



WELCOME

in the name of the Lord!

As God serves us today in Word and Sacrament, may we rejoice in His gifts of forgiveness, life and salvation.

- 1) Please complete either a Guest (blue) or Member (white) card found in the hymnal rack of the pews.** You may place this card in the offering plate located in the Narthex.
- 2) To parents of small children, we love the sound of children in worship.** Thank you for bringing your child to worship; they belong here! If your child is actively crying, we have a cry room with service audio near the restrooms.
- 3) Regarding the Lord's Supper today: If you are not a confirmed member of St. John's congregation or a congregation of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, please speak to the pastor before communing.** Pastor is readily available in the narthex before worship for this conversation. For those with medical need, the center section of the individual cup trays is filled with cups of grape juice (darker color). For those who have a gluten intolerance, gluten-free wafers are available. Share your need as you come forward to the altar.
- 4) Children are invited to come forward to the altar while the Lord's Supper is distributed;** encourage them to bow their heads and fold their hands. While there, they will receive a Baptismal blessing from the Pastor.
- 5) We ask that if you have a mobile device, please silence it during the worship service.**
- 6) Our elders and ushers are here to help with any of your worship needs today.**

Thanks for worshipping with us!

Sermon Reflections

Three things from today's sermon I want to remember:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Worship Times

- ✠ Saturdays 5:30 p.m. — *Abbreviated service*
 - ✠ Sundays 8:00 a.m. — *Communion at the rail*
 - ✠ Sundays 10:30 a.m. — *Abbreviated service*
- Livestreaming** of the 8:00 a.m. service continues to be available at stjohnsportage.com/live.

Weekly Events

- Sunday (10)**
- 9:00 a.m. Coffee, Fellowship, and Christian Education Hour, Church CLC
 - 9:00 a.m. Blood Pressure Screening, Church Nursery
 - 9:15 a.m. Sunday School, School Cafeteria
 - 9:15 a.m. Praise Band Practice, Church Sanctuary
 - 11:30 a.m. Late Sunday Morning Bible Study, Church APR
- Monday (11)**
- 9:00 a.m. Strong Bodies, Church Narthex
 - 9:00 a.m. School Christmas Program Practice, Church Sanctuary
 - 10:00 a.m. Tivoli Monthly Worship
 - 4:30 p.m. GriefShare, Church CLC
- Tuesday (12)**
- 6:30 a.m. Men's Bible Study, Church CLC
 - 9:15 a.m. Tuesday Morning Bible Study, Church CLC
 - 6:00 p.m. Executive Committee, Church CLC
- Wednesday (13)**
- 9:00 a.m. Walkie Talkies, meet at St. John's
 - 10:00 a.m. Advent Midweek Service, Church Sanctuary
 - 12:00 p.m. Weekly Announcements Deadline, Email: churchoffice@stjohnsportage.com
 - 1:00 p.m. School Christmas Practice, Church Sanctuary
 - 5:00 p.m. Handbells, Church Balcony
 - 5:30 p.m. Advent Dinner, Church CLC
 - 6:30 p.m. Advent Midweek Service, Church Sanctuary
 - 7:00 p.m. Sr. Youth Group, School Gym
 - 7:15 p.m. Adult Choir, Church Balcony
- Thursday (14)**
- 8:00 a.m. Esther Bible Study, Church CLC
 - 9:00 a.m. Strong Bodies, Church Narthex
 - 9:30 a.m. School Christmas Program Practice, Church Sanctuary
- Friday (15)**
- Church office closed
- Sunday (17)**
- 9:00 a.m. Coffee, Fellowship, and Christian Education Hour, Church CLC
 - 9:15 a.m. Sunday School, School Cafeteria
 - 9:15 a.m. Praise Band Practice, Church Sanctuary
 - 11:30 a.m. Late Sunday Morning Bible Study, Church APR

Calendar events are subject to change. For the most up-to-date calendar information, please visit our website, <http://www.stjohnsportage.com/st-johns-calendar>. To schedule your group activity, please contact the church office at 608-742-9000 or email churchoffice@stjohnsportage.com.

