

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: Matthew A. Day



ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN
MARTINSBURG, WV

April, 2020

WORSHIP WHILE IN EXILE

Easter will still happen...

THIS
EASTER

*there is a place
for you here*



Be sure to join us for worship. You can participate via Facebook Live or you can join us through our conference call. Here is how you can call in:

Phone: (425) 436-6344

Access code: 461001# or
<https://join.freeconferencecall.com/pastor345>

Palm Sunday

April 5

10 AM

Maundy Thursday

April 9

7PM

Good Friday

APRIL 10

Tenabrae Service

7 PM

Easter Sunday

APRIL 12

7 am and 10 am

2020 ST. JOHN'S COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

MARCH 9, 2020

Meeting called to order by: Jerry Crites, President

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

Members Absent: Pastor Matt (family leave), Trey Voorhees, Anne Moore, Mike Noll

Guest: Pastor Christine Olsen (sitting in for Pastor Matt)

Devotions: led by Rick Losh

Minutes: February 2020 meeting minutes approved with correction. (M/S/

P: Drew Catrow; Rick Losh)

Pastor's Report: Isaiah Dale Day was born on March 2nd – 8 lbs. and 21". All are doing well. God Bless Pastors Matt and Diane, Thomas and Isaiah!

Financial Report: February offerings were up and there were only two payroll days in February. (January had three payroll days.) The Mustard Seed is operating in the black. **All of the funding from St. John's to create the Mustard Seed, and funding added over the years as needed has been restored to our budget!** Summer Program is at full capacity and program activities have been planned.

Unfinished Business: *Special Offerings* for the months in 2020 not assigned at the February Meeting were assigned and approved by Consent of Council.

- September – Habitat for Humanity
- October – Shenandoah Women's Shelter
- November – Immanuel's House and Community Lutheran

Partners (special offering and Thanksgiving offering will be shared equally (50/50) between these two organizations

- December – Special Offering will go to Community Network Inc. (Bethany House); In Lieu of Poinsettias will go to Pastor Matt's Discretionary Fund.

New Business:

-Appointment of new Trustee: Blaine Wilson notified Jerry Crites that he wishes to resign as a Trustee. Jerry Olsen will fill the rest of Blaine's term which ends in 2022. (M/S/P: **Brenda Morrison; Rick Losh)**

-Luther Hall Requests:

1) March 26th 5:30-7pm. Habitat for Humanity to meet with potential

partner families by invitation only.

M/S/P: Linda Payne; Drew Catrow)

2) April 12th Noon – 4pm. Martha Seitler may wish to host her mother's 91st birthday and Easter Luncheon for family only. **(M/S/P: Drew**

Catrow; Brenda Morrison)

3) October 13th or 20th. Lions Club District Dinner (Betty Lou involved with this event). **(M/S/P: Rick Losh; Linda Payne**

-Communion Procedures were discussed in light of the current Corona Virus spread and the use of the common cup and general hygiene for distribution of Communion. Review and announcements will be forthcoming after Jerry talks with Pastor Matt.

****Council Meeting for April: The April Council Meeting has been moved to Tuesday, April 21st ****

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Christian Education: The first Vacation Bible School meeting went well.

Social Ministry: All who are interested in helping with the Backpack Block Party in August are encouraged to attend the committee meeting on March 22nd to help with planning. Friends Feeding Friends will be on Saturday, March 28th. Chili is on the menu. New sock and underwear are needed – all sizes.

Evangelism: The committee will meet in April after church once Pastor Matt returns.

Worship and Music: The accompany edition hymnal has been purchased with funds donated in memory of Carlton Esswein and are now being used in the Chapel.

LYFE: No report

Property/Tech: Anne Moore is waiting for M&M Builders to get back in touch regarding repairs. She will share with her committee when she hears from them. Drew has a quote for security services which he will submit to Anne. Other quotes will be solicited. Our current service (expensive) expires in May. Spring cleaning dates have been set with the first one on Sundy, May 17th after the service. Anyone wishing to submit projects to consider should contact Shane Wagoner.

