

**Town Hall and
“Souper Bowl”
Sunday, February 2**

February

**LENT BEGINS
ASH WEDNESDAY
Noon & 5:30PM in the Chapel
7:30PM in the Nave**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Worship Assistants		Ushers		Acolyte / Crucifer		1
February 2 Brenda Morrison February 9 Cindy Moats February 16 Bess Day February 23 Becky Kline		Bev / Pat Murphy Sally Jenkins / Jane Kelley Rick Losh / Blaine Wilson Ray Bentz / Andrew Banks		Mac Robinson/John Esswein Austin Propst/Elisabeth Gottlieb Braydon Hill/Payton Hill Mac Robinson/Dylan Walker Ash Wednesday: Lakyn Edwards/Nathaniel Edwards		Pastor Matt at Caroline Furnance for a Board Meeting
2 10AM Worship with Holy Communion “Souper” Bowl Lunch & Town Hall Meeting There will be child care available through our Sun- day School Program	3	4	5 1PM Bible Study in the Lounge 6:30PM Choir Rehearsal	6 6PM Table Talk @ Daily Grind	7	8
9 10AM Worship Pulpit Exchange with Pastor Diane Refreshments after Worship	10 7PM Church Council in the Lounge	11	12 1PM Bible Study in the Lounge 6:30PM Choir Rehearsal	13 9AM Pastor Matt @ CCAP meeting	14	15 6PM Family Movie Night We are watching Frozen 2
16 10AM Worship with Holy Communion 11:15AM “Sunday After Church” Lunch and Christian Ed The Book Club meets following worship	17	18 8:30AM Pastor Matt @ Potomac Conference Meeting	19 1PM Bible Study in the Lounge 6:30PM Choir Rehearsal 6:30PM Needcraft Group in Luther Hall	20	21	22 11AM-1PM Friends Feeding Friends
23 10AM Worship Property Meeting after church 1-5PM Confirmation @ St. Thomas	24 7PM Mustard Seed Board Meeting in the Lounge	25 5:30-7:30PM Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper in Luther Hall	26 Noon, 5:30 & 7:30PM Ash Wednesday Holy Communion and Imposition of Ashes 6:15PM Choir 1PM Bible Study	27	28	29 9:30AM-2PM Red Cross Blood Drive in Luther Hall

NEWSLETTER

St. John's Lutheran Church
101 W. Martin Street

Martinsburg, West Virginia 25401

Telephone: 304-263-9291 FAX 304-263-4559

E-Mail: churchoffice@stjohnsmartinsburg.org

Website: www.stjohnsmartinsburg.org

Pastor: The Rev. Matthew A. Day



ST. JOHNS LUTHERAN
MARTINSBURG, WV

FEBRUARY 2020

Souper Bowl Potluck on February 2- 11:30AM

after the worship service in Luther Hall. Bring your favorite crock pot of soup or just your appetite to help us celebrate the souper bowl. LYFE will be there to help with the meal! There will be a free will offering will go to support the 2021 Gathering Fund

Ash Wednesday February 26 12, 5:30 & 7:30PM

Lent begins with a solemn service of reflection and prayer. We will ponder the meaning of life and death. We will be reminded of our frailty and mortality. We will commit ourselves to the practice of confession, alms giving and intentional prayer. Start your Lenten Faith Journey this Lent with your fellow brothers and sisters in Christ here at St. John's.

Town Hall Meeting



February 2

Following Worship in Luther Hall

Please join us for lunch followed by a time where you can bring your thoughts, ideas, and yearnings to the congregation and council's attention.



Bring your
non-perisable food
item with you on
February 2. Let's fill
up two carts to take
to CCAP!

2019 ST. JOHN'S COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

December 9, 2019

Meeting called to order by: Rick Losh, President

Members present: Pastor Matt, Rick Losh, Drew Catrow, Jane Kelley, Linda Payne, Diane Shewbridge, Shane Wagoner, Blaine Wilson, Jerry Crites, Moore, Mike Noll, Bess Day (Treasurer)

Members Absent: Darrell Propst, Trey Voorhees

Guests: Michael Gottlieb

Devotions: led by Drew Catrow

President, Rick Losh, welcomed newly elected Council member Michael Gottlieb and newly elected Trustee Drew Catrow. Newly elected Council member Brenda Morrison was recognized but was unable to attend due to illness. Reelected members are Jerry Crites, Shane Wagoner and Diane Shewbridge. Rick thanked Mike Noll and Darrell Propst for their service as they leave council.

Minutes: November meeting minutes approved with correction (Dec. 11th Compline to remember victims of violence not Dec. 18th) (**M/S/P: Drew Catrow; Linda Payne**)

Financial Report: none

Pastor's Report: December 11th is the 1-year anniversary of the shooting at Lupita's Grocery Store on Queen Street across from St. Johns. St. John's will remember Lopita and all victims of violence by holding an abbreviated Compline service outside on the corner of Martin and Queen streets. Pastor presented templates for replacing the bulletin covers and *Celebrate* inserts that we purchase. By creating our own the church can save \$1500 a year. We will fine tune the formats prior to March when our current subscription to these publications expires. Pastors Matt and Diane will host a Christmas party at their home in Charles Town for council members and families on Friday, December 13th. Pastor would like to have St. John members attend the Lions Club Breakfast with Santa to greet and mix with community folks in attendance. During the month of January, council will be focusing on a S.W.O.T. analysis: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

Upcoming Events:

-December 13 – Council Christmas Party at Pastor Day's home at 6pm

-December 14 – Lions Club Pancake Breakfast from 9-12pm. Help would

be appreciated!