Please Pray

Please notify the church office when one of our church family members is in the hospital, so that a pastoral visit may be made or arranged.

Thanksgiving

(birth, birthdays, baptisms, weddings, anniversaries, recovery):

Medical

Paul Belton (father of *Michael Belton*)

Ned Seymour (father of *Kathleen Bernander*)

Long-term Illness/Treatment:

Stacie Wheeler, Tom Waddell, Ellowyn Kershaw,

Lani Kohrt (daughter-in-law of *Don and Carol Kohrt*)

Lisa Priske (daughter of *Betty Mootz*)

Mourning:

The family of *Ronald Eddy*, The family of *Idella Anacker*,

The family of *Paul Jacobson*

How Do I Get Someone on the Prayer List?

If you, or someone you know, would like to have a name added to the prayer list, please contact the church office.

Prayer requests for Thanksgiving, Medical, and Mourning will remain on the list for two weeks. Prayer requests for Long-term Illness/Treatment will remain for one month unless the church office is notified with an update on the individual. Please be sure that you have the permission of the individual before contacting the church office to add them to the public prayer list.

Blood Pressure Checks

St. John's Health & Wellness Ministry will be offering blood pressure checks at church this Sunday, December 10 at 9:00 a.m. We follow the Health and Human Services guidelines for Columbia County, which recommends that everyone wear a mask. We will sanitize surfaces between clients and provide masks. Stop by our table in the coat area and sign up!

A Gift from Prayer Shawl Ministry

St. John's Prayer Shawl Ministry would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas! To share our greetings, we are offering a gift to you, an angel ornament. The ornaments will be available at the School Christmas Program, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day. Take one for yourself and feel free to take one for a friend.

Merry Christmas!

Christmas FAQ

QUESTION: Can you shed some light on when Jesus was born? I always thought it was 0 A.D. but apparently there is no 0 A.D. and it was sometime around 4-5 B.C.

ANSWER: The current system of dating by A.D. (anno domini means "in the year of the Lord"), based on the traditional year of the birth of Christ, was devised by a 6th century monk by the name of Dionysius Exiguus.

It is now commonly held, however, that the actual birth was several years earlier, between 7 and 4 B.C., since it has been established that Herod the Great died (Matt. 2:19) in 4 B.C.

Advent and Christmas Schedule



Advent midweek services are held
Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.
Advent 3, December 13: John's Joy
Advent 4, December 20: School Christmas Program

Advent Dinner is served at 5:30 p.m. in the Christian Life Center on December 13. Hosted by St. John's CDC staff, serving tomato soup and grilled cheese

School Christmas Program, Connected to the Promise, **Wednesday, December 20th at 10 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.**

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Sunday, December 24

9:00 a.m. Service of Word and Sacrament

5:30 p.m. Festival of Scripture and Carols

9:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Communion and Candlelight

Monday, December 25

9:00 a.m. Christmas Day Service of Word and Sacrament

Altar Guild Flower Fund

Altar Guild Flower Fund

If you are interested in donating toward Christmas poinsettias, please fill in the information below and return it to the church office by

December 22. Please make checks payable to **St. John's Altar Guild.**

Please do not place in an offering.

A Gift in loving memory of:

Given by:

School Calendar

Tuesday, December 12

5:00 p.m. Boy's Basketball –vs– St. Joseph's, School Gym

Thursday, December 14

5:00 p.m. Boy's Basketball –vs– St. John's, School Gym

Thursday, December 19

5:00 p.m. Boy's Basketball @ Sacred Heart, Reedsburg

Thursday, December 20

10:00 a.m. School Christmas Program

6:30 p.m. School Christmas Program

Christmas Break!

December 22, 2023 – January 2, 2024

School Chapel Offering

Each quarter the school chooses a non-for-profit to help.

We then bring in offering envelopes every Wednesday and place in offering plate when entering the sanctuary for school chapel. This quarter's offering goes to **Lead A Child**.

