

“Servants of the Lord”

“Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ” (Colossians 3:23–24).

In the month of September, we Americans celebrate Labor Day on the first Monday. It is a legal holiday in which the social and economic achievements of all workers in this country are honored. We remember with gratitude the contributions laborers have made to the strength, prosperity, and well-being of our country. But as Christians, what does it mean to be laborers or servants of the Lord?

Being a servant, having the heart or attitude of a humble, loving servant, is the very expression of God-given faith. There are references in the New Testament where Jesus makes it quite clear how He feels about His disciples having a servant heart. He even let it be known that greatness in the kingdom of God is measured in terms of service.

While Jesus was walking with His disciples, and in response to James and John’s mother asking Him if her sons could sit at His right and left hand in His kingdom, Jesus taught them all, saying, *“Whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many”* - Matthew 20:26–28.

Not long after, the same night Jesus was betrayed and arrested, He said to the disciples:

“You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher,

have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.”

John 13:13–17

The Christian life, our life as God’s servants is not something we do because we have to, or because by doing so we gain brownie points or curry special favor with God, but rather it’s the character of God in us. It is our privilege and honor to be servants, to serve in love.

As Christians, it’s important to know that our flesh, or our old nature, is primarily self-centered, so it looks at the world around us calculating how best to use it or manipulate it to benefit us. And in so doing, our sinful nature leads us to ignore the best interest or welfare of others. You can’t be in any higher or more beloved position before God than you are already, on account of Jesus. There is nothing you can do to make God love you more, and there is nothing you can do to make God love you less. Jesus has set you free from the condemnation of the Law. You are free to love and serve not because it’s required of you or because you ought to, but rather because doing so is our new way, which is God’s way, the way of our new nature, which God has given us in Baptism by the power of His Spirit. God hasn’t only gifted each of you with His indwelling Spirit, with saving faith, and with a variety of resources, intelligence, and abilities, but He has also blessed

you with an abundance of ways to put all He’s given you to work in loving service to others, to the church, and to our world, in all areas of life.

Jesus makes it quite clear a servant heart expressing itself in humble acts that benefit others is what determines greatness in His kingdom. Jesus emphasizes faith expressing itself in love, in acts of mercy and kindness done even to the least of those who are His brothers or sisters.

God loves you. His love is evident in His serving you. He willingly laid down His life in humble service to you so you can enjoy, experience, and benefit from His love expressed in service to you forever. He did it also that you would be blessed through your love expressing itself in service to others.

A Fellow Servant of Our Lord,

Pastor Riley

NEW BIBLE STUDY



Pastor Riley is beginning a Mid-week Bible Study open to all St. John’s members and the surrounding communities. The first meeting will be Tuesday, September 4, 2018 at 10 a.m. & 6 p.m. The study will last about 1 hour. Come to know the person and the works of Jesus better through the unique eyes of this Gospel writer. Mark witnesses for us Christ’s life from birth to death and resurrection. He also gives us insights into all the miracles – great and small – which were a part of His life here on earth. *“How from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.”* –

"Pipe The Piper: Bach, Buxtehude & Before"

Presented By
'Soli Deo Gloria' Concert Series
Sunday, September 30, 2018
 3:00 p.m.

Join us for the third concert of this season with an organ concert featuring music from the baroque era and before! Director of Music Jeff Windoloski will perform on St. John's Austin pipe organ with selections from Johann Sebastian Bach (1685 - 1750), Dieterich Buxtehude (1637 - 1707), Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck (1562 - 1621), Johann Pachelbel (1653 - 1706) and more. Following the concert be sure to join us in the fellowship hall for a reception. We hope that you will join us to celebrate the majesty and splendor of this early music as it is performed on the king of instruments!



I Want YOU To Join The Choir!

Choir season begins on Thursday September 6th...Rehearsals will be held every Thursday in the lounge beginning at 7:15 p.m.! New voices are always welcome!



The Hand Chimes Choir will begins at 6:30 p.m. in Room 2 starting September 6th. We look forward to returning members as well as some new faces to join. Reading music is not required, just being able to count 1, 2, 3, 4. If you have questions, please contact Linda Slozak at 413-237-8643.

