



*Word and Sacrament*

*Christian Education*

*Caring and Serving*

[stjohnsportage.com](http://stjohnsportage.com)

# The Cornerstone

**850 Armstrong St.  
Portage, WI 53901**

Address Service Requested

**February 2024**

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## Worship Times

### Saturdays:

5:30 p.m.

**Service of Word and Sacrament**

### Sundays:

8:00 a.m.

**Service of Word and Sacrament**

9:00 a.m.

**Coffee Hour and Fellowship,**  
Church Christian Life Center

10:30 a.m.

**Service of Word and Sacrament**

### Wednesdays:

10:00 a.m.

**Lent Service, Church Sanctuary**

6:00 p.m.

**Lent Service, Church Sanctuary**

Lent services begin, Ash Wednesday, February 14

## Weekly Events

### Sundays:

9:15 a.m.

**Praise Band Practice, Church Sanctuary**

### Mondays:

9:00 a.m.

**Strong Bodies, Church Narthex**

### Wednesdays:

9:00 a.m.

**Walkie Talkies, Levee Rd**

12:00 p.m.

**Weekly Announcements Deadline**

5:00 p.m.

[churchoffice@stjohnsportage.com](mailto:churchoffice@stjohnsportage.com)

7:15 p.m.

**Handbell Choir, Church Balcony**

**Adult Choir, Church Balcony**

Starting January 24

### Thursdays:

9:00 a.m.

**Strong Bodies, Church Narthex**

### Fridays:

**Church Office Closed**

## December Memorials

### Undesignated

\$1,550.00

In memory of  
*Idella Anacker, Russ Miller,  
and Ron Eddy*

### Adult Choir

\$120.00

In memory of  
*Ron Eddy*

### Financial Aid

\$200.00

In memory of  
*Ron Eddy*

### Deaconess Program

\$250.00

In memory of  
*Marilyn Jahn,  
Alice Atkinson, and  
George Koepp*

## December Offerings

Unified Fund	\$71,802.52
Capital Improvements	\$1,175.00
Missions	\$225.00
Almoners	\$320.00
Orphanages	\$200.00
School Tuition Relief	\$485.00
Organ	\$55.00
<b>Total Contributions</b>	<b>\$74,262.52</b>

# St. John's Weekly Education and Bible Studies

### Sundays:

9:15 a.m.

**Christian Ed Hour,**  
Church Christian Life Center

9:15 a.m.

**Sunday School,** School Cafeteria

11:30 a.m.

**Late Sunday Morning Bible Study,**  
All Purpose Room

### Tuesdays:

6:30 a.m.

**Men's Bible Class,** Portage Airport

9:15 a.m.

**Tuesday Morning Bible Study,**  
Church Christian Life Center

### Wednesdays:

4:30 p.m.

**Jr. Youth Group,** School Gym

6:30 p.m.

**Sr. Youth Group,** School Gym

6:30 p.m.

**Confirmation Class,**  
Church Christian Life Center

### Thursdays:

8:00 a.m.

**Esther Bible Study,**  
Church Christian Life Center

10:15 a.m.

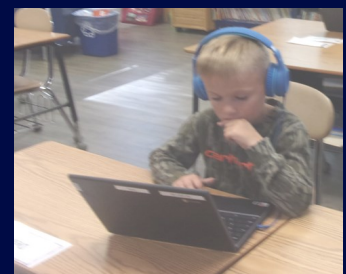
**Rachel Bible Study,**  
Church Christian Life Center



**All families are invited to tour  
St. John's Lutheran School and  
Child Development Center**

Thursday, February 1, 2024  
From 3:30 p.m. until 6 p.m.

Come and meet our teachers, tour the facilities, ask questions,  
and enroll your students for the 24-25 school year!



# February Greetings from St. John's Child Development Center

**Child Development Center:**  
option 2  
Office Hours:  
M—F 7:00a–5:00p  
[cdcoffice@stjohnsportage.com](mailto:cdcoffice@stjohnsportage.com)  
  
Debra Drew,  
Director  
[ddrew@stjohnsportage.com](mailto:ddrew@stjohnsportage.com)