Mutual Ministry: The committee will meet after Pastor Matt returns.

Stewardship: Blood Mobile was a great success! Another one will be scheduled in the summer.

Mustard Seed: Mustard Seed is doing very well. Summer Enrollment is filled and activities planned! The fence replacement project is still on hold

awaiting approval of the Historic Preservation Review Committee. The goal is for our Mustard Seed Director, Christy Costello, to attend the next meeting with Mike Noll for approval to proceed.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Diane Shewbridge

OFFICIAL ACTS

Funerals

Jean Clopton

-Born: October 24, 1930

Died: March 1, 2020

Barbara Beasley

-Born: June 5th, 1947

Died: March 4th, 2020

Denise Widmeyer

-Born: January 15, 1929

Died: March 14, 2020

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER WORSHIP WHILE IN EXILE

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**Palm/Passion
Sunday**

Worship at 10am

Chapel Time with Pastor Matt on Wednesday at
10am on Mustard Seed Facebook Page

**Maundy Thursday
Good Friday**

WORSHIP AT 7 PM

**EASTER
MORNING**

Sunrise at 7am

**Sunday Worship
at 10am**

Access worship by visiting the following:

[facebook.com/stjohnsmartinsnburg](https://www.facebook.com/stjohnsmartinsnburg)

or [facebook.com/stthomaswv/](https://www.facebook.com/stthomaswv/)

or call (425) 436-6344 Access code: 461001# or

<https://join.freeconferencecall.com/pastor345>

The first Easter didn't happen at a church. It happened outside of an empty tomb, while all the disciples were sequestered in a home, grief-stricken and wondering what was going on. So, we're all going to be keeping things pretty Biblical this #Easter.

THE REV. DR. EMILY C. HEATH



My brothers and sisters,

I was not planning on writing a letter in April. I was planning on just sharing lots of pictures of Isaiah with you and tell you to come to his baptism on April 21st. I will still share lots of photos, but I feel the need to write you all in midst of this pandemic

(and in case you are wondering, we will reschedule Isaiah's baptism for the summer...) One of the hardest decisions to accept was suspending corporate worship but looking back, I am glad we made the hard decision. This virus is deadly and if suspending in-person, corporate worship could save even one life, it was worth doing.

Learning how to live stream is nothing new to me. I have been doing it for the Synod for the past three years at Synod Assembly. Preaching to an empty church was hard. Looking out and not seeing the people I love was hard and brought a tear to my eye as I hit the button to go live. I know we have had some technical difficulties with the stream, but I think we have worked out a lot of those problems. Keep tuning in and I promise I will not stop working on it! If you cannot get connect, be sure to check out our YouTube site where I have been posting the video once it is over.

We will have Easter this year. Lent will end. I have saw some churches say that they are going to postpone Easter this year. No. You will not sit in Lent any longer than prescribed. Easter will happen on April 12 and we will celebrate with great joy that our Lord overcame death and the grave once and for all. The world needs to hear this good news more than ever. Postponing Easter for the sake of our good pleasure or for our schedules is not fair to those who are scared, suffering, or lacking hope. We are the proclaimers of hope! We will not let this pandemic stop us from completing our mission.

Continue to check in on each other. I appreciate the members of council who have been calling members to check in on them and all of you who have checked in on each other. While we might not be able to "visit", we can still call one another and offer mutual consolation to each another. This is holy work that we ALL must do. If you need a number, feel free to call me at 410-967-2132 or email me at pastor@stjohnsmartinsburg.org. When you call, make sure everyone knows about our online, virtual worship services. If they are having issues connecting, let me know.