-December 15 – Pulpit Exchange

-December 24 – Christmas Eve Family Worship at 6pm

-December 24 – Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship at 11pm with the musical prelude at 10:30pm

-December 25 – Christmas Day Combined Service at St. John’s Lutheran Church

-December 29 – Lessons and Christmas carols at the 10am service

-All Sundays in January 12-3pm – Joint Choir Rehearsal for Evening Prayer Liturgy at the end of January

-January 5 – Epiphany of our Lord (transferred to Sunday) at 10am

-January 15 – Annual Reports items due

-January 26 – The Light Conquers: A joint Evening Prayer Liturgy at 4pm

Old Business: The Poinsettia plan continued as in the past with a choice of ordering the flowers in memory or honor of ... or donations of money, in lieu of flowers, to be donated to Campus Ministry.

New Business: We will hold a Town Hall Meeting on Sunday February 2, 2020, following the worship service. **(M/S/P: Jerry Crites; Diane Shewbridge)**. Following the Town Hall, the traditional “Souper” Bowl lunch will be hosted in Luther Hall by LYFE youth with donations supporting your Super Bowl team to benefit LYFE. Consider bringing a favorite soup to share! Luther Hall request for P.E.O. Sisterhood on Saturday, March 7th, 10:30-4:40 (and access on Friday evening at 7pm for setup) **(M/S/P: Mike Noll; Linda Payne)**. Luther Hall request from Sierra Club to continue meeting on the following Tuesdays at 6pm in 2020 – 1/21, 3/24, 5/26, 9/22, 11/17 **(M/S/P: Jerry Crites; Drew Catrow)**. New Member requests by Corey and Stacy Stephens (and service dog Gracey) **(M/S/P: Pastor Matt; Drew Catrow)**. Christmas Eve preparations – more volunteers are needed for various assignments and sign up sheets will be circulated during Sunday services. Various social media announcements will be made to advertise the Christmas services.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Christian Education: The Sunday on Monday Christian Education program will continue on Monday evenings.

Social Ministry: All the decks playing cards have been received for the prison ministry. Friends Feeding Friends on November 23rd served 80 meals (17 were children). December Friends meal will be on Saturday, December 28th, with vegetable soup, cheese salad sandwiches, pudding

and cookies on the menu. Donations of new men's and women's underwear is needed. Socks are in good supply right now. (ELCA did not award our grant request for funding for F.F.F. Bess reported that WELCA's focus for grants has changed. Individuals enrolled in Thrivent may still request funding for special projects with some restrictions.)

Evangelism: No report

Worship and Music: The organ has been tuned. On Sunday, January 26th at 4pm, joint Conference choirs will present a concert at St. John's. Rehearsals will be at St. John's on Sundays at 1pm with a potluck lunch at noon. The Altar Guild schedule for 2020 will be ready for distribution soon.

LYFE: Pastor reported for Austin Propst that LYFE will meet on Sunday on Monday evenings (1st & 3rd Mondays of each month) and ALSO on 2nd and 4th Sundays immediately after church. Since our youth are involved in other activities, i.e., sports, band, part time jobs, etc., offering these days/times can enable more youth to participate. The topics for Sunday sessions will focus on life skills. LYFE is open to youth in Middle through High School.

Property/Tech: A member has offered to donate as a memorial an electric carillon when the steeple can contain it. Some work is still needed for the steeple and it appears we will need to find another source to complete the work. Darrell and Shane will continue working on upgrading the lighting.

Mutual Ministry: Mutual Ministry committee had a quarterly meeting in November and discussed various topics and strategies.

Stewardship: Pastor has requested that Bishop Riegel meet with Council at the February meeting to share stewardship strategies. The Red Cross Blood Drive is still scheduled for Saturday, January 11th in Luther Hall from 9am-1pm. Please contact Linda Payne if you can volunteer some time to help that day as help is needed. Blood donations are greatly needed, so come in and donate if you are able!

Mustard Seed: Classes are full and some waiting lists are also closed at this time. The next Mustard Seed Board Meeting will be February 24th at 7pm.

With no other business, the meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer. (M/S/P: Jerry Crites; Linda Payne)

Respectfully Submitted,
Diane Shewbridge

2020 ST. JOHN'S COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

January 13, 2020

Meeting called to order by: Rick Losh, President

Members Present: Pastor Matt, Rick Losh, Drew Catrow, Michael Gottlieb, Jane Kelley, Brenda Morrison, Linda Payne, Diane Shewbridge, Shane Wagoner, Jerry Crites, Anne Moore, Bess Day (Treasurer)

Members Absent: Trey Voorhees, Blaine Wilson

Devotions: led by Diane Shewbridge

Election of Officers: Jerry Crites nominated for Council President; with no other nominations, the nominations were closed with motion to appoint. **(M/S/P: Jane Kelley; Linda Payne)**. Linda Payne nominated for Vice President; with no other nominations the nominations were closed with motion to appoint. **(M/S/P: Drew Catrow; Jane Kelley)**. Diane Shewbridge nominated for Secretary; with no other nominations the nominations were closed with motion to appoint. **(M/S/P: Jerry Crites; Rick Losh)**. Bess Day nominated for Treasurer; with no other nominations, the nominations were closed with motion to appoint. **(M/S/P: Drew Catrow; Linda Payne)**

Minutes: December 2019 meeting minutes approved as corrected. **(M/S/P: Linda Payne; Jerry Crites)**.

Financial Report: We were not able to meet our projected budget for 2019. However, the interest on investments was very good in 2019 and the Mustard Seed continues to operate in the black as investment over the years from St. John's has been reduced greatly.