## St. John's Youth Groups invite

All Married Couples  
to

**Sweethearts Lunch!**

Sunday, February 18, 2024

11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

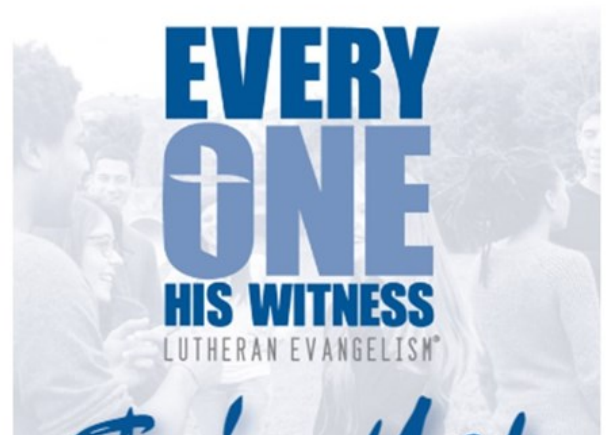
St. John's School Cafeteria

Join us for lunch, games, pictures  
and great conversation.

RSVP by Sunday, February 4, 2024

Look for RSVP box at the welcome center or

Text or leave a message at 608-697-2649



*Join Us!*

Are you uncertain about how to witness Jesus  
to others?

Every One His Witness gives you the tools  
and the confidence to talk about Jesus.

**Join us for a one day class on Saturday,  
February 10 9:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. in the  
Christian Life Center.**

The Board of Evangelism will provide lunch.  
A minimum of 6 people must sign-up by  
Wednesday, February 7. To sign up for Every  
One His Witness, contact Jim Atkinson at  
608-697-7052, mail [jim@atkinsonrealtor.com](mailto:jim@atkinsonrealtor.com),  
or sign up at the Welcome Center.





# Crusader News

## Connected to Christ

The other week, I was talking with some upper-grade students, and one of them said, “I just love the weekend!” Not that there is something wrong about this statement, but it made me think about the use of the word “love” in this statement. Knowing that I was about to write an article for the month of February, it made me stop and think about this tiny little word and how it is abused so much in our vocabulary today.

In the original language of the Greek used by the people of the New Testament era, there are four words that can be translated into love in the English language:

1. Philio - Brotherly love;
2. Storge - Familial love;
3. Eros – Romantic love;
4. Agape is unconditional love.

Of these, only philio and agape appear in the New Testament. The most important is agape because this is the type of love God shows to us. It is poured out to us without any hesitation from our God who was and is willing to sacrifice all for us.

This month we continue our yearly theme Connected to Christ with the phrase Connected to Christ through His love. It is based on 1 John 4:7-8, “Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God because God is love. Notice it doesn’t say God shows love, but God is love. Love is the absolute essence of what God is, and His love for us flows from that. St. Paul describes the power and purpose of God’s love when he writes, “but God shows his love to us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8). His love for us is unconditional. His love lives in us.

But love doesn’t stop there. Notice the verse says, “let us love one another.” How many problems in our society and in our school could be solved by showing the love that lives in us through Christ our Savior? It will never be perfect this side of heaven because of our sinful condition, but God through the work of the Holy Spirit can give us the power to demonstrate God’s love.

During this month, as we go through Valentine's Day and the start of the Lent season, let us never forget that our God has showered His love on us. We should strive to show love to one another. Living in this love, we should praise Him for it.

-Jim Krupski, Principal



**3rd Quarter Chapel Offering!**  
St. John's Lutheran School is  
collecting pillows for  
River Haven Homeless Shelter.

Pillows can be dropped off  
in the coat area.

**Pillow Cases are also needed!**

## PILLOW DRIVE

*River Haven*  
Homeless Shelter



**GOAL!**  
**100**



**75**



**50**



**25**

Help us meet  
our goal of  
100 pillows.

When residents arrive at  
River Haven they are given  
a new pillow to use and  
take with them.

WHAT WE NEED:  
New standard size pillows

WHERE TO SEND:  
River Haven Shelter  
108 E Pleasant St. Portage  
If you would like to donate  
please contact the shelter  
608-742-7687

# GO CRUSADERS!



## CANDY LAND SCHOOL DANCE

St. John's Parent Teacher League invites  
all school and church families to  
St. John's Lutheran School for a Candy Land Dance!  
February 24th, 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. in the School Gym

The Parent Teacher League has a wish list to make the  
event spectacular. If you wanted to help but had no  
time, this is the perfect way to help out.

Check out their wish list at  
<https://shorturl.at/eHOW8>  
or scan this QR code.



Thank you for helping!

### Save the Date!



## April 6, 2024

**Sunday, February 24 – 5th through 8th**  
**Grade School Choir Sings**  
at 10:30 a.m. worship service.  
Join us praising God.



