

NEWSLETTER

St. John's Lutheran Church

101 W. Martin Street

Martinsburg, West Virginia 25401

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The Rev. Matthew A. Day - Pastor



ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN
MARTINSBURG, WV

JULY 2020

TWO WAYS TO WORSHIP

Starting July 26 In-person worship resumes at St. John's

Even with the return to in-person worship to resume July 26, we will continue to livestream our worship via Facebook and over the phone. We recently upgraded to a new platform for both non-facebook and phone uses that will hopefully be more reliable, but it does mean a new phone number that you will have to use on Sunday. **See page 3 for the new phone number.**

On June 30, the council voted to begin in-person worship starting July 26 outside in our parking lot. This decision is contingent on the number of Covid cases in our area. If you do not feel comfortable gathering for worship, you can still gather with us online or on the phone. **BOTH WAYS OF WORSHIP ARE VALID AND HOLY.**

COVID19 has forced us to look at the health and safety of our all who worship with us.

Check out page 4 and 5 to learn more about what worship will look like for the foreseeable future.

We want to stress that you are sick, think you might have been exposed to the virus, or if you are in the vulnerable population for contracting the virus, you should stay home and worship with us through the phone or online.

BACKPACKS FOR KIDS

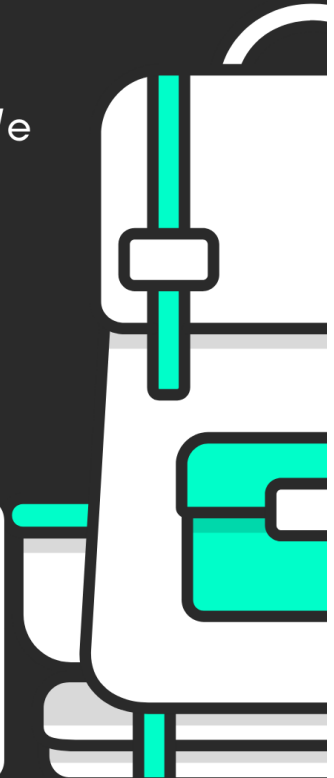
Because of COVID19, we have decided it will be better to forgo the block party and concentrate fully on getting backpacks to kids.

We are looking for a donation of \$30 a backpack. \$30 fills one backpack with all the needed school supplies. We will be taking the backpacks directly to 8 schools. We need to raise the funds for 439 backpacks.

We are set to donate the backpacks on August 14

Donate online at www.stjohnsmartinsburg.org or by mail. Make sure you mark on the memo line "Backpacks for Kids"

This ministry is a partnership between St. John's Lutheran Church and the Lions Club of Martinsburg.



TWO WAYS TO WORSHIP

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(If there is inclement weather, we will hold worship via online and over-the-phone)

OUTDOOR WORSHIP

Starting July 26

Worship
at 10am
in the
Parking lot

OR

VIRTUAL WORSHIP

Worship
at 10am
VIA
Facebook Live
or on over the
phone

Access worship by visiting the following:
www.facebook.com/stjohnsmartinsburg/live

For Non-Facebook Users:

Access worship by going to <https://tinyurl.com/ya9f4sak>
(You may need to enter the meeting ID and password...
see below)

Or you can call 1-301-715-8592

When Prompted, enter the Meeting ID and Password:

Meeting ID: 991 8358 5812

Password: 745576

**If you need a toll-free option,
please contact Pastor Matt.**



ST. JOHNS LUTHERAN
MARTINSBURG, WV

A plan to reopen and return safely

• Reopening

- It is important that we listen to data and not desire.
- All non-essential activities are canceled until further notice.

Essential activities of the church include:

- Worship
- Funerals
- Weddings
- Baptisms
- Friends Feeding Friends and other feeding ministries
- We will continue to livestream and use the conference call system until the pandemic is over. This includes Weddings, Funerals, and Baptisms.

• What will in-person worship and church life look like once we reopen?

