer basket. I have seen toddlers reach out a hand for the bread at communion. I have seen their eyes light up at a random word in the sermon. I have seen them sing before they could read words. And every time I catch them out of the corner of my eye, I can't help but be distracted because these kids are *get* worship. They have seen worship, and they want to participate as they know how. They may not always fully understand what it is that they're doing, but they know that there is meaning and power in what we do as we gather for worship each week.

Isn't that a little like how we approach worship? We may not always understand how it works, but we know that when we routinely practice worship, we will find meaning and power. We know that when we regularly practice meeting God in our singing and our praying, at the table and in the water of baptism, in our giving and our listening to the Word of God, we will encounter God. Sometimes we get wiggly; sometimes we'd rather be somewhere else. But we are always absorbing what is done in worship.

Kids are distracting in worship because they often cause me to pause and reflect on the way our kids *get* worship. Even when they don't fully understand, they *get* the importance of practicing worship, or embodying worship, of absorbing all that happens in worship. What a lesson that is for us to learn from them! We bring our kids into worship so that we can teach them about worship... but each time I watch a sing without words, place a scribble in the prayer basket, reach out for a piece of bread, or come running to the altar with fully embodied joy... I wonder if we maybe bring kids to worship so that they can teach us about worship.

Peace,
Pastor Katie

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.*

Online Sunday Worship

Join Zoom for service: <https://zoom.us/j/5663185411> Meeting ID: 566 318 5411 PW: Luther
Available on our YouTubeChannel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC35PpgMPeMgDRNmKYYKssxvQ>
and in 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
4-June	Ava N	Anna K	Nathan K	
11-June	Emma N	Luca K	Eva K	
18-June	Abigail C	Ava N	Emma N	
25-June	Anna K	Jules K	Abigail C	Abigail C
2-July	Nathan K	Ava N	Ella N	

Adult Worship Leaders

	Greeters	Usher	Assistant Minister	Bread Baker	Counters
4-June	TBD	John T	Denise H	John T	Jamie W Missy K
11-June	TBD	John T	Madison C	John T	Jamie W Missy K
18-June	TBD	John T	Madison C	John T	Jamie W Missy K
25-June	TBD	John T	TBD	John T	Jamie W Missy K
2-July	TBD	TBD	TBD	Denise H	Jill W Valerie C

Campfire Worship – June 15



Thursday, June 15th, join us outside around a campfire on the lawn for 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! Campfire worships will continue through the summer on the third Thursdays of June, July, and August.

Prayer List Updates

We would like the list of names we lift in prayer as a community each Sunday to be as current as possible. We are therefore asking people to review the prayer lists and let the office know whether the names you have placed on the prayer list should continue to remain on the weekly prayers or if the name can be removed.

(Worship Notes Continued)
“Ordinary Time”

The season after Pentecost is called “Ordinary Time.” After Holy Trinity Sunday and until we get to Christ the King Sunday before Advent, the church will be **green** (save for the red week for Reformation), and we count. It’s the **counting that gives the season its orderly name**. But the name “ordinary” also serves as a neat **reminder that God is in the ordinary, regular, mundane parts of life** just as much as God is in the miraculous occurrences of Easter or Christmas or any of the other festivals. The next six months of counting invite us to consider God as a part of our daily, ordinary experiences. **What would it be like to be mindful of God as we wash our hands, mow the lawn, make a sandwich, or any other ordinary moment?**

Serving Others

Harvest Street Mission – June 3 and 4

Every week throughout the year, Harvest Street Mission provides a **Sunday lunch service on the streets of Pittsburgh for people who may not otherwise eat** through ministry partners. We will be providing lunch as well as toiletry bags on June 4. Sign up with the church office to be involved with this service opportunity. **We need people to prepare the meals and bags on June 3rd as well as people to serve on June 4th**. We are also collecting **cash donations through the jar in the Greeting Area** to help us finance this ministry. To learn more about Harvest Street Mission, visit <https://www.harveststreetmission.org/>.



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.**

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.

Community Garden

The garden has plants in it! As the garden grows, **feel free to weed and harvest as you like!** As you explore the garden, please stay on the paving stones to help keep the dirt loose and good for growing. If you have any questions about the garden, contact Pastor Katie. Keep an eye out for tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, and more!



Community News

Synod Assembly – June 16 and 17

We **STILL need 2 representatives** for Synod Assembly! This year's theme is **“Better Together.”** Assembly will begin on Friday with an evening of business conducted online via Zoom, followed by a day of gathering in person at PennWest California (formerly Cal-U) to worship, work, and remember that we are better together. If you are interested in being a representative, please contact Pastor Katie.

Contemplative Walk – June 29

Stay tuned for more details about a community organized contemplative **walk through North Park with prayer, fellowship, and quiet time with God in creation.**

Around the Church

Summer Office Hours

We are shifting to summer office hours. Diane will be in the office Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays 8a-1p. As always, certain tasks call us out of the building, so please call ahead before coming.