# HAPPY BIRTHDAY

1	Michelle Nummerdor Darwin Simonson	12	Kaylee Dickman Keith Licht Diane Simmermon	23	Phyllis Zimmerman
2	Gavin Thompson			24	Carter Edwards Michael Kinzler
3	Calvin Behnke	13	Winston Daniels Katie Heiman Deborah Rohrbeck	25	Dorothy Rice Judith VanWormer
4	Roger Baerwolf Pamela Klappstein Jackson Moll	14	Brittany Yaddof	27	Michelle Erdmann Tanner Kerr
5	Gretchen Halvorsen	15	Amanda Cornelissen David Gussel	28	Scott Jones
6	Arabelle Gitzlaff Ashley Hartwig Troy Witt	16	Joan Bailey Lynn Lauth	29	Jeff Carrington Marian Ernst
7	Willow Conway Joel Leeland Arthur Poppy Peter Welsh Kristine Winkelmann	17	Walker Wheeler		
8	Abigail Edwards Brayden Jones	18	Dale DeLude Jayne Hurd Nancy Johnson		
9	Evelyn Hinrichsen Justin Stanford	19	Phoebe Cole Grace Rabl Robert Wilcox Jeanne Young		
10	Sue Hamel Sandra Tills	20	Roy Erdmann Donald Kohrt Henry Mootz		
11	Marilyn Baars Jennifer Hinrichsen Zoey Zimmerman	21	David Sutfin		
		22	Jacob Witt		

# HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

## February 2

♥ Steven & Teri Dehn

## February 7

♥ Boyd & Holly Wolfgram

## February 8

♥ Jody & Beverly Hornat

## February 14

♥ Ernest & Karen Morgan

♥ Steven & Deb Rohrbeck

## February 21

♥ Don & Terri Soppe

## February 22

♥ James & Deanna Isakson

*Love* one another with genuine affection, and take  
delight in *Honoring* one another.  
Romans 12:10

# St. John's Ministries Monthly and Special Event Calendar

## February

- Th 01 Heritage House Monthly Worship**  
11:00 a.m., Heritage House  
**School and CDC Open House**  
3:00 p.m., School
- M 05 Health and Wellness,**  
11:00 a.m., Church Christian Life Center  
**Financial Peace University**  
6:00 p.m., School Cafeteria Classroom
- F 09 Cornerstone Submission Deadline**  
12:00 p.m., churchoffice@stjohnsportage.com  
Submission Guidelines can be found on our website,  
*stjohnsportage.com/resources/the\_cornerstone\_submission\_guidelines*
- Sa 10 Every One His Witness**  
9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., Church Christian Life Center
- Su 11 Blood Pressure Screening**  
9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m., Church Nursery
- M 12 Tivoli Monthly Worship**  
10:00 a.m., Tivoli  
**Evangelism**  
3:00 p.m., Church Christian Life Center  
**Financial Peace University**  
6:00 p.m., School Cafeteria Classroom  
**New Member Class**  
6:15 p.m., Church Christian Life Center
- Tu 13 Executive Committee**  
6:00 p.m., Church Christian Life Center
- W 14 Imposition of Ashes**  
9:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m., Church Sanctuary  
**Ash Wednesday Service**  
10:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m., Church Sanctuary  
**Ash Wednesday Dinner**  
5:30 p.m., Church Christian Life Center
- Th 15 Columbia County Health Care Monthly Worship**  
11:00 a.m., Columbia County Health Care
- M 19 No School**  
**Financial Peace University**  
6:00 p.m., School Cafeteria Classroom  
**New Member Class**  
6:15 p.m., Church Christian Life Center
- M 20 Board for Christian Ed**  
6:30 p.m., School Cafeteria
- Su 24 School Dance**  
6:30 p.m., School Gym
- M 26 Board of Finance**  
4:30 p.m., Church Christian Life Center  
**Financial Peace University**  
6:00 p.m., School Cafeteria Classroom  
**New Member Class**  
6:15 p.m., Church Christian Life Center
- Tu 27 Board of Elders**  
6:00 p.m., Church Christian Life Center  
**Prayer Shawls**  
6:00 p.m., Church All Purpose Room

