



Standard 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.

Standard Worship Times may change due to Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter. Please see Weekly Events for changes.

Weekly Events

Sunday (31)

- 9:00 a.m. Coffee, Fellowship, and Christian Education Hour, Church CLC
9:15 a.m. Praise Band Practice, Church Sanctuary
11:30 a.m. Late Sunday Morning Bible Study, Church APR

Monday (1/1/2024) Happy New Year!

All ministries offices closed

Tuesday (02)

- All ministries offices closed
6:30 a.m. Men's Bible Study, Portage Airport
9:15 a.m. Tuesday Morning Bible Study, Church CLC

Wednesday (03)

- 9:00 a.m. Walkie Talkies, meet at St. John's Chapel, Church Sanctuary
10:00 a.m. Weekly Announcements Deadline, Email: churchoffice@stjohnsportage.com
12:00 p.m. Jr. Youth Group grades 4-7, School Gym
4:30 p.m. Sr. Youth Group grades 8-12, School Gym
6:30 p.m.

Thursday (04)

- 8:00 a.m. Esther Bible Study, Church CLC
9:00 a.m. Strong Bodies, Church Narthex
10:15 a.m. Rachel Bible Study, Church CLC
11:00 a.m. Heritage House Monthly Worship

Friday (05)

Church office closed

Sunday (07)

- 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.

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. _____

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*)

Kevin Smith (friend of *Linda Vista*)

Dorothy Neitzel, Darlene Krueger

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*)

Gary Tennyson (son of *Jim and Nola Tennyson*)

Mourning:

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.

Youth Ministries

All youth are invited to join us for fun and fellowship.

Sunday School (ages 3–3rd grade) meets Sundays from 9:15 a.m.–10:15 a.m. in St. John's School Cafeteria. Lessons are based on the weekly readings. There will be games, Bible lessons, and snacks. **Join us January 7!**

Jr. Youth Group (grades 4–7) meets on Wednesdays from 4:30 p.m.–6:00 p.m. in St. John's School. The focus of Jr. Youth Group is Luther's Small Catechism to help prepare for confirmation. There will be pizza and games to help us learn God's Word. **Join us January 3!**

Senior Youth Group (grades 8–12) meets on Wednesdays from 6:30 p.m.–8:30 p.m. in St. John's School Gym. The focus of Senior Youth Group is being equipped with God's armor. **Join us January 3!**

Altar Guild

Attention Altar Guild!

We will meet at 1:30 p.m. on January 8 in the Christian Life Center. All are welcome to join us in service to our Lord and church.

–St. John's Altar Guild

Thank you!

Thank you, Connie Eddy for loaning the beautiful Shepherds painting hanging in the sanctuary during Christmas.

Want to be a part of St. John's family?

Interested in joining St. John's?

Basic Bible Teachings – An Introduction to the Lutheran Faith
New Member and Refresher Gathering
Six Monday evenings: 2/12, 2/19, 2/26, 3/4, 3/11, 3/18
6:15 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Christian Life Center

To register online, please use the following link:

<https://forms.office.com/r/m37j7L3k64> or the QR code below. To register by phone, call (608) 742-9000 and press 4. Please register before February 7.



Financial Peace University

Want to improve your marriage? Want to get out of debt? Want to have a retirement plan?

Join us for in-person or virtual classes starting Monday, January 15, at 6:00 p.m. at St. John's. Enjoy a 20% discount for the first 6 participants! Grab this deal now—our comprehensive 9-week classes, including all materials, are marked down from \$100 to \$80." Contact Jim Atkinson 608-697-7052 or email jim@atkinsonrealtor.com to sign up. Bring a friend or the kids to class if you want.

Children in 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!

Feel free to sit toward the front where it is easier for your little ones to see and hear what's going on. They tire of seeing the backs of others' heads.

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 located in the busy bags.**

Sing the songs and participate in the prayers and responses. Children learn how to worship by watching you.

If you have to leave the service with your child, please feel free to do so, but please come back. As Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me."

School Calendar

Christmas Break!

December 22, 2023 – January 2, 2024

National Lutheran Schools Week!

January 21, 2023 – January 27, 2024

Sunday, January 21

10:30 a.m. Upper Grades School Choir Sings

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.

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. They are full of great deals! Cost: \$15.00

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

Help our school grow!

Invite a friend to St. John's school. There are a few seats available for next year.

- Ask a friend or family member to check out our website, stjohnsportage.com/school or contact the school, 608-742-9000 opt. 3 to schedule a tour.
- We offer monthly payments and tuition assistance.
- The number one thing setting St. John's Lutheran School apart from all other schools is our Christ-Centered education.