1. If you are sick, you need to stay home. If you show symptoms when you attend worship, you will be asked to leave.
2. Everyone attending worship on a particular Sunday will need to sign in. Ushers will be writing your name down so that, in the event of someone contracting the virus, we can assist in contact tracing.
3. Social distancing must be kept. Council members will be on hand to enforce social distancing among members attending in-person worship. No Coffee Hour. No physical contact of any kind including hugging, fist bumps, hand shakes or elbow taps.
4. We will need to sit at least 6 feet away from each family attending worship. Ushers will seat people in order to maintain distance and will then help with dismissing people at the end of worship.
5. Masks need to be worn outside during worship, even outside. We will have extra masks on hand for people who forget their masks and for visitors who did not bring one.

6. An usher will seat you when you come to worship. Please bring a chair with you from home. We will have chairs on hand if you forget to bring one.
7. We will offer hand sanitizer for people to use while in worship. People are encouraged to bring their own and use it.
8. Lysol wipes will be placed outside of the bathrooms so that people can use them to wipe down surfaces before and after use. Bathrooms will be opened in Luther Hall. We ask that you limit trips inside to use the restroom.
9. Posters will be posted around the church/parking lot reminding people of proper social distancing.
10. There will be no acolytes during this time. Pastor Matt will take care of the reading the lessons or will prerecord the lessons.
11. The offering plate will be placed in the back of the church/parking lot and not passed. An usher will be in charge of making sure the box is protected.
12. The church nursery is closed until further notice.
13. Communion will distributed under one kind. The host will be distributed by the pastor. The pastor will be wearing gloves and a mask. Please put your mask on before receiving the host. Congregants will be asked to hold your hands up so that I can drop the wafer into a congregants hand. If that is not possible, we can have have small cups available so that these persons can just hold the cup out.
14. For those who cannot come to worship because they are in the vulnerable population, Pastor Matt will take communion to their home and distribute the elements to them using the rite typically used for those are informed or shut-in. Distribution will take place on the front porch. Persons wishing to receive communion will need to contact Pastor Matt and schedule a time for him to come to your home.
15. After each worship, the chairs used will need to be wiped down and cleaned.
16. No outside groups will be allowed to use our facilities with the exception of feeding ministries that take place outside.
17. In-person Choir rehearsal will be canceled until further notice.

St. John's Council Meeting via Phone Conference at 7pm on June 8, 2020

Member Present on Conference Call Roll Call: Pastor Matt, Jerry Crites, Brenda Morrison, Anne Moore, Michael Gottlieb, Drew Catrow, Linda Payne, Rick Losh, Mike Noll, Diane Shewbridge, Bess Day (Treasurer)

Members Absent: Jane Kelley, Trey Vorhees, Shane Wagoner

Guest: Bishop Reigel

Jerry opened the meeting with prayer.

Bishop Reigel addressed Council to ask for a confirmation that Council approved of the appointment of pastor Matt as Dean in the WV-WMD Conference. Deans are recommended by pastors in the conference and serve at the will and pleasure of the bishop to assist the bishop in providing pastoral care to pastors and congregations. It is an unpaid appointment with a recommended minimum of one day per month devoted to assignments from the bishop. The appointment undergoes an annual review. Pastor was asked by council to confirm his willingness to undertake this appointment, which pastor answered affirmatively. Pastor expressed his belief that it is an important mission and his appointment was supported by fellow pastors. It is not a lifetime appointment and can be terminated if circumstances arise that would warrant termination for any reason. As there were no objections from council, Pastor Matt was appointed Dean by general consent. (MSP: Mike Noll; Linda Payne)

Minutes: May 4, 2020 Minutes were approved by general consent. (MSP: Jerry Crites; Anne Moore)

Treasurer's Report: Bess will email the financials when ready as not all information was complete in time for the meeting.

Pastor's Report: Pastor has devoted considerable time to making phone calls to church members to see how our people are doing during this trying time of the pandemic. The evening prayer services will continue virtually through June and then probably end. Our conference calls are costing \$30. Pastor suggested using Zoom for future virtual meetings at a cost of \$15 per month. Approved by general consent. (MSP: Mike Noll; Drew Catrow)

Rev. Rachel Crumley, Pastor of Tuscarora Presbyterian Church is exploring an alternative worship experience via a 'coffee shop' to include music and bible study much like Pastor Matt's Table Talks at the Daily Grind but with more discipleship. Council expressed an interest in learning more from Pastor Crumley and will invite her to speak with us to see if St. John's would like to participate in an alternative coffee shop worship experience. Pastor will be taking some time off to decompress (June 15-20) and asks that we hold off on contacting him until after June 21st. Pastor will be away from August 6-14 and might need a supply

pastor. Pastor Matt expressed his appreciation for all the support he has gotten during this stressful time. Pastor was happy to have the Mustard Seed back as parents have been pushing him to get the Mustard Seed back in operation. The director, Christie, expressed on Facebook much thanks to all who made their reopening possible and a successful first day back. Of course all covid-19 precautions and procedures were in place and will continue to be adhered to.