## March (proposed)

- Sa 02 Gideon Presentation**  
Beginning of 5:30 p.m. service
- Su 03 Gideon Presentation**  
Beginning of 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. services
- M 04 Financial Peace University**  
6:00 p.m., School Cafeteria Classroom  
**New Member Class**  
6:15 p.m., Church Christian Life Center
- Th 07 Heritage House Monthly Worship**  
11:00 a.m., Heritage House
- F 08 Cornerstone Submission Deadline**  
12:00 p.m., churchoffice@stjohnsportage.com  
Submission Guidelines can be found on our website,  
*stjohnsportage.com/resources/the\_cornerstone\_submission\_guidelines*
- Su 10 Blood Pressure Screening**  
9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m., Church Nursery  
**Spring Sweetheart Dinner**  
11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m., School Cafeteria
- M 11 Tivoli Monthly Worship**  
10:00 a.m., Tivoli  
**Altar Guild**  
1:30 p.m., Church Christian Life Center  
**Evangelism**  
3:00 p.m., Church Christian Life Center  
**Financial Peace University**  
6:00 p.m., School Cafeteria Classroom  
**New Member Class**  
6:15 p.m., Church Christian Life Center
- Tu 12 Executive Committee**  
6:00 p.m., Church Christian Life Center
- Th 14 School Play grades K–4**  
1:00 p.m. and 6:30 p.m., School Gym
- M 18 New Member Class**  
6:15 p.m., Church Christian Life Center
- Tu 19 Board for Christian Ed**  
6:30 p.m., School Cafeteria  
**LWML**  
6:30 p.m., Church Christian Life Center
- Th 21 Columbia County Health Care Monthly Worship**  
11:00 a.m., Columbia County Health Care
- M 25 Board of Finance**  
4:30 p.m., Church Christian Life Center
- Tu 26 Board of Elders**  
6:00 p.m., Church Christian Life Center  
**Prayer Shawls**  
6:00 p.m., Church All Purpose Room
- Th 28 Maundy Thursday Service**  
10:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m., Church Sanctuary
- F 29 Good Friday Tre Ore Service**  
12:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m., Church Sanctuary
- Su 31 Easter Sunrise Service**  
6:00 a.m., Church Sanctuary



# Basic Bible Teachings – An Introduction to the Lutheran Faith New Member and Refresher Gathering

February—8

Please consider joining us for six classes starting Monday, February 12. In this short time together, you'll understand what Lutherans believe about our heavenly Father's love; our Savior's presence with us in the past, present, and future; and the Holy Spirit's power for daily living.

We ask that you register before classes begin. 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.

Six Monday evenings: 2/12, 2/19, 2/26, 3/4, 3/11, 3/18  
6:15 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.  
Led by Pastor Hovland

Have you ever wondered —  
What is grace? What do we know about heaven? How can I trust in God more than anything? How can I think about others more than myself? What is the Law? What's the Gospel? Why should I go to church? Are Baptism and Communion really that important?

Whether you're interested in becoming a member at St. John's or just need a refresher on Lutheran theology, this is for you!



The unbelieving world has always insisted on putting God on trial. As our society becomes more secular, we Christians are increasingly aware of the many ways in which God—and his people—are judged. Temptations are many in this environment: treating unbelievers as enemies, retreating from the world, even questioning God ourselves. How do we live as people of God in this hostile world? We find our model—and our motivation—in Jesus. This series takes us back to the moments when God was literally on trial before men in the person of Christ. In these inspired episodes, we find forgiveness for us and all people, love for our enemies, strength for our faith, and courage to testify to the truth.

Lenten midweek services will be held Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.

February 14 – Ash Wednesday – Accusations (Job 40:1,2; 42:1-6)  
February 21 – Restraint (Luke 22:47-53)  
February 28 – Testimony (Matthew 26:57-75)  
March 6 – Misconceptions (Luke 23:1-12)  
March 13 – Truth (John 18:33-40)  
March 20 – Sympathy (Luke 23:26-34)

Ash Wednesday Imposition of Ashes at 9:30 a.m. to 9:55 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. to 6:25 p.m.  
The Lord's Supper will be offered on Ash Wednesday.

Fellowship suppers will be held on Wednesdays during Lent from 5:30 p.m. to 6:15 p.m.



## Update on Gideon Ministry:

Hello brothers and sisters in Christ. Thank-you for your continued support of the Gideon ministry. We will be showing a short Gideon Church Ministry video the weekend of March 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> and taking a free-will offering at the back of the church. (cash/checks payable to Gideons International/credit cards are all accepted!)