Do not neglect your prayer life at this time. Take time to pray each day for this to end quickly. Prayer is not busywork and even if it was, it was commanded by God for us to do. During Lent, we are always more intentional about praying. After Lent is done, do not forget it. To help in

this endeavor and important work, Pastor Diane and I will continue to lead evening prayer on Wednesday nights at 7pm on Facebook and over the phone. Setting aside one night that we all can come together and pray is important. Also, feel free to check out some of our partner congregations in our conference. We are trying to work together to coordinate and offer other times to pray together which do not conflict. Look in your emails and Facebook after Easter for more information the schedule of these things.

I will try to keep you all up-to-date as possible. Be sure to like us on Facebook or check out our website for the latest updates. Are you subscribed to our Announcements email list? Make sure you are and once you are subscribed, make sure you open the emails! Don't miss an important update. Please call me if you are having trouble connecting with any of our social media, website, or email. I will do my best to fix it.

I will probably be working from home for the foreseeable future. Don't hesitate to call me and if I don't answer, leave a message. Since I don't have childcare, if I don't answer, it is usually because I am on dad duty. Text me if you want a fast response. Many blessings to you all. Stay safe, stay home, and stay healthy!

In Christ,



WORSHIP THEME FOR HOLY WEEK AND EASTER: FROM DEATH TO LIFE

HOLY WEEK

April 5 (Palm Sunday) - The Good, the Bad,
and the Ugly

April 9 (Maundy Thursday) - Meeting Jesus

April 10 (Good Friday) - The Truth Is worth
Dying for

April 12 (Easter Sunrise) - He Came Back

April 12 (Easter Morning) - Stop Looking for
the dead

APRIL 2020

April 19 - Thomas, Don't be Late

April 26 - How we deny Jesus to Others

THREE BAD HABITS WE PICK UP FROM CORPORATE PRAYER

By JAYSON D. BRADLEY



I don't know if anything in Christian thought and practice is more confusing than prayer. After decades in ministry, I have found that it's an area where people are the most consistently frustrated, disoriented, and mystified.

One of the biggest problems I've found over the years is that we primarily learn how to do it by praying with others. This means that we have a lot of enculturated ideas about how to do prayer. We develop our impressions of the correct prayer posture (head down, eyes closed) and even tone and vocal inflection from the people around us.

When you add these habits onto the questionable teachings many of us receive on prayer, it can create real problems. Here are three areas where you might want to buck the trend in your prayers.

1. Stop hiding how you truly feel

When I compare the way biblical characters talk to God and the way we do, I'm dumbfounded. Throughout Scripture, people were real and raw with God. But that's not something you'd expect to see at church. And because we seldom hear anguished, resentful, or exasperated prayers, we don't know how to pray when we're

angry, bitter, and fed up.

At one point, the prophet Jeremiah tells God:

“You deceived me, Lord, and I was deceived;
you overpowered me and prevailed.

I am ridiculed all day long;
everyone mocks me.

Whenever I speak, I cry out
proclaiming violence and destruction.

So the word of the Lord has brought me
insult and reproach all day long” (Jeremiah 20:1–7).

Did God deceive Jeremiah? Probably not. But this doesn’t make Jeremiah’s prayer any less meaningful or valuable. The fact that angry prayers like these exist in Scripture should tell us something. Too often, people use prayer to showcase their good theology or Scriptural knowledge, and God just wants us to be real.

If you think about it, roughly 70 percent of the Psalms are laments. How many laments have you heard in church? How many songs of lament have you sung in worship?

Can you imagine wanting to communicate with your children, but instead of being honest about how they’re doing and how they feel, they just keep telling you what they imagine you want to hear? That would be sad and exhausting.

2. Quit talking to God with religious jargon

Christians have a lot of insider language that mistakenly passes for real communication. We say bizarre things like “love on,” “gird up,” and “hedge of protection.” And that gobbledygook gets thrown into our prayers. For some, that includes throwing archaic King-James language into our prayers. “I beseech Thee . . .” does not begin a prayer that anyone needs to hear in the twenty-first century.