The WINGS next meeting will be on Saturday, September 15th in Room 8 at noon A light luncheon will be served followed by the meeting which include finalizing details for the Tag Sale on October 20th. We will also be starting our Christmas cards for service men and women who will not have the opportunity to enjoy the Christmas holidays with their family.



Come and enjoy the fellowship and lunch.

The following have signed for flowers for September & October:
 September 2- open
 September 9 - Sienkiewicz (1)
 September 16 - open
 September - Sienkiewicz (1)
 September 30- Riley (1)
 October 7 - McLeavy (1)
 October 14 - Sienkiewicz (1)
 October 21 - Caba (1)
 October 28 - Riley(1)



If you would like, sign up in the 2018 FLOWER BOOK located on the round table in the church foyer or contact Jane McClure. We can do up to three bouquets per Sunday. The cost per bouquet is \$21.00.

St. John's BACKYARD PICNIC



Everyone is invited to join in the fun at St. John's backyard picnic to be held directly after an outdoor worship service on September 16. Inclement weather, activities will move inside. Hamburgers and hot dogs will be served along with condiments and ice cold beverages. An ice cream treat will be dessert. Every family attending is asked to bring their favorite picnic dish. Don't forget your lawn chairs. We are asking for volunteers to help set up, barbecue, games, clean up, etc. Children be ready for water games. There will be a sign up sheet in the church foyer so the correct amounts can be purchased. Invite your family and friends to join us.



A NEW SIGN-UP SHEET HAS BEEN POSTED OUTSIDE THE CHURCH OFFICE

Hope you were all able to enjoy some restful time off this summer. Whether you are away for a weekend to visit family or taking some time off, there's no excuse for not getting the Good News just log on to <http://stjohnswestfield.org>

Please help in the continuing outreach mission project of our Radio Broadcast of Sunday morning Worship. Broadcasts can be heard each Sunday at 7:30 a.m. on WHYN (560 AM). The cost for the program is **\$125 per week**. If you are interested in sponsoring a broadcast (or a part of a broadcast) in memory of or in honor of anyone please call the church or sign up on the sheet outside the office door. Donations of any amount are welcome. Additionally, we have posted previous weeks' broadcasts on our website along with the associated bulletin. Just log onto <http://stjohnswestfield.org>; links to the broadcasts and the weekly bulletins are on the main page.

Let us know if there is a shut-in or someone who missed a week, and we will email a link so they can hear they whole service.

Please see/call Bill Schneeloch (413-568-4906 or 860-604-5264) or e-mail at radio@stjohnswestfield.org with any questions.

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEEDS YOUR HELP!!!



We are in desperate need of Sunday School teachers for the fall. **ALL GRADES ARE NEEDED!** You do not have to be an expert to be a Sunday School teacher - just the desire to help the young people of our church grow in their faith. If you are interested in sharing your love and knowledge of Jesus, please speak with Pastor.

TAG SALE and RUMMAGE SALE

A church tag sale is scheduled for Saturday, October 20 from 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Preview night will be Friday, October 19 from 6:00—8:00 p.m. with a donation of \$1.00. Your saleable items in good, clean condition and clean used clothing may be brought to the church as soon as possible. Take this opportunity to clean your homes and help the church at the same time. If you have large items for pick-up, if you have questions or want to volunteer some time to help, call Ali Talmadge at 413-627-0800.



Thrivent Notes:

The Thrivent Choice Dollars may be allocated at any time through the year. St. John's would like to ask you to allocate your Thrivent Choice Dollars to St. John's Lutheran Church. Last year these donations helped provide meals for the Westfield Soup Kitchen, supplement coffee hours, buy supplies, sponsor two children in Liberia for schooling, etc. The Choice Dollars also have helped to support various LCMS Missions by monetary donations. Please log-on to your Thrivent account www.Thrivent.com to allocate these funds or call Thrivent at 1-800-847-4836, or call Louise at Jim Shuttleworth's office at 413-525-9165, or see Jane McClure for assistance.

YOUR INVOLVEMENT IS NEEDED:

At our October Congregational Meeting, the election of officers will be held. Some of our current officers will be stepping down this year and your help is encouraged. Please pray and notify Bill Schneeloch if you are willing to help guide our church forward.