Pastor's Report: Baby Day is due March 6th or so. Baptism will be celebrated on the first Sunday after Easter with Bishop Riegel presiding. Sunday services in March (8,15,22) will be led by Pastor Nelson Strobert. On March 29th the Mustard Seed will present a program during the sermon time with Pastor Matt, here with Thomas, presiding. Wednesday worship during lent (noon and vespers) will be either Pastor Matt via recording, or volunteers reading the message written by Pastor Matt. The theme for Wednesdays in lent is *Lent – A Journey from Creation to the Tomb*. Topics from week 1 thru 5 are the following: (1) Creation, (2) Flood, (3) Deliverance at the Red Sea, (4) Salvation Freely Offered to All, and (5) Deliverance from the Fiery Furnace. Lenten Visitation to shut-ins will be

by our Eucharistic ministers. Please let Pastor know if you would consider serving in this important role as St. John's has 24 shut-ins. Pastor Christine (Arden) and Pastor Karen (Shepherdstown) will both be on-call. Pastor will be able to attend the March 9th Council meeting; we can ask another ELCA pastor to attend or cancel a March meeting. To be determined. Pastor plans to return for Palm Sunday, Holy Week and Easter. Pastor presented two new templates for replacing the Celebrate insert. After discussion, Council approved the format we would like to use.

Christmas Review: Both services were very nice and well attended. The special music by the choir was indeed beautiful. In the future it is suggested not to light the candles too early. The luminaries were a nice addition and we thanked Bess for that.

The greeters, with name tags, and additional signage out and around the building were helpful as well. There is definitely a need for additional handicap spaces on Martin and Queen Streets. Council or Pastor will ask the city for additional marked spaces. Forty-six attended the Christmas Day service.

Town Hall Meeting: Sunday, February 2nd, we will hold our traditional Souper Bowl luncheon with a Town Hall Meeting, with LYFE youth assisting. This will be announced for several Sundays prior to the event. This will be a town hall format to encourage discussion between St. John's members and Council on any topics or issues. Bring your favorite pot of soup to share and a few dollars to vote for your favorite super bowl team. Proceeds will benefit LYFE.

Sunday on Monday: Beginning in February, the church school program will continue on Sundays following the church service on 1st and 3rd Sundays. Format will be the same with lunch followed by lessons and meditation.

Pulpit exchange dates for 2020: February 9, June 7, September 6, December 6

Upcoming Events:

-All Sundays in January 12-3pm – Joint Choir Rehearsal for Evening Prayer Liturgy at the end of January

-January 5 – Epiphany of our Lord (transferred to Sunday) at 10am

-January 15 – Annual Reports items due

- January 26 – The Light Conquers: A joint Evening Prayer Liturgy at 4pm
- February 2 – Souper Bowl Lunch and Town Hall Meeting
- February 9 – Pulpit Exchange
- February 25 – Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper
- February 26 – Ash Wednesday
- March 6 – Baby Day Due!

Old Business: SWOT Analysis is postponed until February meeting.

New Business: Luther Hall request. Bethel Assembly of God requests the following dates to continue hosting their community meal as they have been doing. Tuesdays – January 28, April 28, July 28, October 27. **(M/S/P: Drew Catrow; Linda Payne)**

New Member Request: Mr. Michael McGough by transfer from Trinity Episcopal, Martinsburg. **(M/S/P: Jerry Crites; Drew Catrow)**

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper: February 25th: Rick, Jerry, Shane and Drew will head up this event.

Alarm Service: Council would like to lower the amount we pay for security services. An ad hoc committee of Mike, Drew, and Shane will explore options and consult Bess with their findings.

Benevolent Organizations to support: Having taken specific benevolent goals out of the 2020 budget, the following organizations will be considered for monthly or special focus for giving. February appeal will go to Lutheran Disaster Relief to be used where needed most. Other months will focus on East Ridge Grove Center, CCAP/Loaves and Fishes, Rescue Mission, Meals on Wheels, Camp Caroline Furnace, United Lutheran Seminary Scholarships, WVU Campus Ministry, Community Lutheran Partnership, Good Samaritan Clinic, Berkeley County Backpack Program, Emmanuel’s House, Habitat for Humanity, Lutheran Immigration Relief, Bethany House.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Christian Education: Plans for Vacation Bible School are being made. First meeting to be scheduled for late January/early February. The theme for this year’s VBS is “*Construction and Concrete*”.

Social Ministry: Betty Lou has plans underway for the Block Party (backpack distribution) for August 15 with a rain date of August 22nd. Trinity Methodist will join with St. John’s to host this “2-block party”

event. Many new activities have been added and community sponsors are being solicited for support. The goal is to prepare 400 backpacks for first come, first served distribution the day of the event. A summer giving tree may be set up in church to give members the opportunity to support a backpack or ½ a backpack or to contribute money so supplies can be bought in quantity. Friends Feeding Friends will be held on January 25th. Coats, blankets, socks, and men's and women's underwear are needed – all sizes. Our member, Abigail McBee, and other members of the Hedgesville High Leadership group will be helping with FFF this month also.

Evangelism: no report

Worship and Music: Choir practice continues for the combined congregations (5) service on Sunday, January 26th at 4pm to be held here at St. John's. Drew is making a list for food for the choir's lunches before the Sunday afternoon practices. Rick Losh has a piano to donate which is better than the one currently in Luther Hall. We will accept the piano and arrange for moving it and tuning it. We will need to have 3 old pianos removed from the premises. Rockwell's Moving will be contacted for an estimate.

LYFE: Pastor reported that LYFE will meet only on 2nd and 4th Sundays immediately after church. The topics will focus on life skills. Pastor is Council liaison.

Property/Tech: No report. A new chair is needed to head up this committee. Anne Moore will liaison with this committee and set up a meeting in February.

Mutual Ministry: Mutual Ministry committee will meet again in February. Committee liaison is Blaine Wilson.

Stewardship: Pastor has requested that Bishop Riegel meet with Council at the February meeting to share stewardship strategies. The Red Cross Blood Drive scheduled for Saturday, January 11th was cancelled by Red Cross due to connectivity problems. It will be rescheduled in February or March.

