



Lately I have been encountering a lot of individuals who self-identify as spiritual, or even as Christians, with no discernable connection to any Christian church. Now when someone tells me they are a Christian, or that they believe in Jesus Christ, I take them at their word; but I can't help but feel saddened by what I know is missing from their lives. That is, the fellowship of Christ's church. I truly believe that one of the most important ways we experience and encounter Christ is through relationships with Christ's people, and that is harder to do outside of the church context. Here are just a few reasons why I believe it is important for people to gather as the church:

The church provides us with opportunities to encourage one another in life. We need reminded and encouraged from time to time to continue to love one another and help one another. (See Hebrews 10:24-25) A few years ago I asked my wife to remind me when I get angry at someone, that they are a "beloved child of God". It doesn't happen often, but occasionally when I car cuts me off or is driving erratically I may become upset, but that gentle remind that they are a "beloved child of God" encourages me to change my attitude, offer prayer for the individual, and breath in the peace of Christ as I calm down. The church helps us encourage one another!

The church provides the space and the means to worship God with other believers. (see Luke 4:8, psalm 95:6-7) Praising God is one of the chief purposes of humankind and doing it together invites the presence of God. (see Matthew 18:20) By coming together as the church of God we find that our worship is enhanced by our shared focus and devotion. We learn from each other and are challenged by each other to worship and learn.

The church teaches us more about ourselves and God. We learn through the sharing of scripture, through preaching, through Sunday school class, through bible studies, and through interactions with each other. One of the beautiful things about the gathered church is that we are not all the same. We have different views and experiences that when

shared cast insight into how we understand ourselves and how we understand our God. (see Colossians 3:16-17, Matthew 28:20)

There are many other reasons I believe gathering as the church of God is important, but I believe I have shared enough to convince you that church is both important and scripturally called for. In fact, if you are taking the time to read this newsletter article you are probably already connected to the church in some way, so you may be wondering why I would go to such lengths to convince you of something you probably already know. The reason is that almost all of us know someone who is not connected to a church community and I believe it is part of our responsibility as the church to help connect them to a worshipping community. (whether it is Mars UP or another church!) What's more interesting is that studies consistently find that people who are not part of a church community are willing and often interested to have conversations with churched folks about their faith. My dad always used to say that the best time to plant a tree was twenty-five years ago, and that the next best option was today. Today we should start planting the seeds of faith and the vitality of the community of faith in our family members lives, in our neighbor's lives, in our friend's lives, in their children's lives and so forth. (see Matthew 28:19)

Being the church matters. It matters to the community we live in. It matters to families and individuals who are lifted up by it. It matters to those who are looking for that Spirit filled fellowship or for the peace that surpasses our understanding. And friends, we are the church. The church is not the brick and mortar of the building in which we gather, it is you and me and everyone else who chooses to gather as one; to be encouraged, to learn, to worship, to praise God, and to truly be the body of Christ. Don't wait to plant more seeds or invite a friend back to the church, plant seeds today so that the church will grow tomorrow.

Blessings,  
Pastor Brian



# MY School Preschool awesome updates

I am very excited to announce that the preschool board recently approved something that I am very excited about. For the first time ever, we are going to combine our annual art show and graduation with a fundraiser for the Caring Place. We would like to invite anyone and everyone to attend our annual art show on Wednesday, May 7th, and Thursday, May 8th, from 5:30-7:15 pm. Over 750 pieces of artwork will be featured in the fellowship hall for this annual event. We will raise funds for the Caring Place, as many grieving children have found solace through their art therapy program. The idea of kids raising money for kids is one of the best ways to teach them about generosity and kindness towards others. Join us in the hope that we can help make a difference in the lives of grieving families.

The Highmark Caring Place, A Center for Grieving Children, Adolescents, and Their Families, is committed to helping grieving children get the support they deserve. A community resource, the Caring Place offers services at no charge to grieving families throughout the community. No insurance is necessary.

The Caring Place provides peer support to children who have experienced the death of someone important in their lives, providing a safe place where grieving children and families can come together and be with others who understand what they're going through.

