

June  
2024

# 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 8-1

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Pastor's Cell #: 412-407-3166

In May I had the opportunity to attend the Festival of Homiletics. Homiletics is the fancy church word to talk about the art and practice of preaching. There was more information and inspiration offered in those few days than I could summarize here; it was everything I could have hoped for and more. One of the speakers, Amy Butler, reflected on the way storytelling influences our lives in the church. The Bible tells us parts of God's story, and today we are continuing to live in God's story. As she said, we are now players in a story that is currently unfolding. We do not know the [specific details of the] ending, and sometimes the story gets a little messy. But the true faith stories we tell can move us toward collective hope for what's ahead. This made me think of all the faith stories that I am privileged to hear as a pastor: when peace and calm filled someone at the most unexpected time, when inspiration led a person down a new path; when a moment in worship opened someone's heart in a surprising way; that moment of jaw-dropping realization of the power of grace, mercy, and forgiveness.

We each have our own collection of faith stories, those stories where we see God's story unfolding in our everyday lives. Maybe the stories are small moments, like marveling at an unfolding flower in your garden. Maybe they are big moments, like feeling God move you in a brand-new direction and you take the leap of faith. (See the Summer Study for an opportunity to engage your "Everyday Spirituality.") We don't often pause to reflect on our faith stories, but I encourage you to do so. So tell a story of when you experienced God through worship or a ministry experience at church. What was a holy moment you experienced within St. John? Tell the story of a dearly departed saint. What made them special? How did God use them to touch your life? Tell a story about a difficult time in your life. Where and how did you see God in the difficulty? What story of faith at St. John longs to be told?

I'd like to intentionally collect and share some of our stories. In the fall, I'd like to start offering a reflective podcast. One of the things I'd like to feature in this podcast is your faith stories and how you experience God in the worship and ministry and life of St. John. If you'd be interested in being interviewed for the podcast, I'll be recording through the summer, so just let me know! But even if you're not interested in being interviewed, reflect on your faith story; think about all the ways that God's story is unfolding in your life. Then tell your story in what you do and what you say!

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>

## **Worship Notes**

### **Young Worship Leaders**

If you are unable to be present, please find someone to cover and tell the office of the change.

	<b>Acolyte</b>	<b>Offering</b>	<b>Offering</b>	<b>Young Reader</b>
<b>2-June</b>	Abby C	Anna K	Nathan K	
<b>9-June</b>	Ava N	Luca K	Eva K	
<b>16-June</b>	Abby C	Ava N	Lydia M	
<b>23-June</b>	Anna K	Jules K	Abigail C	
<b>30-June</b>	Nathan K	Ava N	Ella N	
<b>7-July</b>	Ava N	Anna K	Nathan K	

### **Adult Worship Leaders**

	<b>Greeters</b>	<b>Usher</b>	<b>Assistant Minister</b>	<b>Bread Baker</b>	<b>Counters</b>
<b>2-June</b>	Cardinal Family	Cardinal Family	Valerie C	Denise H	John T VOLUNTEER
<b>9-June</b>	Cardinal Family	Cardinal Family	Valerie C	Denise H	John T VOLUNTEER
<b>16-June</b>	Cardinal Family	Cardinal Family	Emma N	Denise H	John T VOLUNTEER
<b>23-June</b>	Cardinal Family	Cardinal Family		Denise H	John T VOLUNTEER
<b>30-June</b>	Cardinal Family	Cardinal Family		Denise H	John T VOLUNTEER
<b>7-July</b>	VOLUNTEER	VOLUNTEER		Denise H	Jamie W VOLUNTEER

### **Graduate Recognition – June 9**

We are so proud of our graduates! We will be celebrating our high school and college graduates during worship on June 9 as we celebrate the way God nurtures us and helps us grow into who we are.

### **Campfire Worship – June 13**

**Thursday, June 13<sup>th</sup>**, 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 second Thursdays of June, July, and August (6/13, 7/11, 8/9).

*(Worship Notes continued)*

## 2 Corinthians

From June 2 to July 7, our epistle reading will be from the book of 2 Corinthians, part of the several communications Paul had with the church in Corinth, an important city in ancient Greece that was situated in a popular thoroughfare for travelers. Because it was frequented by travelers, Corinth was a diverse city. In 1 Corinthians, we hear about the major disagreements that were developing in the church. He also faced some struggles in his own relationship with the church in Corinth. In 2 Corinthians, we can see that the relationship worsened after Paul sent the letter we know as 1 Corinthians. After a particularly painful visit (2 Cor. 2:1), he decided not to visit again (12:14, 13:1) and wrote a letter (now lost) known as the “letter of tears.” Paul quickly regretted sending this “letter of tears” (7:8, 1:8-9, 2:13). **Throughout 2 Corinthians, Paul offers forgiveness to those who hurt him and attempts to restore the relationship. Paul also defends himself and his teachings.**

## 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.**

## “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?** See our summer study program to learn about how you can become intentional about your own everyday spirituality!

