

**St. John  
Lutheran  
Church**

Late Winter / Early  
Spring 2020

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# The Revelations



## ***Lent at St. John***

### **Ash Wednesday, February 26**

12:15 pm (spoken) | 7:30 pm (with choir)

*Both services offer an imposition of ashes.*

### **Sundays in Lent**

March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

8:15 am and 10:30 am worship

### **Wednesdays in Lent**

March 4, 11, 18, 25, April 1

*Traveling in the Lenten Wilderness*

6:30-7:45 pm Soup Supper & Devotion

Fellowship, meal and worship around the table

*A sign-up sheet to host and bring soup & bread is in the Great Room.*

## ***Holy Week at St. John***

### **Palm Sunday, April 5**

8:15 am and 10:30 am worship

### **Maundy Thursday, April 9**

7:30 pm worship

### **Good Friday, April 10**

7:30 pm worship

### **Easter Sunday, April 12**

7:30 am and 10:30 am

# Thoughts from Pastor Steve

## Lent – a slice of the Church year, a slice of pie



Lent is to Easter as Advent is to Christmas. Lent and Advent had their origins as penitential, preparatory seasons. Advent has lost much of its penitential character, (in many churches it has even shed its penitential color, purple). Advent is never more than 4 weeks, Lent is always 6 ½ weeks.

When I think about Lent, much more so than Advent, I think of *doing something* – often, giving up something – sweets, coffee, 2<sup>nd</sup> helpings, etc. In recent years, there has been a focus on doing something by adding something – reading scripture, reserving more time for prayer, doing good deeds.

As a child, I would give up desserts for Lent. My Mom would reward me by taking me to get a banana split after Easter. It was definitely an incentive. I was not raised in a liturgical church, so I was intrigued when I learned from a Catholic friend that Sundays were not technically part of Lent. I remember fact-checking in our *Funk and Wagnall's Encyclopedia* and learning – he was right! However, my mother was old school, so if I wanted that split, I had to quit desserts on Sundays in Lent as well.

This is a long introduction for me to get to the point: it is hard to do anything out of the ordinary and keep doing it for 6 ½ weeks in Lent. I know from Advent how difficult it is just to maintain the discipline of having an evening wreath-lighting devotion for the 25 or so days of Advent.

Lent is coming. My usual question – what shall I do? This year, I pose another question: what is, exactly, the point of having a so-called Lenten discipline? Will it get me closer to Jesus? Does my 'sacrifice' help me better connect to Jesus' sacrifice? Does it make my celebration of Easter more meaningful? Do Sundays count? And, finally, does Jesus care if I have a piece of apple pie on February 27<sup>th</sup>? Of all the questions to ask when it comes to Lent, maybe the apple pie question is the important one – because it is one I can answer: Jesus does not care about my slice of apple pie. PERIOD. So, if I eat it or not – I am on my own.

Maybe this is a good place to start thinking about Lent – with freedom – the freedom to eat a slice of pie or not. But to also remember that I do not live out my freedom on my own. When there are three people at our table and only two slices of pie left, I can choose not to have a slice. And, even if I am trying to give up sweets in Lent, when I visit a parishioner who offers me a slice of homemade pie, I can choose to eat it.

Maybe a good place to start thinking about Lent is to remember that Lent is not just about me. It is a season of the church – the home of my fellow sisters and brothers in Christ. Maybe a good thing for me in Lent is to be with the people of God in worship, in fellowship, in prayer.

Lent is a season that directs us all to see Jesus completing his earthly ministry – going to the Cross. Maybe a good thing for me in Lent is to focus on Jesus – in the Sunday lessons, in the mid-week devotions, in my prayers, in my Scripture time.

Maybe there is a place for discipline – during Lent, during Advent, during each day of my life. Maybe there is a place for thinking about what I am doing and what I am not doing. Maybe there is a place for thinking about others who are affected by what I am doing and what I am not doing.

There is still time for me to think of something that will make my Lenten days different. As I ponder this, I do know that there is a place for repenting – turning to God, turning away from words and deeds, from thoughts and inactions that do not honor God. Yes, Lent is a season for turning to the Cross of Jesus. This Cross will be marked on my forehead on Ash Wednesday with the ashes of last year's palms and I will be reminded that there is a connection from season to season from Lent to Lent. And I will remember: Lent does not depend on my doing or thinking, my giving up or taking on. As Lent begins, I will also hear the words, "Remember you are dust and to dust you shall return."

I will remember that I am playing, I am living, with house money. It is called grace. Grace. It is freedom – God's radical freeing in Jesus that frees me to observe Lent, to observe, again, the workings of our gracious God in Jesus. This is important to remember. May I just remember to say grace if and when I eat that slice of pie. Thank you, Jesus. Amen.

Pastor Steve Godsall-Myers  
Bridge Pastor

## A Word on the Transition & Call

The Transition Team has completed their work over the last few months with listening tours to several St. John groups and broader congregational meetings. The information collected was used to update the Ministry Site Summary and that has now been approved by Council. Next Pastor Bell will present it at the Deans' meeting in March.