New Member Conversation – June 7

We are excited to welcome new members to the St. John congregation! As part of joining the church, we invite people to participate in a new member conversation, including a **basic introduction to the ELCA at large and St. John specifically as well as what it means to be a member of St. John.**

Annual Church Picnic – July 23

Mark your calendars! Our **annual church picnic will be on July 23rd.** This year we will be back at our regular **park pavilion** (stay tuned for details). We will have worship, picnic food, and games! It's a great time for all!



Adult Education Forum

On May 24th we wrapped up our conversation about the book of 1 Peter. We will be taking a break for the month of June and **will return to regular gathering and studying in the middle of July.** If there is something that you're curious about, please contact Pastor Katie.

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.**

Ladies' Tea Update

Due to a record number of attendees and a wonderful array of baskets donated by members and friends of the congregation, **the Deacons are reporting a net of \$4,451 from the tea.** A super big thanks goes out to Jamie Weaver for manning the kitchen and to all the servers and basket providers. **The \$260 from the 50/50 raggle will be used to beef up our little food pantry.** The remainder will be decided at a later date.



Children and Youth

Sunday School Leaders Meeting – June 11

Leaders of the various parts of Sunday School will be meeting on June 11 after worship to review the past year and consider what, if anything, we would like to keep, adjust, and get rid of as we prepare for next year. We will also be working on a roster of children in the program and developing a list of substitute helpers. If you have any ideas, you are more than welcome to share them ahead of time or attend the meeting.

Youth Car Wash Fundraiser – June 24

The youth group and kids club will be doing a **car wash fundraiser** to help pay for 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, 10a-2p!**



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

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.

June 3 – Packing for Harvest Street Mission (9:00a)

June 24 – Car Wash Fundraiser at Agway (9:30a-2:30p, includes set up and clean up time)

July 9-13 – Vacation Bible School at Mars United Presbyterian (6:00-8:20p)

July 14 – Pool Party

August 19 – Ohiopyle Trip for all ages

Faith at Home

Praying through the Senses

God created us as embodied beings; by bringing our bodies into our prayer practices, we can connect with God in different ways. **During our summer readings, we will be encouraged to pray through our senses, focusing on each sense for two or three weeks.** Be sure to follow us on Facebook and/or Instagram or check out the bulletin to see which sense we'll be focusing on each week and some suggestions on ways to pray with each sense.



(Faith at Home Continued)
Calling All Thrivent Members

Are you a Thrivent Member?

Thrivent is a financial company that has been around for years under a few different names. They offer a variety of financial resources for people of all ages, but **members who either have an insurance policy or an annuity account with them have access to special generosity programs including Thrivent Action Teams**. Action Teams provide a kit of resources to be used for a project within a non-profit organization. **A \$250 gift card is included in the kit!** Action Teams can be used for any number of things, including VBS, the Community Garden, Lutheran World Relief Quilts, Clean Up Days, and more! **So if you are a member of Thrivent and haven't used your Action Teams, consider using them to support a project at church!**

Looking Back at May

Many thanks to those helped with cleanup day and worked on a variety of projects around the building, including spreading new mulch, cleaning out the garage, preparing the garden, and wiping down tables in the basement!



And thanks to our Sunday School students for the planters full of flowers at the different entrances to the building! The flowers look wonderful!

But it wasn't all work! The kids had a great time playing mini golf and eating ice cream too!



And next time you're around the garden, check out the rain barrel that will be used to water our garden! Using a rain barrel is a great way to practice stewardship while gardening by lessening the draw on local water systems and using the natural source of water given by God.

June 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	Food Pantry hours Mondays and Wednesdays 9:00 am - 2:00 pm			1	2	3 Packing for Harvest Street Mission 9:00 am
4 Worship 9:00 am Trustee's Meeting 10:15 am HSM Serving	5	6 Elder's Meeting 7 pm Deacon's Meeting 7 pm	7 New Member Conversation 7 pm	8	9	10
11 Worship 9:00 am Sunday School Meeting 10:15 am	12	13	14 Worship Planners 7:00 pm	15 Campfire Worship 7:00 pm	16	17 Synod Assembly
18 Worship 9:00 am	19	20 Council Meeting 7 pm Newsletter Articles Due	21	22	23	24 Car Wash at Agway 10:00am - 2:00pm
25 Worship 9:00 am	26	27 Pastor Katie Penn Mar 1:45 pm	28	29 Contemplative Walk	30	



6/05 Gerald Brunson
6/06 Henry Ford
6/08 Cindy Knauff
6/12 Janet Senka
6/13 Laura Gold
6/19 Beth Fitzgerald
6/21 Katie Niklewicz
6/24 Reed Richards
6/26 Alaina Nagel
6/28 Abigail Cardinal
6/29 Gabriella Julio



6/11 – Jamie & Erin Weaver – 18 yrs.
6/29 – Henry & Janet Ford – 60 yrs.

JUNE NEWSLETTER

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