Lead A Child is an independent Lutheran Mission Agency, dedicated to *sharing the Good News of Jesus' love to children through Christian education in third world countries*. More information on this organization can be found at leadachild.org.

St. John's Lutheran School has raised \$375.83 for Lead A Child as of 11/29/2023.

Second Quarter Ends 1/12/2024.

Crusader Cards

Crusader Cards are on their way! Watch for St. John's Lutheran School students selling Crusader Cards in December. They are full of great deals!

Portage:

- Red Apple Restaurant
- Canape Sandwiches
- Edgewater Green House
- Portage Country Club
- The Ball Room
- Craig's Popcorn Corner
- J&J Fireball Lanes
- Dairy Queen
- Dino's
- Pizza Ranch
- La Tolteca

Westfield:

- It's Poppin, Westfield
- Thal Acres Golf
- Tiffany's Buds and Beans
- Amish Market

Pardeeville:

- Johnny B's Rolling Smoke
- The Crooked Branch Coffeehouse

Montello:

- Oyster Cracker

Bring your children to church.

To the parents of young children, may we suggest:

God gave children vibrant energy that sometimes causes them to wiggle and make noise. They belong right here with God's people where you have so faithfully brought them. Stick with it!

Quietly explain the parts of the service, and the actions of the pastor, ushers, singers, etc. **Check out the Kids in the Divine Service booklets in the busy bags.**

Thank You

Thank You To all of you who made desserts, casseroles, and salads for the Alice Atkinson funeral, To those who came to visit her, to the Sisters in Christ who set up the luncheon, your generosity, and your prayers. The family is very appreciative. Thank You very much!

Blessings and Grace to you, the family of Alice Atkinson

Dear fellow members of St John's and the body of Christ.

First let me say something that Marilyn would say regularly, Alleluia, He has risen indeed! The outpouring of love from my brothers and sisters in Christ has been overwhelming and much appreciated, your prayers were so needed, and your continued prayers are welcome. The people who helped with the funeral luncheon, I thank you, to Pastor Hovland a very special thank you, and to those who gave gifts and flowers, I thank you. As I continue to grow in Christ, my hope that all of you will also continue to go in Christ so on the last day we can all worship Jesus, our Lord and Savior together with the Father and Holy Spirit. I was reminded continually by Marilyn to be in his word daily, to pray, praise and give thanks, so that I have the full armor of God as I go through our everyday life in this world, and keep our eyes on the prize, to be with Jesus in Heaven. I extend those words to you and God Bless you All and Thank You!

From Ken Jahn and Family

Thank you to all our chefs and cooks out there who bring food for funerals and other events. We have an amazing congregation and amazing volunteers. If you brought food for a funeral or other event, your dishes are located in the Christian Life Center kitchen.

Reminder

Please be considerate of our disabled worshipers' parking needs. If the driver is not disabled, it would be best if he or she would drop an individual at the door and use a regular parking stall when possible. Then, we will be sure we have enough handicap parking for our disabled drivers. We appreciate our caregivers and drivers.

Beware of texting scams this Christmas and New Year.

When receiving unsolicited texts requesting personal information, offering unrealistic offers, or a text from Pastor Hovland asking for gift cards, always verify the legitimacy of the sender before sharing any sensitive details or engaging in financial transactions.

Rachel Bible Study

Rachel Bible Study is taking a break. We will meet again January 4. Have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Walkie Talkies

Looking to get your steps this fall? Join the Walkie Talkies! We meet on Wednesdays at 9:00 a.m. at St. John's. If you have any questions, call Theresa at 608-697-0509. Join us. All are welcome!

Volunteer Opportunities!

We still need people willing to assist with the operation of the projector at each of our services.

If you are interested in helping, please email churchoffice@stjohnsportage.com.

St. John's is ready to use Church Music Solutions for music during church services when an organist is not available. We are looking for volunteers to attend training and run the Church Music Solutions program as needed. Any volunteers please contact Bob Fairfield, Elder. Thank you.

Get Involved!