Thank you to Pastor Bell and the wonderful Transition Team for your work! Sam Posen, Beth Wood, Justin Kiefski, Larry Erdman

As the Transition team's work has wrapped up, the Call Committee has begun preparing. In January, the group met with Pastor Bell and Pastor Penman to review the call process and Terry Welford is chairing the committee with Phil Wood as vice-chair. The group is excited and humbled to start the process! Please look for updates during our Sunday worship services, as well as the eNews.

Call Committee: Terry Welford, Phil Wood, Linda Mauer, Wayne Huss, Megan Kiefski, Katie Myers

## Church News

### ANNUAL MEETING



#### Special Congregational Meeting: March 1

We will hold a special split congregational meeting on Sunday, March 1 to address one item of unfinished business from the annual meeting: the approval of another 5-year term on the church's mortgage. These meetings will be held after each service.

***Missed the Annual Meeting on February 9?*** You can review the meeting report on our website at: [stjohnbluebell.org/2020meeting](http://stjohnbluebell.org/2020meeting)



#### Easter Candy Sale Underway!

The Gertrude Hawk Easter Candy sale is in its 32<sup>nd</sup> year! This fundraiser has helped to raise over \$75,000 for various projects at St. John and this year, all proceeds will go to the church bell tower refurbishing fund.

You can order each Sunday morning before or after worship services. Brochures and order forms are available in the Great Room. Deadline for orders is March 1.



#### Nursery Help Needed

We are reviving the St. John Nursery during 10:30 am worship service! We will need two volunteers each Sunday. One must be an adult but a youth of confirmand age can assist. You can find sign-ups on the church Sign-Up Genius page, as well as a paper sign-up in the Great Room.



#### Guest Pastor: Pastor Meissgeier

We welcome back Pastor Ellen Meissgeier back to St. John for our concluding 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year worship on June 7.

## Update from St. John Nursery School



Right now the children are so excited to share Valentines with one another!

On March 9 the school is having its annual art show, we will leave the doors open on Sunday, March 8 if any church members would like to walk through and take a look at the children's projects, they are welcome to do so!

## Children & Youth News



### Save the Date: VBS 2020

August 3 – August 7 – Evenings

Planning has started for St. John VBS 2020! Would you like to volunteer for VBS? Reach out to Vince for details on how you can help!



Join us at 9:15 in Fellowship Hall for singing before moving on to classes for different age groups, Pre-school through 5th Grade.



The **Youth Group** will participate in **Box City 2020**, a Sleep Out for Homelessness event on March 7-8.

The event is held at St. James Lutheran Church in Limerick and seeks to raise awareness and raise funds to support homeless ministry in SEPA.

## Adult News



### **Sunday Bible Study at 9:30 am.**

The Sunday Adult Sunday School meets at 9:30 in the multi-purpose classroom. The group follows the same schedule as the children's Sunday School program.

**Pastor Steve's Morning Bible Study meets on Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m.**



### **Monthly Pub Theology**

Join this group (ages 21-50) as they meet at a local pub to discuss faith & current events.

Please reach out to Beth Wood (mcsbeth@gmail.com) for details on upcoming dates & location.



**Altar Guild** is looking for members. This group of volunteers prepare the table for communion each Sunday, ensuring that the paraments are appropriate to the liturgical calendar and that the linens are clean and pressed.

If you would like more information in Altar Guild, please reach out to Cheryl Posen or Sue Lorenski.

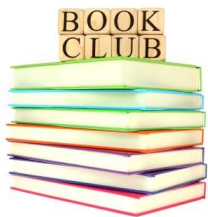


### **The 10 Commandments ... coming to St. John's!**

St. John will welcome local artist, Rob Lawlor, to give us another 'look' at the 10 Commandments on Sunday, March 22, between the two worship services. Rob has painted 10 interpretative panels – nine depicting the Commandments (9 and 10 are combined), one depicting the Great Commandment. He will not just display his art work, he will give his artist's perspective on his depictions that will invite us to explore these familiar words from God transmitted by Moses to God's people.

The confirmands will begin a review of the Commandments in their March 15 class, you can get started with these websites: <https://catechism.cph.org/en/10-commandments.html>, <https://www.elca500.org/with-new-voices/>

## Connecting with Others



**St. John Book Club** will meet again on Tuesday, February 25 at 7:30 pm. The book for February is *I Heard the Owl Call My Name* by Margaret Craven. Please join us!

Note the new meeting day due to Ash Wednesday.



**Christian Service Quilting Group** meets on Mondays at 10 am in 1st floor Sunday school wing. New members are welcome to join us.

We have recently been busy disbursing our quilts locally to those in need. Our mission quilt project here at St. Johns is an ongoing project so there is an ongoing need for used sheets; please keep us in mind for the future, too. If you (or anyone you know) has lightly used sheets in good condition to donate, please bag and label them: Attn Quilting Group. God bless you for your support and donations!