Unfinished Business: Church will not reopen in the month of June. Jerry will appoint a committee to work on a safe reopening. Discussion ensued with concerns that other churches are opening and maybe we should work to reopen soon. Other concerns were the uptick in virus cases among congregations that have reopened already. Outdoor services are safer than indoor and would it be possible to meet at War Memorial Park, Poor House Farm or other outdoor venue? There was a general consensus to remain closed for services through June and continue live streaming the services. Our security contract expired at the end of May. Drew got one quote from Security Electronics. Mike asked Drew to send him the quote/criteria and Mike would get other quote/s. Due to the pandemic Rick has not followed through with improved lighting on our parking lot, especially in the back corner where it is very dark but he will pick this up and contact Potomac Edison about our options.

New Business: Church picnic would normally be scheduled for September 13th (first Sunday after Labor Day). Martha will reserve Poor House Farm Park for that day and we will cancel if we have to. Jerry appointed Pastor Matt and Brenda Morrison along with himself to comprise the committee to reopen the church. Our next council meeting will be July 13th at 7pm. There is a possibility that this meeting will be in Luther Hall observing Covid-19 protocol. (To Be Determined.) A question arose regarding payment to Aaron, our sexton, for stripping and waxing the floors in Luther Hall. Before the pandemic the work was going to be undertaken by Aaron and his father outside of Aaron's regular work schedule for St. John's and a proposal was to be submitted. A proposal was not submitted and the work was actually done during the pandemic/shut down of the church during which time Aaron was paid his regular church salary based on hours worked and his father was paid \$800 for his work. During the hours devoted to the floor project, Aaron was not working on regular church duties as there was no activity requiring Aaron's time otherwise. By role call a motion passed to pay Aaron \$100 additional for a job well done. (MSP: Anne Moore; Linda Payne).

Committee Reports:

Christian Ed: No report but Pastor will touch base with Shane. A virtual VBS is planned.

Social Ministry: Friends Feeding Friends continues as a ‘grab and go’ bag lunch distributed in our parking lot. The Backpack block party will be possible due to the virus; however, plans are to fill backpacks and deliver them to four elementary schools in town – Burke Street, Winchester Ave, Berkeley Heights and Rosemont.

Evangelism: No report

Music and Worship: We are still worshiping and there is still music!

LYFE: No report

Property/Tech: Bid for steeple completion from J.P. Smith was \$171,000. Doug Widmeyer is soliciting other bid/s, including a bid from the contractors working on the Gateway Hotel project. The water problem in Luther Hall (ceiling issue) is most likely problems with the whole downspout system. Needs to be fixed. Smoke detectors need to be changed/checked/replaced. Mike Noll will get someone to climb up under the beams and take care of this.

Mutual Ministry: No Report

Stewardship: No Report

Mustard Seed: The Mustard Seed Board had a policy review in view of the recent shooting incident in our parking lot during a protest gathering. The policy regarding the procedures when there is an incident has been updated following much work that went into this.

Motion to adjourn: By general consent the meeting was adjourned. There will be another meeting on June 30th at 8pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Diane Shewbridge
Secretary

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.



Theology and Bible

TABLE TALK

Food and Drink

JOIN US

1st Thursday of the
Month

JULY 2

6pm at your Kitchen Table

We are going to continue to explore Luther's Small Catechism as we have for the past few months. 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!

To participate In Table Talk visit

www.facebook.com/stjohnsmartinsburg/live/

The comments will be on and we will respond as we see them. Non-Facebook users can use Zoom & go

to <https://tinyurl.com/ybvjonjy> or call 1-301-715-8592 and enter the Meeting ID 958 6794 4027 and

then enter the Password 067348



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 is happening July 5-9th via online and by mail. We will get on Zoom at 6pm!