Board for Evangelism leads the members of the congregation in outreach into the community. Seek to keep the reaching out of lost souls for Jesus Christ. Train all Board members to effectively share their faith. Lead classes on "Everyone His Witness" to the congregation. Keep the evangelism ministry of St. John's in front of its members and its community. Be responsible for proposing, evaluating, and then distributing mission funds from the congregation's offering for mission work. Chairperson Jim Atkinson, 608-697-7052 jim@atkinsonrealtor.com.

Daily Lectionary

This week's readings comes from the Daily Lectionary found in the Lutheran Service Book page 299.

Sunday, Is. 26:20—27:13 & 1 John 4:1—21	Tuesday, Is. 29:1—14 & Jude 1—25	Friday, Is. 30:27—31:9 & Rev. 3:1—22
Monday, Is. 28:14—29 John 5:1—21	Wednesday, Is. 29:15—30:14 & Rev. 1:1—20	Saturday, Is. 32:1—20 & Rev. 4:1—11
	Thursday, Is. 30:15—26 & Rev. 2:1—29	

Weekly Offerings

December 10 (includes Advent midweek attendance)

In-person Attendance: 492

Unrestricted Unified Received: \$22,935.24

Restricted Contributions Received: \$710.00

TOTAL: \$23,645.247

Weekly Unrestricted Unified Needed: \$12,885.00

YTD Unrestricted Unified Giving: \$289,676.46

YTD Budgeted Unrestricted Unified Need: \$296,355.00
(week 23)

Life Thoughts

December 10 – Advent II – John the Baptist prophesied the Gospel of the Kingdom that with Jesus' blessing is always coming (Mark 1:7-8). Even during surprise pregnancy or terminal diagnosis, He is not slow to keep His promises. Instead, He acts patiently, not wishing that any should perish (2 Peter 3:9). Aren't we crying out about it as this generation's voice in the wilderness (Mark 1:3)?

Stewardship Thoughts

Romans 15:4 – “For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction.” God's Word was given to us to bless us. The Bible warns us of our sin and points us to Christ for our salvation. The Bible also instructs us how to live out our Christian lives (this is the “third use of the Law”). As Christians, we should welcome this instruction in humble faith. We know that Christ has saved us; now, we want to know how to live lives of faith that are pleasing to Him.

LCMS Memory Verse Challenge

*He who testifies to these things says,
“Surely I am coming soon.”
Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!*

Revelation 22:22

Coffee Hour

Adopt a Sunday! It's a fun and easy way to get to know your church family. We encourage families and groups to “Adopt a Sunday” by hosting coffee hour on Sunday mornings. Hosting coffee hour involves providing a simple snack, making coffee, and enjoying fellowship time with our church families. Sign up in the Christian Life Center or email churchoffice@stjohnsportage.com

December 10:
GriefShare

December 17:
Open

Contact us: 608-742-9000

Church:
option 4
Office Hours:
M—Th 8:00a–3:30p
churchoffice@stjohnsportage.com

Rev. Greg Hovland,
Senior Pastor
(c) 608-571-3360
ghovland@stjohnsportage.com

Child Development Center:
option 2
Office Hours:
M—F 7:00a–5:00p
cdcoffice@stjohnsportage.com

Debra Drew,
Director
ddrew@stjohnsportage.com

School:
option 3
Office Hours:
M—F 7:30a–3:15p
schooloffice@stjohnsportage.com

Jim Krupski,
Principal
jkrupski@stjohnsportage.com

St. John's Elder Directory:
Bob Fairfield 296-4012, Chairman

Roger Baerwolf 617-6088
Ken Chvojicek 697-2102
Bill Hageman 279-0272

David Hall 493-2125
Patrick Kirchenwitz 575-3959
Ron Mueller 369-1845
Pete Smith 697-3807
Gene Thompson 697-4786
Mark Witt 697-0224

To schedule your group activity or add a loved one to the prayer list, please contact the church office at 608-742-9000 option 4 or email churchoffice@stjohnsportage.com.