**Our popular yoga class continues on Thursdays at 2 p.m.** Sessions are ongoing, drop-ins are welcome. Our instructor, Kellie Burnette LMT, CYT, AHC, will guide us through gentle moves, poses, and breath. All levels of skill are welcome; Kellie is quick to assist you. The cost for the 8 week session is \$40, or you may drop in for \$8 a session. No pre-registration is necessary. Please bring a mat or towel to use. Questions? Please connect with the Church Office. For a full description of our yoga classes, please visit our website.

## The Arts at St. John



### **Dona Nobis Pacem Concert**

The next Arts at St. John concert is Sunday, May 3 at 4 pm. Join us for exciting concert with the St. John's Festival Choir & Chamber Orchestra. The program includes Brahms' *Alto Rhapsody*, Nino Rota's *Concerto for Bassoon and Orchestra*, and Vaughan Williams' *Dona Nobis Pacem*.

## Serving God Together



The new **Senior Outreach Committee** has begun planning events to reach out to our local senior communities in the coming months. The group is planning to create an activity or event on a quarterly basis. If you are interested in joining this outreach, please contact Caroline Frank at [mrsconfrank@comcast.net](mailto:mrsconfrank@comcast.net).



### Being Beautiful Foundation

We are still collecting toiletries, sheets, blankets and towels for the Being Beautiful Foundation. They currently have 20 girls in their foster homes and are constantly in need of things like that as well as laundry supplies, soaps, shampoos and lotions. A collection box is located in the Great Room.



We can't believe that our **St John's 2nd Annual MLK Day of Service** is already a month behind us. It was a huge success in part because of the generous support of the congregation.

Every year there seem to be more individuals/families/organizations that can benefit from our event. Whether you donated items to be

used that day, chaired a project, or assisted monetarily we are extremely grateful. It is with the congregations' support that we are able to rise to meet the challenge of helping so many in need.

This year we had close to 300 participants and we were able to help 16 different organizations. We have already received some very positive feedback from the organizations served. If you have any suggestions for projects for next year's event, or feedback on how to make this event better please be in touch with us.

Again thanks for your assistance in making this a historic event in the life of St John as we celebrate our 250th Anniversary year. We look forward to seeing you all on Monday January 18th, 2021.

Kathy Erdman & Monika Bontempo  
Committee Chairs

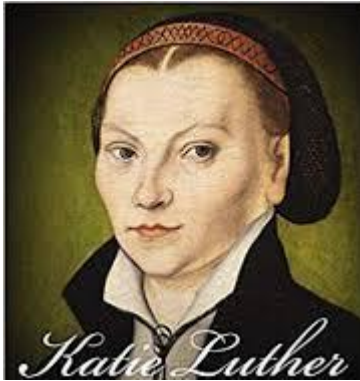
**A few pictures from MLK Day 2020!**





# Celebrating 250 Years

## Upcoming Events



### **Katie, Anna and Me Presentation**

Saturday, March 14 – 10:30 am

Join us for this special event! This skit will give perspectives on the lives and faith of Katie Luther, Anna Muhlenberg, and a present day member of St. John. This represents the 16<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and current century. Jean Godsall-Myers developed this skit and will led the presentation. Open to members and friends, it will begin at 10:30 in the Sanctuary, followed by light snacks in the Great Room. It will conclude by 12:00.

### **Nursery School Homecoming Sunday**

April 26, 2020 – 9:30 am

A special service recognizing St. John Nursery School's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary school year. Invitations will go to past nursery school graduates, past and current teachers, and the founding members of the school: Barbara Welther, Sue Lorenski, Doris Petusky, Sibbi Mehan (RIP), Barbara O'Connor, Mary Kay Buchanan and Mary Schneider.



### **Concluding 250<sup>th</sup> Service and Congregational Luncheon**

June 7 – 9:30 am

There will be one service followed by a large group photo of everyone attending. A special luncheon will be held at Blue Bell Country Club from noon to 3 pm.

This is an occasion to invite friends and former members of St. John to celebrate with us!

A **new church directory** is being made that will include photos from our 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary year events, member photos, contact information and committee information. If you did not get a member photo taken in 2019 and would like to be included in the directory, please reach out to Linda Catherwood or Barry Stock.

## Contact Us

St. John Lutheran  
Church

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610-277-1086

Office Email:  
stjohn1802@gmail.com

Website:  
Stjohnbluebell.org

Facebook:  
@stjohnbluebell

Twitter:  
@stjohnbluebell

Nursery School Info:  
610-272-7163

Website:  
stjohnsns.com

School visits are  
available by  
appointment only.

## Staff Listing

Rev. Stephen Godsall-Myers, Bridge Pastor	wittsgm@gmail.com
Rev. Marcia Bell, Interim Consultant	marciagbell@comcast.net
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**Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