Mustard Seed: The next Mustard Seed Board meeting is scheduled for February 24th at 7pm.

With no other business, the meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer. **(M/S/P: Drew Catrow; Jerry Crites)**

Respectfully Submitted,

Diane Shewbridge

PASTORAL AND LEADERSHIP COVERAGE DURING PASTOR MATT'S PATERNITY LEAVE

On Call for Pastoral Emergencies:

•Pastor Karen Erskine-Valentine, Pastor Christine Olsen, and Pastor Ron Kreiensieck (Pastor Ron will handle any emergencies at Winchester Hospital)

•Visitations will be handled by our Eucharistic Ministers.

•If you have a pastoral emergency, please call the church office at 304-263-9291 or Council President Jerry Crites at 304-263-1467. For after hour emergencies, please call 304-263-9291 and dial 3. Leave a voice message and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

Worship Leaders:

•The Rev. Dr. Nelson Strobert will be with us March 8, 15, and 22 to lead our Sunday morning worship. Pastor Strobert has led our worship a number of times before. He is a retired professor from the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Gettysburg where he taught Christian Education. He is a gifted preacher and musician.

•Wednesdays in Lent

•Morning Prayer will be led by Pastor Christine Olsen from Trinity Lutheran Church.

•Evening Prayer will be led by different members from the council and the congregation. Pastor Matt will prepare a message and a leader will read the message. We will appoint a coordinator who will organize this and make sure each week is filled.

•There will be a simple meal held before Evening Prayer each Wednesday. The Evening Meal Coordinator will make sure there are people who sign up to bring food for dinner.

Extra helpers for Holy Week and Easter

•We will need extra helpers for Palm Sunday, Holy Week and Easter. These lists will be passed around by the coordinators. There will be a coordinator for:

•Palm Sunday

•Holy Week

•Easter

Pastor Matt will return and lead worship for Palm Sunday, Holy Week and Easter.

If you are interested in serving as a coordinator or as a helper, please speak with Pastor or a member of council. These coordinators will be appointed at the next council meeting on February 10



Stewardship

a way of life

Each month, we will focus on a different ministry and show different ways that you can support their work. This month we will focus on:

LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE

Lutheran Disaster Response brings God's hope, healing and renewal to people whose lives have been disrupted by disasters in the United States and around the world. When the dust settles and the headlines change, we stay to provide ongoing assistance to those in need.

Lutheran Disaster Response strives to help the church continue to be church in the midst of disaster — following Christ's call to bring hope and healing to our neighbor in need. Some key areas of work include:

- Providing emotional and spiritual care for people who have been affected by a disaster and for leaders who respond to a disaster
- Coordinating volunteers through our local affiliates
- Assisting refugees in a holistic way by meeting the varied needs of the community
- Promoting disaster risk-reduction by helping communities build their assets thereby reducing the effects of likely disasters
- Providing long-term recovery efforts by addressing the unmet needs months or even years after a disaster strikes



Saturday, Feb. 29

Red Cross Blood Drive

in Luther Hall.

Time: 9:30AM-2PM

You may call 1-800-733-2767 or visit RedCrossBlood.org and enter martinsburgcommunity to schedule an appointment.

Socks are the least

donated item at

shelters...

And thank
you!



Please considering donating a pair or two of new socks. We will distribute them at a Friends Feed Friends Meal.

yet... socks help us stay warm.

We have so many socks that we are good for the next couple of months. However, we need something that nobody likes to talk about...

**Let's face it,
we all wear underwear!**

We need all sizes and kinds. Please bring only new items and will hand them out at the next Friends Feeding Friends.

And thank you!

MAIL AND THANK YOU NOTES

St. John's Congregation,

Thank you so much for continuing to bless our school families with your generosity and thoughtfulness. This act of kindness and love is greatly appreciated and affects them more than you know. It is great knowing that our community cares about those here at Burke Street Elementary.

Sincerely,

Theresa Weller, School Counselor

Dear Betty Lou,

I can't believe I'm now on the receiving end of one of your funeral meals. It's a difficult time for our family, but this special meal and all who helped prepare it have brought a memorable ending to this day.

With love and affection,

Jeanne (Rector) and Family

.....

Dear Betty Lou,

Thank you for remembering us "shut-ins" during Christmas. The gift bag is appreciated and I enjoyed the time you spent talking with me.

Sincerely,

Karen Kelley

oo

Dear Friends,

Thank you for donating hats & gloves for our students. Last year the "Tree of Warmth" was such a success, we decided to do it again this year. It remains a great success. Thank you for making it possible.

Thank you again for your kindness. Our school is blessed to be surrounded by a wonderful, caring community.

Sincerely,

Todd Cutlip, Principal

& Burke Street Staff



IGNITE YOUR FAITH

YOUTH NIGHT

LYFE is for Middle School and High School age kids who wish to come for dinner, Bible Study, and prayer. This will be a space to have safe conversations and to have fun.

**LYFE MEETS ON THE
SECOND AND FOURTH
SUNDAYS FROM 11:30-1PM**

**ALL MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL AGE
KIDS ARE WELCOME TO JOIN IN!**

An opportunity for the youth to grow in spirit through worship, prayer, good food, fun games, and amazing company!



Theology and Bible
TABLE TALK
Food and Drink

JOIN US

1st Thursday of the
Month

FEB 6TH
6pm at the Daily Grind

Ever want to explore theology in a way that is not intimidating or hard to understand? And do you enjoy, eating out with friends who want to know more about their faith? Then you need to join us for Table Talk.

Over the next few months, we are going to be exploring Luther's Small Catechism. Luther instructed pastors to teach the Catechism to the entire congregation once a year. Many have called Luther's Catechism a jewel of the church. Come and experience its richness!

