



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 (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
- 11:30 a.m. Christmas clean up with Parish Life, Church Sanctuary
- 12:30 p.m. Parish Life Meeting, Church CLC

Monday (08)

- 9:00 a.m. Strong Bodies, Church Narthex
- 10:00 a.m. Tivoli Monthly Worship
- 1:30 p.m. Altar Guild, Church CLC
- 3:00 p.m. Evangelism, Church CLC

Tuesday (09)

- 6:30 a.m. Men's Bible Study, Portage Airport
- 9:15 a.m. Tuesday Morning Bible Study, Church CLC
- 6:00 p.m. Executive Committee, Church CLC

Wednesday (10)

- 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. Confirmation Class, Church CLC and Church APR
- 6:30 p.m. Sr. Youth Group grades 8-12, School Gym

Thursday (11)

- 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

Friday (12)

- Church office closed
- 12:00 p.m. Cornerstone Newsletter Deadline, Email: churchoffice@stjohnsportage.com

Sunday (07)

- 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

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):
The Baptism of Harper Ann Moreno

(Medical)

*Dorothy Neitzel, Darlene Krueger, Jane Kaiser, Ray Konkel
Kevin Smith (friend of Linda Vista)*

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.

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

Blood Pressure Checks

St. John's Health & Wellness Ministry will be offering blood pressure checks at church this Sunday, January 14 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!

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.

For the protection of the church facility, the only door unlocked during church office hours is the side entrance on Armstrong Street (near Franklin Street). Feel free to park on Armstrong Street near the entrance, if you plan on stopping by.

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.

FAQs About the Bible

QUESTION: On what date was Jesus born?

ANSWER: *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (Third Edition, 1998) in its article on *Christmas* details the history of the dating of Christmas. The article points out that the time of Christ's birth was a matter of speculation and even dispute in the early centuries of the Christian church.

The celebration of Christ's birth on a specific day did not become a general practice until the 4th century. The earliest mention of December 25 is in a calendar representing Roman practice of the year 336, the date probably chosen to oppose the pagan feast of the sun.

Other traditions of the dating were present, including the Eastern tradition of connecting Christ's birth with Epiphany on January 6 (a practice still followed in the Eastern churches).

The Scriptures, of course, do not give us a precise date for Christ's birth and therefore it must always remain a matter of conjecture. It is not a doctrinal matter.

<https://www.lcms.org/about/beliefs/faqs/the-bible#date>

School Calendar

National Lutheran Schools Week!

January 21, 2023 – January 27, 2024

Sunday, January 21

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

Tuesday, January 30

100th Day of School!

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 Coffeeshouse

Montello:

- Oyster Cracker

St. John's School Open House!

St. John's School Open House, Thursday February 1 at 5:00 p.m.

- 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.

Check out our website, stjohnsportage.com/school or contact the school, 608-742-9000 opt. 3.

Help us grow the kingdom of God.

School Choice

Wisconsin Private School Choice Program is a tuition assistance program for private and religious schools.

Who is Eligible?

Incoming Kindergarten

All New & Current 1st Graders

All New Students to St. John's

Students Already in the Choice Program

Enrollment begins February 1.

For information on the Wisconsin Private School Choice Program, visit <https://dpi.wi.gov/parental-education-options/choice-programs>.

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."

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.

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.

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.

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, Ezek 1:1-14, 22-28 & Rom. 1:1-17	Tuesday, Ezek. 3:12-27 & Rom. 2:1-16	Friday, Ezek. 34:1-24 & Rom. 3:19-31
Monday, Ezek. 2:1-3:11 & Rom. 1:18-32	Wednesday, Ezek. 18:1-4, 19-32 & Rom. 2:17-29	Saturday, Ezek. 36:13-28 & Rom. 4:1-25
	Thursday, Ezek. 33:1-20 & Rom. 3:1-18	

Weekly Offerings

December 31

In-person Attendance: 202

Unrestricted Unified Received: \$12,475.31

Restricted Contributions Received: \$615.00

TOTAL: \$13,090.31

Weekly Unrestricted Unified Needed: \$12,885.00

YTD Unrestricted Unified Giving: \$347,989.74

YTD Budgeted Unrestricted Unified Need: \$347,895.00
(week 27)

Life Thoughts

January 7 – Epiphany I/Baptism of Our Lord – Nothing and nobody comes into existence apart from the will and the Word of the Lord God Almighty (Genesis 1:3). This means God desires the survival of every human life from fertilization to forever. We court great danger if we go against this intent or counsel others to do so (Psalm 29:7-8). Instead let us receive neighbors as blessings and enjoy our Father's favor (Mark 1:11)!

Stewardship Thoughts

Mark 1:7 – “**And [John] preached, saying, ‘After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie.’**” John is right — Jesus is immensely greater than any of us, yet behold how He came to serve! That is the upside-down, outlandish grace of God: the innocent Jesus takes our sinner's place. This is the greatest act of giving the world has ever known or will know: the Father gives His Son to die in the place of sinners.

LCMS Memory Verse Challenge

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.
John 1:14

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

January 7:
Open
January 14:
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.