What happens is that biblical phrases and Christianese expressions get strung together into a sort of prayer Mad Lib that sounds pious but is often meaningless. I don’t know how many times I’ve heard the equivalent of, “Lord, your Word says . . .” which isn’t necessarily wrong, but it’s too often a way that people use prayer to impress others with how much Scripture they know. It’s like

pretending to make a joke to someone you know when you're really saying it for the benefit of everyone else in earshot.

Speak from the heart even if it's simple. And if you're in a public prayer time, don't feel like you *have* to contribute.

3. Abandon non-specific, generalized prayers

One of the curious things about prayer is that it quickly reveals weaknesses in our theology. If you believe that nothing happens that God hasn't already willed, it's going to impact the way you pray. Why pray for a specific outcome if we don't really believe it's going to make a difference. If it's good and within God's will, it's going to happen anyway—right?

Meanwhile, that's not the way Scripture talks about prayer. The Bible talks about prayer as if outcomes are legitimately riding on our input. It's hard to believe that Jesus would ask us to pray that God's will would be done on earth as it is in heaven if prayer was just an empty formality.

In Mark 9, Jesus returns from the transfiguration to find the majority of the disciples unsuccessfully to cast a demon out of a child. After Jesus casts the demon out, the disciples ask him what the secret was. Jesus's response was, "This kind can come out only by prayer" (Mark 9:29). Think about that a second. This would mean that this child's freedom was already aligned with God's will, but it still required some partnership with the prayer.

This seems to line up with the rest of Scripture that portrays God as collaborative and desirous to work alongside human beings that have legitimate agency and authority. Unfortunately, we tend to pick up a habit of praying sort of non-specific, toothless prayers. If you listen to a lot of corporate prayers, you'll find them to be largely broad and vague.

When we're going through a rough patch, we often ask people to pray for us without specifying the outcome we're looking for. Why not ask people to pray in a specific direction? James tells us that prayer is powerful and effective, but it's hard to believe either is valid if prayer isn't also focused and determined.

Taken from <https://www.patheos.com/blogs/jaysondbradley/2020/01/3-bad-habits-we-pick-up-from-corporate-prayer/>.

A FEW CEMETERY MOWERS NEEDED

The season has started and will go into the Fall for the up-keep of the Old Lutheran - Reformed Cemetery located across from Brown Funeral Home.

We are in great need of “trimmers”, but you will need to bring your own equipment - trimmers, pruners, rakes, etc.

Once we get the winter left-overs cleared away, maintenance is much easier and less often.

We welcome any amount of time and help you can spare.

For more information contact Pat Murphy (304-263-0586).

2020 SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY

St John's Scholarship Award began in 2011. In the past, eight scholarships have been awarded in June. Previous recipients of \$500 awards include Lauren Haines, Colin Banks, Harrison Banks, Christine Smith, Nicholas Crites, Jenna Taylor, Myranda McQuaid, Eryn Fleming and Katie Kline.

Confirmed members of St. John's who apply must fulfill these minimum requirements: Contributed 25 hours to the community (church and non-church) through service, have a 2.5 GPA for the most recent grading period, have graduated from high school within the last three years, been accepted to an accredited college, university, or technical school, and complete a 500 word essay that explains the impact this one-time scholarship will have toward achieving their career and academic goals. Applications for the Scholarship Award are available through the church office and are to be returned to the church by April 15. Visit our website to download the application. The scholarship will be awarded during a June worship service.

Summer CAMP 2020

2020 Camp Theme

“From Generation to Generation

June 21 - 27, 2020

Located at Camp Caesar
in Cowen, West Virginia



**register online by visiting
camplutherwv.com/**



register online by visiting www.carolinefurnace.org/

Scholarships available to both camps

To The Congregation St. John's Lutheran Church

As we struggle daily during this time of crisis, we must come to you now prayerfully requesting your help. We depend on our weekly giving to maintain our ministry in Martinsburg. Since we are not gathering as a congregation, now through the end of April, we are hoping you either mail your giving envelope each week, or scan the QR code on the next page

Even though we are not meeting Sunday mornings, the work of Christ goes on. One such important outreach is to feed the hungry, and we do that with Friends Feeding Friends. This has been an important community outreach for a number of years and with the Covid-19 pandemic, we will be rethinking how we continue this critically important ministry.