## **Stay Tuned!**

### Annual Church Picnic

Mark your calendars! Our **annual church picnic will be on July 28<sup>th</sup>.** We will have worship, picnic food, and games! Stay tuned for details.



## **Children and Youth**

### Youth Car Wash Fundraiser – June 29

Our youth will be doing a **car wash fundraiser** to help pay for the costs of activities for the coming year. 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 29 at Agway, 10a-2p**

(and start hoping for a sunny day!).



## Around the Church

### Ladies' Tea Update



**Many thanks** to all who contributed to the Ladies' Tea. If you attended, contributed a basket, helped to serve and/or clean up your efforts have not gone unappreciated. **It takes ALL of us to make this event a success.** Our final net was \$3,620. We were also able to give the family of John Clark \$420 from our 50/50 raffle. Thanks to all.

### Summer Hospitality Hour

Throughout the summer, there will be a **hospitality hour after worship**. When the weather permits, we will be **on the lawn offering light snacks as people linger and mingle after worship**. If you would like to sponsor or host one of these weeks, please contact one of the Elders.

### Game Day – June 8

Join us for an afternoon of **family-friendly games from 3:00 – 7:00 pm on Saturday, June 8!** Bring your own or play one of ours! Bring snacks to share and we'll order pizza for dinner. **No RSVP required, just come when you can!**

## Lutherlyn

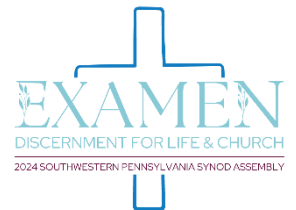
### Lutherlyn Summer Camp Registration

Lutherlyn Summer Camp Registration is OPEN! While camps are filling up, there are still spaces available! If your child would like to attend Lutherlyn, but finances are standing in your way, please contact Pastor Katie to learn about the “camperships” Lutherlyn offers. **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.

## Synod Notes

### Synod Assembly – June 14-15

It can be hard to hear God's whisper guiding us to faithful decisions and holy outcomes amid the noise of the world. St. Ignatius of Loyola gifted us with **EXAMEN**, a method of reflection that invites God's presence in our daily lives and discernment. Together, we will learn how to transform discernment from a merely theoretical concept to a lived reality that can shape our shared future. Synod Assembly is Fri. June 14, 9:30am – Sat., June 15, 12:30pm in person at PennWest California.



### Synod Communications

Did you know that the synod has a weekly email with announcements about things happening in the synod? You can sign up to receive these emails at <https://www.swpasynod.org/wayfarer>. On that site you can also sign up to receive the quarterly magazine “Wayfarer.”

# Serving Others

## Mission Emphasis

Our **second quarter mission emphasis is Quality EMS**. This vital service relies on donations to be able to provide quality care to our neighbors in their moments of crisis. **Support their work by making a designated offering to the “Mission Emphasis.”** 100% of the mission emphasis donations will be collected and sent directly to Quality EMS.

## St. John Food Pantry

We recently received a call in the office from someone who stopped by the outdoor pantry. **They wanted to call to simply say thank you.** Thank you for the availability of the pantry. Thank you for what was inside the pantry. Thank you for the care you provide for the community through the pantry. **As the pantry sees more people, though, its supplies are diminished more quickly.** 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.

## Community Garden

The garden is planted, and it is full! Thanks to the generous donations of time, talents, and treasures, our little community garden is full of good veggies and herbs. Part of the reason it is so full is companion planting. **Companion planting involves growing different kinds of plants together to make the most use of the space as well as deter pests using herbs and flowers as natural deterrents.** It will take some time for all the plants to grow big enough for a harvest, but for now we will be weeding and watering. **If you have time to help maintain the garden, contact Pastor Katie.**



# Faith Formation

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

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 no matter their connection to church.