In an effort to keep our kids safe online, we are asking that everyon register inorder to participate in the Virtual Part of VBS. Visit stjohnsmartinsburg.org and click the link at the top of the page!

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

PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR EMAIL AND FACEBOOK FOR ALL THE DETAILS HOW TO CONNECT TO VBS 2020 THIS YEAR!

Are all your kids grown up? Consider sponsoring a child this summer by contributing \$30 to the VBS program. Your donation will make sure everyone participating will receive a custom box full of materials to use.

JULY 2020 SERMONS

July 5- How would you like your Yoke?

July 12- Ears of Corn...or something like that.

July 19- The Parable of Weed Killer

July 26- 5 Parables for one low price

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).

It is with great sadness that we bid Christy Costello farewell for the Mustard Seed.

Christy was our Pre-K teacher for 14 years before she stepped into the role of director. Over the years, she has written grants for the center, taught a generation of children, and helped make the Mustard Seed an amazing place. We will miss you and we wish you success and happiness in her next adventure!



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:

UNITED LUTHERAN SEMINARY

MISSION

Unifying, Learning, Serving: United Lutheran Seminary is a welcoming and diverse learning community equipping people to proclaim the living Gospel for a changing church and world.

VISION

Our vision is to be an innovative and vibrant seminary centered in the gospel of Jesus Christ, forming faithful servant leaders bold in public witness and action in welcoming learning environments that are Lutheran in focus, ecumenical in practice, and led by grace.

United Lutheran Seminary provides a vital ministry for the sake of the church and the world – the equipping of trained leaders to serve the Gospel in the church and the world. They can provide this important theological education only through generous and faithful partners, like you, who support their mission through gifts and prayers. United Lutheran Seminary is committed to offering students unprecedented levels of financial aid to make it possible for gifted leaders to follow their calling and reduce the debt levels graduates bring with them into ministry. Your generosity helps them meet that mission.

WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY IN PARTNERING WITH US IN OUR MISSION OF UNIFYING, LEARNING, AND SERVING, AS WE BUILD FUTURE LEADERS FOR THE CHURCH!



Ways

to

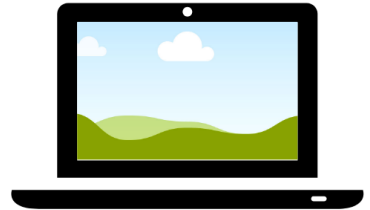
Give



At Worship



By Mail



Online

Covid19 has taught us that our mission of preaching the gospel does not stop even while the rest of world stops. Online giving has enabled many to continue to contribute during this time of exile and Isolation.

We thank you for your generosity and continued support. Your gifts given at worship, by mail or online ensure that we can continue In our work of proclaiming the good news. 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!**

Outdoor Ministry is more than Summer Camp.

We come to you today with difficult news and cautious optimism. For the first time in over 60 years, we will not have Summer Camp this year. However, outdoor ministry is so much more than Summer Camp. We are providing the best summer experience possible, through another session of Camp at Home (virtual camp) and Family Retreats. And although we are unable to open for Summer Camp this year, we continue to prepare for WHEN we are able to resume Summer Camp. Our hope rests in the power of the overnight Summer Camp experience, and we look forward to sharing this experience with you again soon.

We want to thank you for your patience and grace as we continue to adapt to this ever-changing situation in the COVID-19 pandemic. We have learned so much in the past three months and expect to see more developments in the coming weeks. Our Board of Directors and staff have been learning, discerning, consulting, and brainstorming with many other organizations and industry leaders across the country. We are implementing standards and guidelines for our family groups and retreat guests as outlined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the state of Virginia, and the American Camp Association.

We have focused on our mission of faith, education, and renewal by hiring our full summer staff, no matter the outcome of the summer. This has allowed us to be prepared for a number of alternatives.

Many of our Board of Directors and year-round staff are former camp counselors or counselor parents, and we value the leadership and faith development of our young adults. With the help of donor funding and the Paycheck Protection Program grant, our staff are already on-site; loving, learning, growing, and leading.