SUNDAYS AFTER CHURCH

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AT ST. JOHN'S

Worship is just one part of a Christian's faith development. Learning and growing in faith is a key part for ALL Christians. On the first and third Sundays, we have a program for both children and adults to help them grow in their faith while taking into account the very active lives of all involved. Sundays after Church offers class time for both adults and children to learn the same thing, just at an appropriate grade level. This way, parents can go home and talk with their children about what they learned and further re-enforce the story. Christian Education works best when the story is brought home and talked about around the dinner table or in the car. You do not need to have a family to participate. Everyone is welcome to come and deepen their faith in our Lord so that we might better fulfill our mission of proclaiming hope to the people of Martinsburg, WV.

The Schedule:

10am - Worship

11:15am - Potluck Lunch

11:45am - Class Time

Classes

Nursery (to the age of Kindergarten)

1st-4th grade (Both Nursery and 1st-4th grade can be combined if necessary)

LYFE (Middle School - High School)

Adult Class

Curriculum

Nursery through 5th Grade will use the Spark Bible. Typically, we will have an Old Testament Lesson the first week and a New Testament Lesson the third week.

Upcoming Dates

February 2- Baby Moses

February 16- Burning Bush

March 1- The Red Sea

March 15 - David and Goliath

April 5 - Ten Commandments

April 19 - Lord's Prayer

May 3 - Trivia Night

May 17 - The Lord is My Shepherd

Advancing Evangelism In Your Congregation

Does it appear that your congregation is doing everything well in the area of evangelism, but the congregation continues to plateau or even decline? Congregations hit plateaus for a variety of reasons. Sometimes, there is a shift in demographics. Other times, congregations settle into routines and lose the spirit of God empowering new ventures of witnessing.

Many of us have realized the blessing of God's presence in our lives. Some are just beginning to discover the incredible gift of God's love made known in Jesus Christ. Yet, any of us can get lazy and complacent about being a witness to the good news found in Jesus Christ. We lose a sense of urgency. We put on blinders, settle into our pews, and wait to be served. It is our consumer mentality at work.

Jesus calls us to be the light of the world. We are to share the light of Jesus Christ with others, witnessing in our office places, neighborhoods, schools, homes, and daily lives. How do we let the light of Christ shine?

Pray

Always begin with prayer. Prayers might include:

- Confession of failure to accomplish God's mission in the world
- Thanksgiving for God's direction within the congregation
- Requests for discernment and wisdom in decision-making
- Intercessions for the leaders of your congregation

Ask Questions

Start asking questions about your congregation's approach to mission and ministry.

How is your congregation engaging God's mission?

What might the next steps be?

Do you grieve for those who have not heard the Good News of Jesus?

If so, what might God be calling you to do to bear witness to that Good News?

Listen for the Answers

We do not always like the answers we hear. Maybe your congregation is in need of major transformation. Perhaps your congregation needs to renew its commitment to God's mission in your local setting.

Where is God calling you?

Change the Climate

God may be calling for change in the climate of your congregation, empowering us to bold new ventures.

How might your congregation become joy-filled, vibrant witnesses to Jesus Christ?

How might God use you as a change agent in your congregation?

Who else is God calling to partner with you to bear witness to the love of Christ?

SERMONS IN FEBRUARY

February 2 - They Lost Jesus

February 9 - Pass the Salt - pulpit exchange

February 16- Choosing Death

February 23 - The Meeting Place

CHURCH ATTENDANCE IS DOWN, BUT WHY?

By Mike Glenn

Recent studies have confirmed what most of us have already figured out. People aren't going to church the way they used to. Attendance and involvement are down across every denomination and in every demographic. No age group, no ethnic group, no area of our country has been immune from this new reality. We've been following this trend long enough to know it's not a temporary slump, but a full-blown decline.

While there are some mitigating factors – more people are attending community churches with no affiliation and different understanding of membership – that make getting the exact numbers difficult, the primary reason is obvious.

Fewer people are going to church.

Yes, there are reasons. For one thing, streaming services have impacted church attendance. If the weather is bad (meaning it has rained, might rain or ... well, you get the picture), I'm sure to get several screen shots of people watching the services on line while wearing their pajamas. Not long after, a lot of these people will discover they can stream the service regardless of the weather.

Organizations that used to respect Sunday morning no longer do. Children have field trips and sporting events on Sunday morning most every weekend. Travel teams take up family weekends as the entire family follows the dreams of one of their children to play hockey, football, baseball, debate or gymnastics. Stores that used to be closed on Sunday start opening at 1pm. Now, they're open all day.

Entertainment has discovered Sunday morning. The NFL kicks off at noon, but if you're going to go the game, you have to go early for the tailgate. Concerts in the park, music festivals, food festivals, book festivals, and classic car rallies now consider Sunday morning to be prime time for their events.

I guess this is to be expected. Churches should not expect any

culture to support the practices of their faith. Yet, there's more.

For one thing, everyone is in a time crunch. Families are facing multiple demands from careers, schools and social obligations. The work/life balance has been compromised to the point many Americans can't tell you when their work day actually ends and their home life begins. Most people are working longer hours than before, and social media demands more and more of our attention. Because of these growing demands on our time, most of us aren't getting enough sleep.

When the weekend gets here, if we can catch up on some sleep we do.

All of this means when a person or family decides how they are going to spend their time, every investment of time has to be worth the time required. That is, more and more people are spending their time like they spend their money.

Every investment has to have a significant ROI – return on investment – or they won't do it.

This brings me to a very hard question for those of us in church leadership. Is going to church worth it?

Why would anyone go to church?

OK, I know the usual answers. The Bible says we should go. There's exciting worship and the sermon usually isn't too bad. We get to see our friends and work together to do some good in the world.

All of that is true, but I don't have to go to a church building for all of the above to happen. I can stream any number of worship services. I can hear sermons by some of the best preachers in the world. My family and I can find any number of non-profits that need volunteers to make a difference in the world.