Love,  
Heidi S. Beahm  
Director, My School Preschool

**My School  
Preschool  
Annual**



**ART  
SHOW**



**May 7 & May 8 - 5:30-7:15  
Over 750 Pieces of student artwork**



*Happy Mother's Day*

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**MEMORIAL DAY** *Prayer*

Eternal and living God, surely your goodness and your mercies have followed us all the days of our lives. On this Memorial Day, we pause to remember that our blessings, liberties and rights have been secured at great sacrifice to others. Loving Lord, we ask you to console and strengthen those who mourn the loss of their loved ones. May this Memorial Day be a time to remember the grief of our loss and turn our eyes forward seeking the fruit of your peace ahead. Amen.Amen.



**CALLING ALL GRADUATES**

If you or someone in our church that you know is graduating from high school, college or another post-high school program, please let us know in the church office.



# VBS - share with friends, family, neighbors



**COMMUNITY VBS 2025**  
**SUNDAY, July 13 –**  
**THURSDAY, July 17**

7/13 - Families join us for a **HOT DOG BEAN** kickoff  
5:00pm MUP Fellowship Hall  
GET a preview of the great VBS decorations,  
music and games!



**REGISTER YOUR KIDS**  
**AGES 3-12**  
**INCLUDES EXPANDED**  
**PRE-SCHOOL FUN!**  
Scan code or register @  
**WWW.MARS-UP.ORG**



Sponsored by your community churches -  
St John Lutheran, Valencia & Mars UP

## VBS dates – planning/decorating/preparing

**Wednesday, June 4, 2025, from 6:00-8:00 pm at Valencia UP-Sandwiches**

**GOALS: Make decorations**

**Wednesday, June 11, 2025, from 6:00-8:00 pm at Valencia UP- Chicken Tenders and Salad**

**GOALS: Make decorations**

**Wednesday, June 18, 2025, from 6:00-8:00 pm at Mars UP-Sloppy Joes**

**GOALS: Assemble the card- board cabin, finish decorations**

**Wednesday, June 25, 2025, from 6:00-8:00 pm at Mars UP-Rigatoni**

**GOALS: Finish large decorations/Decorate the church**

**Wednesday, July 9, 2025, from 6:00-8:00 pm at Mars UP- Pizza**

**GOALS: All volunteers requested to attend – Education/Run through  
and complete decorating**

**We are looking for volunteers to make decorations and of course help the week of VBS!**  
**Please contact Alma or Pastor Brian.**

**All are welcome, we will find a place for your special talent!!**



# Good Friday Worship Service

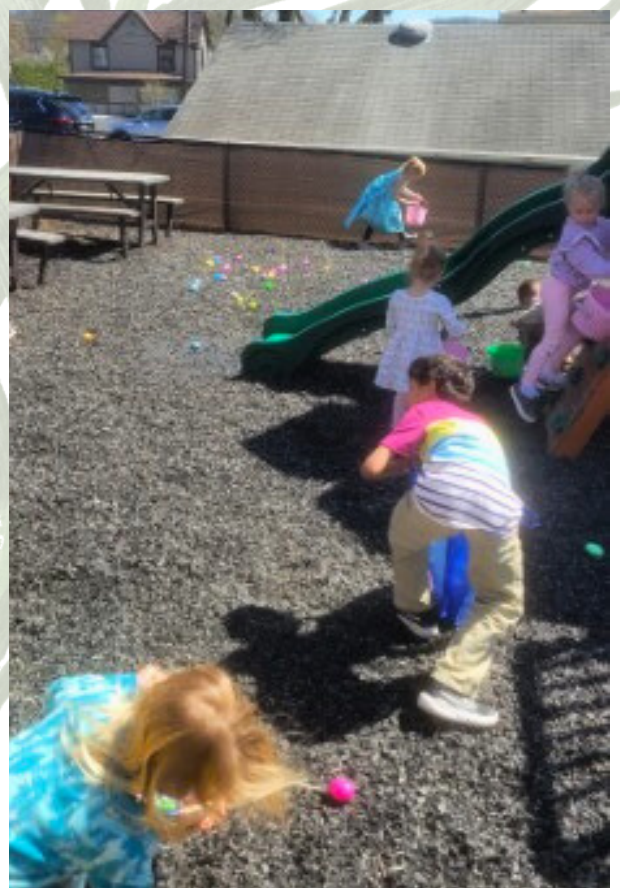


On Good Friday we were reminded that when Christ died for our sins, our sins were completely removed from us. There is no longer a record of our sin, there is no left over ashes or marks to remind God of our sins. Our sins are consumed by God's grace! We are totally and completely forgiven. Thank Be to God!