From Caroline Tucker, 2020 Program Director: “Caroline Furnace has been fundamental in my discernment to ministry. In my first summer as a counselor, I remember sitting on the porch of my cabin, reflecting on the day and all of the ways that I had seen God’s love around me. I remember thinking to myself that with whatever I end up doing in life, I want to share God’s love just like I have been doing at camp. This was first of many epiphanies in my discernment at camp that has led me to where I am today. I look forward to joining the fifty other Caroline Furnace staff who have found their call to seminary here in Fort Valley. This fall, I’ll continue my journey at Wake Forest Divinity School.”

This summer, we are continuing to develop the next generation of leaders for the world. Outdoor ministry is so much more than Summer Camp. We ask for your continued support of your outdoor ministry during this uncertain time. Donations are tax deductible and can be made by mailed check or at www.CarolineFurnace.org/donate. Trusting in God's plan, we are committed to continue providing unforgettable faith, education, and renewal experiences in God's creation for all God's people. We are YOUR outdoor ministry, and we look forward to welcoming you back to Fort Valley soon!

Follow Along with Camp at Home!

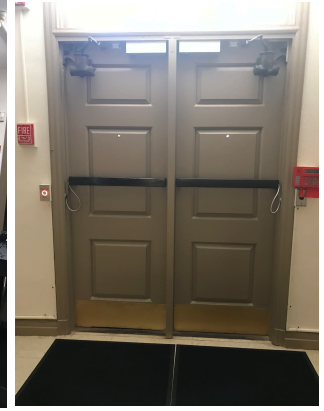
Pre-recorded content is being posted daily using FlipGrid, an interactive video content platform used by many teachers and professors for online discussion. FlipGrid allows the campers to respond using their own video clips, and is a great way for campers and counselors to interact remotely. Camper groups have their own interactive FlipGrids, PLUS we have a public FlipGrid to share with you!

Find that here:

1. Go to the FlipGrid website (<https://info.flipgrid.com/>)
2. Enter our Flip Code
 - June 14 to 19 - carolinefurnaceweek1
 - June 21 to 26 - carolinefurnaceweek2
 - June 28 to July 3 - carolinefurnaceweek3
3. Follow along with Camp at Home*!
 - Sunday - Opening Campfire, Bible story of the week (led by a volunteer chaplain)
 - Monday - Cooking with Ms Lee Ann
 - Tuesday - Crafty Creations
 - Wednesday - Critter Patrol
 - Thursday - Sustainability Superhero
 - Friday - Camp Shenanigans

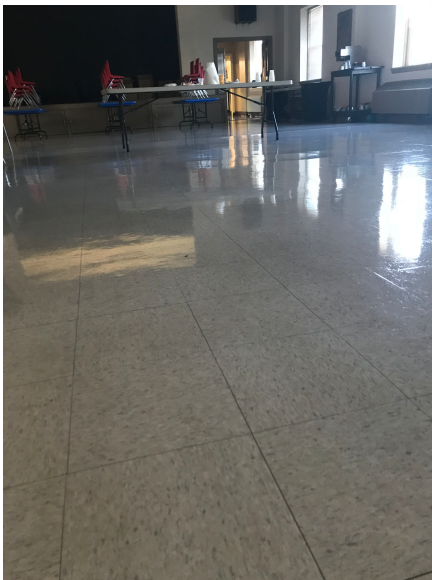
*Music videos, daily devotions, and other fun videos will be scattered throughout

Visit <https://www.carolinefurnace.org/> for more information about a Virtual Camp experience this summer. Scholarships are available from St. Johns! Let us know and we can help cover the costs!



Thank you to Buddy and Gail Newman for putting in the time to finish the painting around Luther Hall, Thank you to Betty Lou for cleaning and organizing, Thank you Doug Widmyer for his help in getting cracks in the cement fixed and locks repaired, and for Aaron Maphis and his Dad, Rick, for cleaning and polishing all the floors. And to the members of our Property Committee who are working on some pretty big projects around the church.

Luther Hall has never sparkled so much!



MILESTONES IN JULY

BIRTHDAYS

- 3 Diane Shewbridge
- 4 Independence Day!