So, why should any of us go to church?

To find at least part of the answer, let's go back and find out why people went to find Jesus in the first place. Some went to find healing. Some to have demons driven out of them which, when you think about it, is just another form of healing.

Yet, when asked, Peter said he and the rest of the disciples wouldn't leave Jesus because they knew "Jesus alone had the words of

life.” In other words, people sought Jesus because they found in Him what they couldn’t find anywhere else.

We as church leaders seem to forget this. Jesus offers the world what they can’t find anywhere else. Whenever we go to conferences on church growth, we’re told about worship services and visual effects, dramatic preaching and comfortable pew cushions.

No one ever says, “What people need is Jesus. So, when people come to church make sure they get Jesus.” I know, no one would ever come to a conference where the message is that blunt and basic. A message like that certainly won’t drive conference ticket sales.

I know I may sound cynical, but I’m not. I’m just tired. In my ministerial career I’ve jumped through every church growth hoop I could find. I have worn myself out. I’ve worn out my people as well.

And you know what? We’re no better off. Our marriages get divorced at the same rate as unbelievers. We become addicts at the same rate as unbelievers.

Why? Because we went to church and we were entertained and impressed, but we never met Jesus. Now, when the world comes to our churches, we don’t have anything that matters because, well, we don’t know Jesus either.

Perhaps instead of focusing on saving the world, the church should focus on finding its own salvation first. I’m convinced when we find Jesus again the community will find the church again.

Taken from https://www.patheos.com/blogs/jesuscreed/2019/03/08/church-attendance-is-down-but-why/?utm_medium=social&utm_source=facebook&utm_campaign=FBCP-EVG&fbclid=IwAR322iOW7UqtAVxezCD6_K_QNzby3LYGg5qM4EwTtsuqKoXHIXyl5yMflo4

Mike Glenn has pastored churches in South Carolina and Tennessee. Mike has written two books, *In Real Time* and *The Gospel of Yes*. He also writes on his blog, MikeGlennOnline.com and is a frequent contributor for the Jesus Creed blog on Patheos.com. You can follow Mike on Twitter @mikeglenn.



MILESTONES IN FEBRUARY

Birthdays

- 1 Heather Edwards
- 2 Drew Cole
David Hartley
- 4 Jessica Hancock
Jessica Stroeck Brooks
- 6 Pat Murphy
- 10 Lauren Riley Jackson
Edward L. Shewbridge
- 12 Jonathan Edwards
- 16 Ruth Miller
- 19 Tiffany Noll Leighton
- 20 Kristen Kirkpatrick
Oliver (Pete) Long
- 21 Frances Coffinberger
Deanna Clarke Rapp
- 22 Heather Brewbaker
Donald Castleman, Jr.
- 23 Eric Burnell
- 25 Trina Bartlett
- 26 Justin Ruble
- 27 Catherine Whitmore



**We would love to include you
and your family's special dates:**
Just give us a call: **304-263-9291**
Drop us an e-mail:
churchoffice@stjohnsmartinsburg.org
or put them in the offering plate.

Anniversaries

- 9 Heather and Jonathan Edwards

*Saturday,
February 15*

Family Movie Night



This month we are watching
Frozen 2

We will provide the movie, popcorn
and drinks.

All you need to bring is your family!

Movie starts at 6pm!



VBS Planning Has Begun.

March 1, after church, we will meet in the lounge.

This year's theme of Concrete & Cranes will include:

High Steel Worship Rally

Bulldozer Crafts

Blueprint Bible Study

Wrecking Ball Rec

Jackhammer Music

Food Truck Snacks

Excavator Missions

As you consider whether you have time (or energy) to assist with VBS this summer, consider this:

* 95% of parents said that participating in VBS was one of their child's most meaningful church experiences, according to a survey by LifeWay Research.

* The unique nature of VBS gives everyone an opportunity to be involved and impact children on a short term basis for long term results! (And it's FUN!)

February 25, 2020

5:30 - 7 pm

At St. John's Lutheran Church

101 W. Martin St. Martinsburg

No cost for the meal but there will be free will offering



Shrove Tuesday

PANCAKE SUPPER

Would you like help cook, serve or clean up? We could use a few extra hands in the kitchen.

A Free Will Offering will be taken up this evening.

More details will be given closer to the event.

Ash Wednesday

February 26, 2020

12 and 5:30pm

Imposition of Ashes and Holy Communion

Spoken Liturgy that will Last no more than 30 minutes
Perfect for your lunch break or right after you leave work.

&

7:30pm

Imposition of Ashes and Holy Communion

A contemplative service where we will recommit
ourselves to practicing our faith this Lent

**Come and recommit to
God and begin a journey
of faith this Lent**

NEED IDEAS FOR A SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE THIS LENT?

For many people, Lent is a time when we give things up, but there is so much more to Lent than just giving up cake or coffee. Instead of giving something up for Lent, try doing something instead:

Reading a book, waking up in the morning and praying, reading a chapter from the Bible a night; working at a soup kitchen; walking to work, walking once a night with your family, playing a game with your family once a week, turn off your phone one day a week and spend that time with your family, volunteer to help around church, volunteer to ride around with Pastor Matt as he goes and visits shut-ins, do some manual labor, or simply clean the the garage. These are a few ideas, but really all you need to do is look at your life and see the places that are lacking your presence. The possibilities are endless.

Come to both the Maundy Thursday and Good Friday Services. These are very important worship times in the church for we will hear how Jesus won our salvation. These services remind us of our salvation and the story we so love to tell. Without these two services, Easter makes no sense. So come and learn why we gather on Easter.