### Distributions:

- 16 Amish Schools
- WI Dells hotels/motels (three large chains let us into every room and check on the Bibles and replace any that were damaged or missing)
- Columbia County Fair & Touched Twice Event
- UW-Madison & UW-Stevens Point & UW-Whitewater
- Milwaukee Scripture Blitz –over 20,000 copies of God's Word to UW-Milwaukee, nursing homes and assisted living centers, schools, Police
- Pregnancy Resource Center (they are needing more and more Spanish Testaments)
- Jail Ministry at the Columbia County Jail (separate Bible study for men and women)
- Pizza Ranch – hundreds of Testaments and Bible App cards have been distributed to customers; now Gideon Steve Kilian is giving blue service Testaments to Police/Fire/EMS

- Several “Trunk or Treat” events for Halloween
- Calling on Pastors in Door County (one LCMS Pastor has a heart for the Hispanic farm workers and we provided him with a box of 100 Spanish Testaments)
- Annual Scripture Blitz in Door County visiting all hotels/motels (many Hispanic workers)
- We provided 7,500 Spanish Testaments to Illinois Gideons to help with the Chicago migrant influx

100% of what you give goes to the purchase and distribution of God's Word; our annual dues and our Barnabas Fund help pay to keep International Headquarters running.

We had a Pastor Appreciation Breakfast on November 2nd. This was a great opportunity to meet with the Pastors and their spouses and thank them for their service and to pray over them.

Gideon key Bible verse, Isaiah 55:11 “so shall My Word be that goes out from My mouth; it shall not return to Me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.”



Thank-you!  
Ken Manthey

## Self-Control

The sanctified life of the Christian is one of self-control, the last of the “fruits of the Spirit” that Paul speaks about in that famous Galatians passage. Self-control is the ability to control one's emotions in conformity to God's Will.

Doing a simple Bible word search just in the ESV, you first find self-control used in Proverbs 25:28. “There, a man without self-control is like a city broken into and left without walls.”

Nothing good happens in a city like that. The city would be lost to looters. In a similar fashion, a man lacking self-control, who loses his temper or emotions easily, loses respect and dignity in sight of his counterparts.

St. Paul warns young Timothy that self-control is an extremely important characteristic when it comes to those seeking to serve the Church as a pastor. Having self-control is important because we need to remember that it is easiest lost by a loose tongue. But having self-control also is an important trait for all people.

Involved with self-control is the concept of being disciplined in what we say and do. What better to be disciplined (a follower) by the Word of God, from which we hear the good news of our justification in the sight of God for Jesus' sake?

Paul reminds that we were once a people who were slaves to our sinful passions. But in light of Christ's atoning sacrifice on the cross and his resurrection, we have been granted new life and it is in this new life that we desire to control our sinful desires and flesh. The Christian life is one that involves self-control. It is intimately connected to returning to the font of holy baptism by way of confession and absolution. There we put to death our Old sinful Adam and daily rise to the new obedience, actually desiring to do the things which God commands of us.

It is a continual struggle; as even Paul attests. Self-control is a character trait that needs to be developed and exercised. God's gift of self-control is one that is continually developed by being in His Word and being formed by the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ.

# Luther's Large Catechism

In this edition of the Cornerstone, we continue to publish portions of Luther's Large Catechism for your continued growth in God's Word. The text for this series is taken from the Triglotta, a public domain version of The Book of Concord. For a more up-to-date reading, consider purchasing Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions at [cph.org](http://cph.org).

Give us this day  
our daily bread.



## The Lord's Prayer

### The Fourth Petition

*Give us this day our daily bread.*

Here, now, we consider the poor bread basket, the necessities of our body and of the temporal life. It is a brief and simple word, but it has a very wide scope. For when you mention and pray for daily bread, you pray for everything that is necessary in order to have and enjoy daily bread and, on the other hand, against everything which interferes with it. Therefore you must open wide and extend your thoughts not only to the oven or the flour-bin, but to the distant field and the entire land, which bears and brings to us daily bread and every sort of sustenance. For if God did not cause it to grow, and bless and preserve it in the field, we could never take bread from the oven or have any to set upon the table.