COFFEE HOURS

Volunteers are needed to help host coffee hours on Sunday Mornings following the worship service. The coffee, juice and half & half are provided. All the host needs to do is provide baked goods or snacks, serve after the worship service, and clean up. There is sign up sheet in the foyer. This time after church allows for wonderful fellowship among our members. There is a sign up sheet located at the coffee hour tables. If you have any questions, please speak with Linda or Erika Slozak.



“St. John’s & Community

Table”: Every fourth Friday of the month our church serves the Westfield Community Table. We are looking for volunteers to help cook and serve. If you are able to help on a regular basis and just once in awhile, please speak to Sally (562-3186) or Doris (568-7440).

“WOMEN’S BOOK STUDY GROUP”

The September meeting for the book club will be on Saturday, September 22 at 11:30 a.m. at Sally Sienkiewicz’s home. The group will be discussing *When Night Comes* by Dan Walsh. If you have any questions, please speak to Doris Love at 413-568-7440.



RED SOX TRIP REMINDER:

All going to the Red Sox Game on Saturday, September 20. Please be at the church by 11:45 a.m. for the bus check-in. Waters and snacks will be provided. Watch for the February 2019 newsletter for next year’s trip information. For questions, please call Gary Wolfe at 568-0325.



Make Music For Your Mighty King!

In the hymn 'New Songs Of Celebration Render' written in the mid 1900's by Erik Routley, he explores the way in which music is called to share the Gospel and give praise to our Triune God. Routley writes in his second verse, "Trumpets and organs, set in motion, such sounds as make the heavens ring." Trumpets with their heralding horns and organs with their mighty thunder surely ring praise before the throne of the Almighty. Certainly, we consider trumpets and organs fine musical instruments, however, as Lutherans we lend the creation of music to much more than just trumpets and organs. As we see later in Routley's hymn, music calls on all things living to sing of the glories and goodness of God. In the Lutheran church we believe that music is God's good gift to the Church for the proclamation of His Word. This is music's chief duty. Music and the Word are, in Luther's view, closely bound together. The Church, therefore, is careful that the texts of its liturgy and song are the nourishing words of the good news of the Gospel. It is when the Gospel is proclaimed that God is truly praised. It is towards the final verse of Routley's hymn that he composes, "All things that live in earth and ocean, make music for your mighty King!" Yes, we most certainly should make music to our mighty King. How? Through the liturgy of the Divine Service every Sunday, in the singing of hymns and psalms, in our choral music presented by the choirs and in our personal devotions in our homes. For when the music of the church shares the Gospel, our mighty King is most assuredly praised and adored!

Discover the Joy in Sharing the Gospel

Joy is both a gift of God as well as a response to the gifts of God. Joy is a deep-seated sense of happiness in what God has done and what He is doing in our lives. Filled with God's love, grace, and mercy, we eagerly want to share those blessings with others. We want others to experience our joy in the Lord. Through our sharing with others, we receive even more joy knowing that we are being faithful in telling others about Jesus' amazing love.

God's plan for His people has always been that we take responsibility for sharing the Good News of the Gospel. Peter wrote, *"Always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for that the hope that is in you"* (1 Peter 3:15). God blesses us

with minds to learn and mouths to speak. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, God will give us the words and the courage to use them. Along with most people, we are eager to talk about the weather, sports, economy, or politics, but, as Christians, we have been given the treasure of the Gospel message—something vastly more important to talk about. Our attitude should be like that of Peter and John, who, when commanded to stop speaking of Christ, said, *"We cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard"* (Acts 4:20).

In sharing the Gospel, we want people to know there is a God Who cares for us and is almighty and powerful, yet loving and compassionate. Like kids bragging about their dads, we can talk about our wonderful, almighty loving Father, Who, while we were still

sinners, sent us a Savior to redeem us from our slavery to sin (Romans 5:8). This is the God, Who, at just the right time, *"sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those who were under law, so that we might receive adoption as sons"* (Galatians 4:4-5).

Through Christ, we know the Father, and, through Christ, the Father has come to us. Through Christ, we have life everlasting in Heaven. This is the Good News that we as joy-filled Christians want to share. May God give us courage to use the opportunities He gives us, and may we experience true joy knowing that our hearts are right with God and that He is working through us as we tell others about Jesus.