- 5 Jon Fleming
- 6 Harriett Eyler
- 7 Gregory Noll
Linda Propst
- 9 David Gatrell
Ella Murphy
Pat Rigot
- 11 Jeff Spoon
- 13 Amanda Ferenchick
- 14 Anise Frye
- 23 Sherlyn Clarke
- 27 Dennis Coffinberger
- 28 Arlene Leitzke
- 29 Lynn Aikens

ANNIVERSARIES

- 1 Lisa & Daniel Clarke
- 2 Linda & Jerry Olsen
- 5 Traci & Lewis Harden
Sue & Roger Wall
- 7 Danine & Jerry Crites
- 10 JoAnna & Andrew Banks
- 19 Kate & David Gatrell
- 20 Kandi & Bill Ruth
- 24 Kathy & Jim Chapman

**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.



My brothers and sisters in Christ, Joseph Robinson wrote a hymn title, "Tis good, Lord, to be here." The first verse reads:

*How good, Lord, to be here!
Your glory fills the night;
your face and garments, like the sun,
shine with unborrowed light.*

The hymn itself is about the Transfiguration of our Lord. The Feast of the Transfiguration was actually the last time I was with you all in person for worship before Isaiah was born and our eventual exile from in-person worship. The hymn speaks about Peter, James, and John wishing that they could stay on the mountaintop with the transfigured Jesus. Robinson even writes one of the verses to say "we long to hold the vision bright and make this hill our home." I think back to this Sunday in February and long for the days of "normalcy." I just want to go to my office and visit the people who I have been called to serve. I just want preach from the pulpit at St. John's to a room full of people I love. I just want to stand behind the altar and proclaim the gospel through the sacrament. I just want to baptize my son in the font surrounded by both my family and my church family.

How good it would be for things to be just like the way they use to be where it felt as though Christ's glory filled the our sanctuary, his face shined with the brightness of the sun, and everything felt good. However, Robinson goes on to write in the last stanza:

*How good, Lord, to be here! Yet we may not remain;
but since you bid us leave the mount, come with us to the plain.*

Christ called us to leave the mountain with him three months ago and what an exit it was! We left the mountain and have been down in the valley for sometime. For some, this valley has been the wilderness. Some of us want to go back to the mountain. Some of us are too scared to leave their homes even to attempt the return trip. The good news though—Christ is with us wherever we shall go.

I am very excited about our future. I know God is going to do amazing things. Friends Feeding Friends will continue to done on the fourth Saturday of the month. VBS might be virtual, but it is still going to be VBS and God will sanctify our work and make what we do holy and good for our children. We are still going to make sure kids in our communities have all the school supplies they need to start the school year. Even though we might be losing Christy Costello as our director

of the Mustard Seed and a longtime employee, I know God will see this ministry through and be with us during our time of discernment.

Over the coming months, we are going to have to grapple with doing church as safely as possible. Right now, the council has decided that with the proper safety measures in place, we can hold worship safely outside starting July 26 barring any major changes from the CDC, the governor's office, or local health officials. However, we know that with all the safety measures in place, we cannot provide a fully-safe worship environment. With that said, we will continue to stream our worship over facebook and the phone. **Both forms are valid and holy.** No one should feel shame for choosing to stay home during this time. This virus is terrifying. If you choose to stay home during this time, you can still worship. We have proven that the communion of saints is not limited to the gathering of people on Sunday mornings in our buildings. When this virus passes, and it will pass in time, we will all gather back together. Until then, do what is best for you and your family.

I am worried about the future of worship and church. I am worried that people will not come back. I am worried that our church might not ever look the same as it once did. However, Jesus tells us that not even the gates of Hades will prevail against us. If we truly believe these words from Jesus, then we must trust that God will see us through this time.

I believe that this time in exile has forced us to examine what really matters to our ministry. Right now, we are doing what is necessary and concentrating all our energy on making sure that those things which are vital to our mission and ministry happen and those things that are not vital, have been put on hold. I hope we continue to examine what is vital and necessary to our mission and ministry; that we do those things which are vital and leave behind the things that are not.

COVID might have caused us to stay home, but our work and ministry in downtown Martinsburg continues. THANK YOU for coming along for the ride! And thank you for all your prayers and support. Your generosity has made the work we do as a congregation possible!

In Christ,



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

Return Service Requested