Give up a meal once a day and use the money for that meal to help the needy. This has been a tradition in the Roman Catholic Church for years. You simply skip a meal and place that money that you normally would have spent on that meal and give it to the poor. Put that money aside that you would have spent and donate it ELCA World Hunger or another cause close to your heart.

Do not eat meat on Fridays or maybe Monday (meatless-Monday). This has been a tradition in the Catholic Church for years, but it is another way you might find some spiritual growth. Sometimes, failing at this discipline teaches more than actually keeping the discipline. For in failing, you will see just how dependent we are on meat in our diet where many in the world are lucky to have meat once a month.

Come on Wednesday for food and prayer. This is not just self promotion. Come and fellowship with other Christians and deepen your faith. Martin Luther once said, "Anyone who is to find Christ must first find the church. How could anyone know where Christ is and what faith is in him unless he knew where his believers are?" So come find Christ and see Christ in the face of your brothers and sisters.

Turn off all notifications on your cell phone. Sounds simple right? These notifications help us stay connected but they can interrupt family time and sabbath time. Consider turning off your notifications this Lent and get to the emails and text messages later.

Read the Entire New Testament. Martin Luther use to read the whole Bible once a year. Not to many of us have ever done this so start small. You can read the whole Bible in 40 days but if that seems to large, try the New Testament. Remember that the Bible is not just available in print but there are audio copies of this book available. There are even free versions available as a podcast. Just be careful with the translation. Instead of listening to the music or the news, use your commute time to read/listen the Bible.

SPEND TIME WITH YOUR FAMILY. I don't think I can stress this enough. Spending time with your family is so important these days. In the blink of an eye, tragedies can strike. Take as much time as you can to be the people you love and who love you the most.

The most important thing to remember this Lent with whatever discipline you might pick is to not be afraid to fail at it. Failure teaches us what we did wrong so that we can fix it for the future. Don't be afraid to fail but come and bring your failures to worship where they can be forgiven. And do tell others about what you are doing this Lent. Don't hide what you are doing. Telling others will help hold you accountable and will help you succeed.

Property Committee Meeting

There will be a general meeting of the property Committee on February 23rd after Church to organize the committee and plan projects for the coming year.

**You do not need to
be skilled in a
certain trade to be a
part of this
committee.**

While it is helpful, we really need "project mangers" or people who can follow up with contractors and repairmen to make sure the work is completed. If you have extra time on your hands and can meet vendors during the week, we could really use your help!

CONFIRMATION WITH POTOMAC EAST CONFERENCE - YEAR 2 (2019-2020)

Date	6th and 7th Grade	Teacher	8th Grade	Reinforcement Activity	Teacher
October @ St. John's	6		Why Church? Presentation: Pastor Karen Panel Discussion led by Pastor Christine		
November @ St. John's	10	Pastor Matt and Pastor Karen	Commendments 1-4 Middle/High School Confirmation Lock In at St. James Uville	10 Commendments Movie	Bess and Pastor Diane
November	12-13				
December @ St. John's	8	Pastor Christine and Pastor Diane	Commendments 5-10 Confirmation Retreat - Topic: Sacraments	West Wing Episode - Take this Sabbath Day: Discussion on the Death Penalty	Pastor Matt and Bess
January	17-19	Pastor Diane			Pastor Matt
February @ St. Thomas	15	Grafts Kingdom	Apostles' Creed		Pastor Matt and Pastor Christine
March @ St. Thomas	1	Death to life	Lord's Prayer		Pastor Christine and Pastor Diane
April @ St. Thomas	26	The Church	Confession and Forgiveness/Office of the Keys		Bess and Pastor Christine
May	1-2		Field Trip to Gettysburg (Friday to Saturday)		
Confirmation Sunday - Pentecost (or at your congregation's preference)					

Lent at a Glance

Ash Wednesday - February 26

at 12 pm 5:30 pm and 7:30 pm

Wednesdays in Lent - Lent: A journey from
creation to the empty tomb

Morning Prayer at 12 pm

Dinner at 6:30 pm and Evening Prayer at 7:30 pm

Every Wednesday in Lent

starting March 5 - April 1

Palm Sunday with the reading of the Passion from
Matthew on April 5 - One Service at 10 am with the
procession beginning outside at the square.

HOLY WEEK

Maundy Thursday - April 9 at 12 pm and 7:30 pm

Good Friday - April 10 at Noon at Trinity

Episcopal and 7:30 pm at St. John's

Easter Sunday - Sunrise at 6:30 am and

Festival Eucharist at 10 am

Deepen your faith this Lent by making time to
come and worship with us. Learn about the
mysteries of our faith with others. See the
story of how Jesus saved us, come alive.

WEDNESDAYS IN LENT

Lent

A journey from creation to
the empty tomb

Morning Prayer
at 12 pm

&

Dinner and
Evening Prayer
at 6:30 pm

Every Wednesday in Lent
starting March 4 - April 1

OFFICIAL ACTS

Funerals

Ann Elizabeth Cloud

-Born: November 11, 1947

Died: December 20, 2019

New Members

On Sunday January 12, we welcomed

**Corey and Stacy Stephens
and Gracie their service dog**

officially into our congregation.

Be sure to say hi to them and welcome them into
our family of God.

Interested in becoming a member?

Officially joining our church family means you want to be personally committed to the ministry of St. John's. We need each and every member to play a part in our mission and ministry here. If you have not officially joined our community, consider doing so. We love having your worship with us and we would love to have your commitment!