We thank the Mars Area Ministerium for orchestrating this community Good Friday Service.



# Palm Sunday - Kid's Bell Choir & Easter Egg Hunt





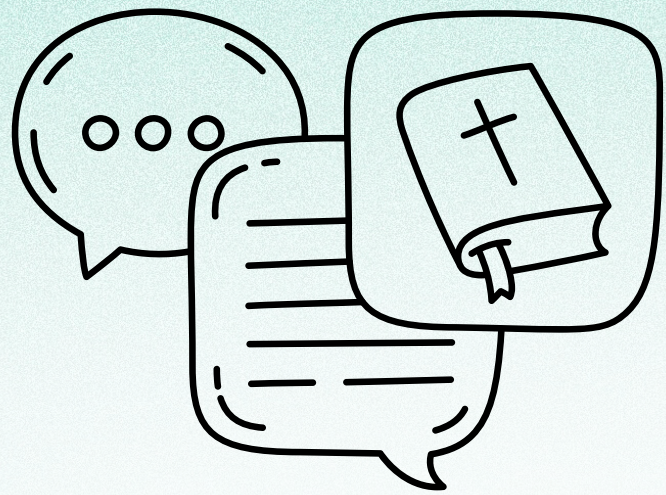
## May Scriptures:

May 4 - John 21: 1-14

May 11 - Acts 9: 36-43

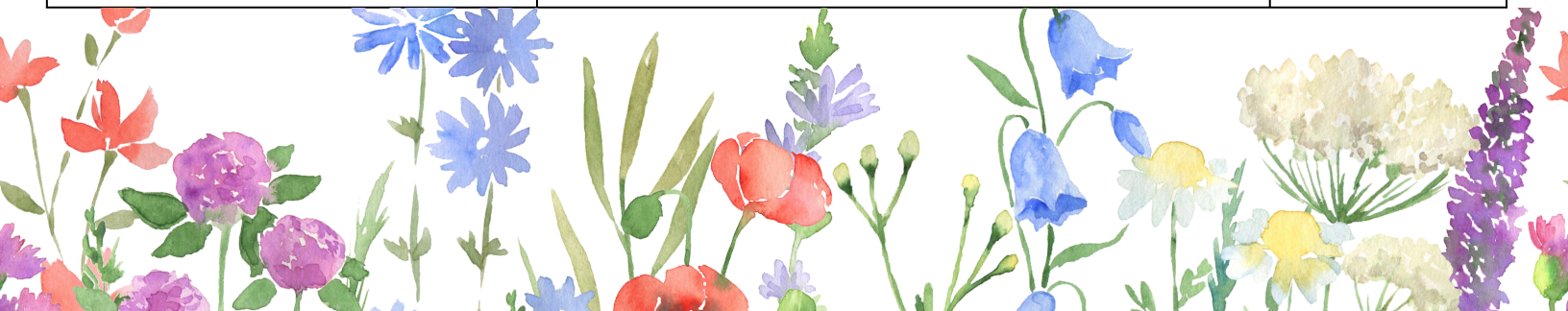
May 18 - John 13:31-35

May 25 - Luke 24:44-53



## Dates for your Calendar

Date	Event	Time
May 4	Youth Sunday	10 am
May 11	Youth Group Year End Party	1-2:30 pm
May 11	Mother's Day	
May 18	Last Sunday School till Sept.	
May 26	Memorial Day	
June 6 & 7	Mars New Year	
June 8	Pentecost	
July 13-17	VBS	5:00pm
August 24	Summer Fun Fest	4-8pm





## DATES TO KNOW

- May 4 - Youth Sunday with St. John's
- May 11 - Youth Group End of Year Party
- May 11 - Mother's Day
- May 18 - Last Sunday School until Fall
- May 26 - Memorial Day
- June 8 - Pentecost
- July 13-17 - Community VBS
- Visit our website for a full color newsletter



## Contact Us

Stop by the office, email or give us a call for more information.

### **Mars UP Church**

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PO Box 805  
Mars, PA 16046  
(724) 625-1365  
marsup@mars-up.org

Visit us on the web at  
[www.mars-up.org](http://www.mars-up.org)

We're also on Facebook!!

Join us for Worship  
Sunday's at 10:00am

Prayer Chain:  
pastor@mars-up.org

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