We pray that the Covid-19 virus will be contained soon, and we can all get back to our regular worship services.

Yours in Christ,

Your Congregational Council

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.



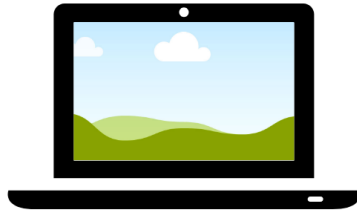
Send an email to announcements@stjohnsmartinsburg.org to sign up for weekly emails and announcements.

**Even though the church
might not be able to
gather, our mission to
preach the gospel and do
God's work does not stop.**

**Your offering makes this
work possible.**



By Mail



Online

Your offering envelopes do not require a stamp. Simply drop it in the mailbox and it will make it back to us. Or consider setting up online giving. If you are not able to give at this time because of no income, we understand. Take care of yourself and your family. If you can give, please do so.



**Scan the QR Code
or visit our website at
stjohnsmartinsburg.org
and click Online Giving
And Thank You!**



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 IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE SERVICES

Driven by our faith and our nation's values, LIRS works to protect and embrace refugees, migrants, and children seeking a new life in America. Having carried out this work for more than eight decades, LIRS and our national network of service providers are uniquely equipped to provide holistic, trauma-informed, and age-appropriate care to the vulnerable individuals we serve.

Areas of work:

- Refugee Resettlement
- Foster Care Services
- Family Reunification
- Empowering New Americans
- Welcoming Migrants
- Engaging Communities

Visit <https://www.lirs.org/> for more information about their work and how you can get more involved.



Theme Verse:
I am sure of this, that he who
started a good work in you will
carry it on to completion until
the day of
JESUS CHRIST
Philippians 1:6 (CSB)

Motto
Jesus! Our Strong Foundation!

VBS Planning Has Begun.

MBe Sure to Contact Shane or Jess Wagoner if you are interested in helping

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!)

MILESTONES IN APRIL

Birthdays

- 1 John Haarman, III
Michael Murphy
Darcy Vogel
- 3 Dan Hancock
- 4 Richard Ettinger
- 5 Kate Gatrell
- 6 Kathy Murphy
Joan Schuler
- 7 Sandy Stroeck
- 8 Laura Jenkins
- 9 Dustin McQuaid
- 12 Shawna Boswell
- 13 Elaine Merceruio
- 18 Aidan Leighton
Kim Remsberg
- 19 Lucas Barnhart
Daniel Miller
- 23 Jean Jackson
- 24 Shirley Boomer
- 26 Conner Harden
Elizabeth White
- 28 Dawn Hutzler

- 29 Sabrina Alvarez
Beth Chapman
Mason Janney

Anniversaries

- 13 Michelle and Ben Byers
- 30 Angela and Jared Stroeck

**We would love to include
all of our church families
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.



PASTOR'S REPORT

March 2020

VISITATION

February Visits: 54

CONFERENCE AND SYNOD

Potomac East Conference Meeting

WORSHIP

4 Sunday Worship Services

3 Ash Wednesdays

CHURCH COMMITTEES

Council

Town Hall Meeting

Staff Meeting

CHURCH AND COMMUNITY FUNCTIONS

Family Movie Night

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

EDUCATION

2 Sundays After Church

Confirmation Class

Table Talk

MUSTARD SEED

4 Chapel Services with Mustard Seed

Mustard Seed Board Meeting

Spirit Night at Chick-Fil-A

WEDDINGS

FUNERALS

CONTINUING EDUCATION

Appalachian Symposium in Gettysburg

CHOIR

4 Choir Rehearsals

MILEAGE

Pastor Day's Mileage for the month of February was 504 miles.

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Return Service Requested