Help us grow the kingdom of God.



Bible Studies

Join us for fellowship and Bible study!

- ✦ **Christian Education Hour meets Sundays at 9:15 a.m. in the Christian Life Center.** This is a Pastor-led Bible study of Luther's Catechism: The Lutheran Confessions Series produced by Concordia Publishing House.
- ✦ **Late Sunday Morning Bible Study meets at 11:30 a.m. in the Christian Life Center.** We are currently studying the book of Acts.
- ✦ **Men's Bible Study meets Tuesdays at 6:30 a.m. at the Portage Airport.** We are currently studying the book of Romans.
- ✦ **Tuesday Morning Bible Study meets at 9:15 a.m. in the Christian Life Center.** This is a Pastor-led Bible study of the upcoming week's readings.
- ✦ **Esther Bible Study meets Thursdays at 8:00 a.m. in the Christian Life Center.** We are currently studying the book of Revelation.
- ✦ **Rachel Bible Study meets Thursdays at 10:15 a.m. in the Christian Life Center.** We are currently watching and discussing My First Trip to Israel by Sheila Walsh.

Young Adult Ministry (YAM)



Young Adult Ministry

Young adults are coming home for the holidays. Let's be intentional about recognizing them as fellow church members. Evangelism Board encouraged this tear-out for the bulletin. Put this in the offering plate, and we'll get back to you. It's wonderful to reach out to our young adults.

-Danielle Rabl, YAM Coordinator

 I am a young adult, and I'd like to be connected and involved.

 I am actively staying connected to a young adult church member. YAM will know that I'm already involved in this ministry.

 I am interested in reaching out to high schoolers or young adults when I see them at church.

 I am a parent of a high schooler or young adult and would like to get involved,

 I know a young adult or high school student to whom I'd like to reach out. Even once per month via text, for example. YAM can assist; let us know.

 I would like to offer input or be involved in Young Adult Ministry. Here are some ideas, or contact me:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Support our Ministries

Support St. John's while you shop!

Shop for gift cards with RaiseRight. You can place your order on Tuesday and pick up on Thursday. Or, stop in the church office and pick up a card from our stock.

Visit: raiserright.com

Click: **Sign Up**

Enrollment Code: **Please call the church office, 608-742-9000 for the enrollment code.**

Festival	\$25 & \$50
Kwik Trip	\$25, \$50, & \$100
Pizza Ranch	\$25
Walgreens	\$25
Walmart	\$25
Culvers	\$25
Portage Movie Theater	\$10

BoxTop\$ for Education is a great way to support St. John's School!

All you have to do is download the Box Tops for Education app and scan your receipt. It's that simple!



Daily Lectionary

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

Sunday, Is. 60:1-22 & Luke 1:39-56	Tuesday, Is. 62:1-12 & Luke 2:1-20	Friday, Is. 65:8-25 & Luke 3:1-20
Monday, Is. 61:1-11 & Luke. 1:57-80	Wednesday, Is. 63:1-14 & Luke 2:21-40	Saturday, Is. 66:1-20 & Luke 3:21-38
	Thursday, Is. 63:15-65:2 & Luke 2:41-52	

Weekly Offerings

December 24 (includes Advent midweek attendance)

In-person Attendance: 631

Unrestricted Unified Received: \$21,820.08

Restricted Contributions Received: \$345.00

TOTAL: \$22,165.08

Weekly Unrestricted Unified Needed: \$12,885.00

YTD Unrestricted Unified Giving: \$335,514.43

YTD Budgeted Unrestricted Unified Need: \$335,010.00
(week 26)

Life Thoughts

December 31 – Christmas I/New Year's Eve – Christmas – and a new year – offers opportunity for the joys of looking forward. Simeon and Anna exemplify and inspire faith that finds strength and celebration in anticipating. The Heavenly Father who escorted us thus far will also usher us ever onward. Neighbors facing surprise pregnancies or suffering terminal diagnoses need to know. For their sake, please do not keep silent (Psalm 62:1)!

Stewardship Thoughts

Luke 2:21 – “**And at the end of eight days, when he was circumcised, he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.**” The name of Jesus means “the Lord saves.” There is no better way to end or begin a year than with the sweet comfort of the name of Jesus. He saves us. He loves us. He desires to bless us. That assurance is the basis for all we do in our Christian lives, including our stewardship of His financial blessings.

LCMS Memory Verse Challenge

You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.

Isaiah 26:3

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 31:

Open

January 7:

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.