**As this ministry grows, we are in need of table hosts,** people to sit at each table to facilitate the activity and guide conversation about the theme of the day using the questions and talking points on signs at each table. **If the chaos is not your thing, we can also use people to help prepare dinner and people to come in at 7:30 to help the clean up process.**

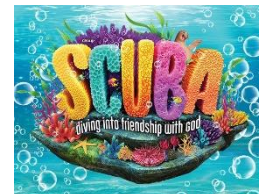
**Each month we see a new family being reached through this ministry!** Sometimes these families come from other churches and are looking for something in addition to their current church connections. Others are people who are looking to find a community where they can have fun and help their children meet Jesus in an interactive and relaxed environment. Who will you invite in June?



**(Faith Formation continued)**

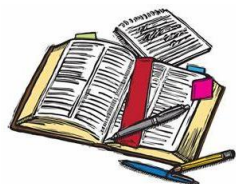
### **Vacation Bible School**

This year, we're diving into the deep waters of our relationship with God with SCUBA! Mark your calendars for Vacation Bible School 2024, Sunday through Thursday, July 14-18, 2024! **If you would like to volunteer to help, please contact Tanya Nagel** (contact information can be obtained by calling the church office). This year we are adding a pre-school program to specifically tailor the week to our young friends!



Each evening of VBS runs 6:00-8:20pm. Registration is free and open. The link is on the website at [stjohnchurchmars.org/childrenyouth](http://stjohnchurchmars.org/childrenyouth).

### **Adult Summer Study**



**As we slide into “Ordinary Time” in the church, we are diving into ordinary spirituality** with James Hazelwood’s book “Everyday Spirituality: Discover a Life of Hope, Peace, and Meaning.” James Hazelwood is the retiring bishop of the New England Synod of the ELCA. In her review of the book, Laura Everett calls it **“the kind of book that feels like a front porch conversation on that first warm summer day shared with an old friend over glasses of cold lemonade.”** Come for a cool glass of lemonade and explore with Bishop Hazelwood how those things we do every day, every week, and every so often is a part of our spiritual journey. From the description of the book on Amazon: “Everyday Spirituality is for people who have left the church, never went, or are still hanging on. What they all have in common is, the old way just isn't working. Not because it wasn't of value, instead because, well, life got crazy, work took over, and who has time to sit and pray and read a devotional every day for an hour? **Instead, what if your life was prayer?** Your walk in the mall, your dinner with friends, your questions, your travels, even your time at the gym...what if you saw all that as a connection to that which is timeless, eternal and holy. Would your life be different, better, filled with hope? You bet it would.” Copies of the book are available at the church, or you can purchase your own. The book is also available as an audio book for those who prefer to listen. **We will meet on June 23, July 21, and August 11 from 6:30-8:00pm. Zoom participation is also available and welcome. Wednesday meetings may also be available if there is sufficient interest in that time.**

Stay tuned for the return of weekly meetings after VBS in July!

### **Stewardship Corner**

We are stewards of God’s creation. We are called to the task of caring for creation. **As you gear up for summer yard work, think about ways you can care for God’s creation in your own lawn.** What products do you use? Do you have plants that offer food or homes for different members of the ecosystem? How do you use water in your space? **In the community garden, we strive to be examples of ways to be good stewards of creation even while we use it for our purposes.** We try to use organic gardening practices, using herbs and flowers to deter pests instead of chemicals that can hurt our garden friends. We collect rainwater so that we don’t need to use borough water in our garden. We plant extra so that critters can share in our harvest. We offer the produce to our neighbors in need and see to it that nothing goes to waste. **You may not be able to do everything possible in your space, but is there one practice you can adopt this summer to be a better steward of the piece of creation under your care?**

# June 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						<b>1</b>
<b>2</b> 2nd Sunday in Pentecost 9:00 am Trustees mtg. – 10:15am	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> Deacon's Meeting 7:00 pm Elder's Meeting 7:00 pm	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> Game Night 3:00 – 7:00
<b>9</b> 3rd Sunday in Pentecost Worship: 9:00 am	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> Campfire Worship 7:00 pm	<b>14</b> Synod Assembly	<b>15</b> Synod Assembly
<b>16</b> 4th Sunday in Pentecost Worship: 9:00 am Father's Day	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> Council Meeting 7:00 pm	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> Worship Planners 7:00 pm	<b>21</b> Messy Church 5:30 pm	<b>22</b>
<b>23</b> 5th Sunday in Pentecost Worship: 9:00 am Book Study 6:30–8:00pm	<b>24</b> Communion @ Penn Mar 1:45 pm	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> Car Wash 10am – 2 pm
<b>30</b> 6th Sunday in Pentecost Worship: 9:00 am Birthday / Anniversary Coffee hour 10:15 am						



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 – 19 yrs.  
6/29 – Henry & Janet Ford – 61 yrs.

# JUNE NEWSLETTER

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