Sunday March 15
After Worship

CORN BEEF AND CABBAGE



**FREE WILL
OFFERING**

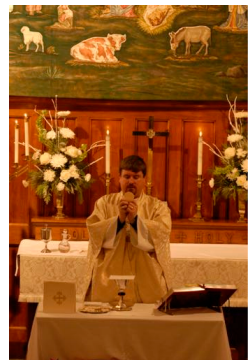
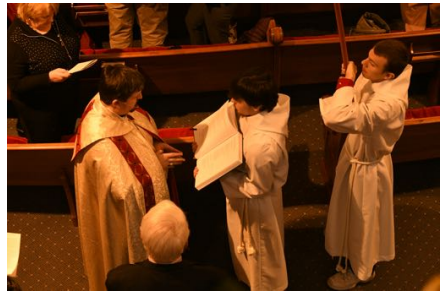
ST. JOHN'S IS LOCATED AT
101 W. MARTIN ST
WWW.STJOHNSMARTINSBURG.ORG

Fifth Sunday **Worship** *March 29* *at 10am*

A DAY TO CELEBRATE THE WORK AND MINISTRY OF THE MUSTARD SEED

Come hear and see all that our Mustard Seed Children have learned about over the year. They will sing some of their favorite chapel songs, show off some of their favorite things they have learned, and hear where God is leading us. **This is a special part of our ministry at St. John's. Be sure to come and welcome the students, families, and staff of the Mustard Seed and make sure they feel welcome and a part of our church family!**

Thank you to everyone who made Christmas so special at St. John's.
Here are some photos from the worship at 11pm.
Special thanks to Pat Murphy for taking these photos.



3 YEAR GOALS

For St. John's

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

BY NOVEMBER 30, 2020, WE WILL:

- Increase Sunday worship attendance by 20% so that more people will be able to experience the great reward of being in a relationship with Jesus.
- Have 50% of the congregation's confirmed-membership fill out a Covenant so that we can seek out those ministry areas the Holy Spirit is leading us to do.
- Strengthen our physical involvement in community activities through participating in community organizations and schools.

Please pray over these goals and ask for the Holy Spirit to guide you in helping us accomplish our goals over the next year.

WANT TO KEEP UP BETTER WITH ACTIVITIES AND WORSHIP AT ST. JOHN'S?



Search for **St. John's Lutheran Church, Martinsburg** on Facebook and like our page.

Visit Our Website

www.stjohnsmartinsburg.org

Sermons posted weekly, information about faith practices, and more information about events happening at the St John's.



Send an email to announcements@stjohnsmartinsburg.org to sign up for weekly emails and announcements.

Pastor's Report

December 2019

VISITATION

December Visits: 25

CONFERENCE AND SYNOD

Advent Craft Night

Potomac Conference Caroling

Buttonwood Lodge Meeting

WORSHIP

4 Sunday Worship Services

Pulpit Exchange

Christmas Pageant

2 Evening Prayer

Family Christmas Eve

Candlelight Christmas Eve

Ecumenical Christmas Day

CHURCH COMMITTEES

Council

Council Christmas Party

Meeting with Austin for LYFE Planning

CHURCH AND COMMUNITY FUNCTIONS

Graham Cracker House Decorating

CCAP Holiday Party

CCAP Board Meeting

Pancake Breakfast with the Lion's Club

Family Movie Night

EDUCATION

2 Sunday on Monday

Confirmation Class

2 God and Me Class

MUSTARD SEED

Mustard Seed Board Meeting

3 Chapel Services with Mustard Seed



My brothers and sisters in Christ,

We are just five weeks away from Baby Day's arrival. I am nervous, scared, excited, and overwhelmed all at the same time. You all have been very supportive of us since we announced about Baby Day. It is really been

helpful to know that many of you all felt the same way that we do now. The nursery is mostly together. The swings and portable cribs have been brought down from the attic. Now we wait...

I am very thankful for the paternity leave that you provide me. When Thomas was born, it was instrumental in helping Diane and I learn how to be parents. I am sure this time, it was be just as important. I have been working with council to make sure everything is covered in my absence. There will be pastor coverage for the sick. There will be leadership for Wednesdays in Lent. There will be coordinators in place to make sure all the extra volunteers we need for Holy Week and Easter are covered. I will be back for Palm Sunday, Holy Week and Easter this year.

Before we get to Wednesdays in Lent, we first must feast on pancakes. And these are not your ordinary pancakes. These are buttery, fluffy, covered in a rich sausage gravy (you can have it on the side) pancakes! Tradition tells us that in the ancient church, Christians prepared for Ash Wednesday and the season of lent by holding a special meal on the eve of Lent. We celebrate, we eat, we enjoy the goodness of life in preparation for entering into forty days of fasting in remembrance of our Lord's sacrifice on the cross. Shrove Tuesday has been used as a way to get ready for the fasting part of Lent by getting rid of all those fatty, sugary foods. But why mess up your kitchen? We will do the work and clean it up. We'll take up a free-will offering to benefit a local group (which will be decided at the February Council Meeting). So, come to Luther Hall on February 25 from 5:30-7pm for our Annual Pancake Supper.

The next day starts Lent. What I love about Lent is that everything spiritual slows down. The rest of the world will spin out of control like normal, but we will slow down. We will enter into intentional moments of prayer and other spiritual practices. Ash

Wednesday starts this season and it is on this night (or day depending on when you can make it) that we all make a pledge to be faithful to our spiritual disciplines and that we accept that we are mere mortals. Lutherans do Lent really well so please take advantage of the extra liturgies we are offering as well as taking up a spiritual discipline.

I have written in the past that a Spiritual Discipline does not have to be something you give up. It can be something that you add to your life. Normally, I would tell you what my discipline will be this year, but at this point, I think I am going to focus on making sure that Diane, Thomas, and our new baby are take care of. What is your discipline going to be this year? Talk to me about them. Share them with a prayer partner.

We have a lot coming up in February and March. I hope you can participate and be a part of the ministry here at St. John's. Even in my absence, the work of the gospel continues on and we need you now more than ever, to be an active participant.

In Christ,

Robert A. Dargatzis



St. John's Lutheran Church
101 W. Martin Street
Martinsburg, West Virginia 25401

Return Service Requested