To comprise it briefly, this petition includes everything that belongs to our entire life in the world, because on that account alone do we need daily bread. Now for our life it is not only necessary that our body have food and covering and other necessities, but also that we spend our days in peace and quiet among the people with whom we live and have intercourse in daily business and conversation and all sorts of doings, in short, whatever pertains both to the domestic and to the neighborly or civil relation and government. For where these two things are hindered [intercepted and disturbed] that they do not prosper as they ought, the necessities of life also are impeded, so that ultimately life cannot be maintained. And there is, indeed, the greatest need to pray for temporal authority and government, as that by which most of all God

preserves to us our daily bread and all the comforts of this life. For though we have received of God all good things in abundance, we are not able to retain any of them or use them in security and happiness, if He did not give us a permanent and peaceful government. For where there are dissension, strife, and war, there the daily bread is already taken away, or at least checked.

Therefore it would be very proper to place in the coat-of-arms of every pious prince a loaf of bread instead of a lion, or a wreath of rue, or to stamp it upon the coin, to remind both them and their subjects that by their office we have protection and peace, and that without them we could not eat and retain our daily bread. Therefore they are also worthy of all honor, that we give to them for their office what we ought and can, as to those through whom we enjoy in peace and quietness what we have, because otherwise we would not keep a farthing; and that, in addition, we also pray for them that through them God may bestow on us the more blessing and good.

Let this be a very brief explanation and sketch, showing how far this petition extends through all conditions on earth. Of this any one might indeed make a long prayer, and with many words enumerate all the things that are included therein, as that we pray God to give us food and drink, clothing, house, and home, and health of body; also that He cause the grain and fruits of the field to grow and mature well; furthermore, that He help us at home towards good housekeeping, that He give and preserve to us a godly wife, children, and servants, that He cause our work, trade, or whatever we are engaged in to prosper and succeed, favor us with faithful neighbors and good friends, etc. Likewise, that He give to emperors, kings, and all estates, and especially to the rulers of our country and to all counselors, magistrates, and officers, wisdom, strength, and success that they may govern well and vanquish the Turks and all enemies; to subjects and the common people, obedience, peace, and harmony in their life with one another; and on the other hand, that He would preserve us from all sorts of calamity to body and livelihood, as lightning, hail, fire, flood, poison, pestilence, cattle-plague, war and bloodshed, famine, destructive beasts, wicked men, etc. All this it is well to impress upon the simple, namely, that these things come from God, and must be prayed for by us.

But this petition is especially directed also against our chief enemy, the devil. For all his thought and desire is to deprive us of all that we have from God, or to hinder it; and he is not satisfied to obstruct and destroy spiritual government in leading souls astray by his lies and bringing them under his power, but he also prevents and hinders the stability of all government and honorable, peaceable relations on earth. There he causes so much contention, murder, sedition, and war, also lightning and hail to destroy grain and cattle, to poison the air, etc. In short, he is sorry that any one has a morsel of bread from God and eats it in peace; and if it were in his power, and our prayer (next to God) did not prevent him, we would not keep a straw in the field, a farthing in the house, yea, not even our life for an hour, especially those who have the Word of God and would like to be Christians.

**Continued on page 11.**

## The Lord's Prayer—The Fourth Petition

Behold, thus God wishes to indicate to us how He cares for us in all our need, and faithfully provides also for our temporal support. And although He abundantly grants and preserves these things even to the wicked and knaves, yet He wishes that we pray for them, in order that we may recognize that we receive them from His hand, and may feel His paternal goodness toward us therein. For when He withdraws His hand, nothing can prosper nor be maintained in the end, as, indeed, we

daily see and experience. How much trouble there is now in the world only on account of bad coin, yea, on account of daily oppression and raising of prices in common trade, bargaining and labor on the part of those who wantonly oppress the poor and deprive them of their daily bread! This we must suffer indeed; but let them take care that they do not lose the common intercession, and beware lest this petition in the Lord's Prayer be against them.

## The Resurrection of the Body



To the ancient Greek philosophers, and many people today, resurrection is nonsense. (Acts 17:32) We all know what happens to the body after death. We've seen it on the television, in crime shows, and in horror films. Some families have the bodies of their loved ones cremated. It decays and eventually turns to dust, just as God promised Adam. (Genesis 3:19)

Yet God clearly promises this wonderful miracle. While we cannot understand how this can be true, we know that God, who is almighty and who created us and whole world, can do whatever he wants to do. (Matthew 22:23-33) The resurrection of the body is the bottom line for the Christian

hope. Because Christ rose from the dead, we will rise from our graves on the last day. (1 Corinthians 15:12-58)

The resurrection teaches us a few very important things. First, the body matters. The way we talk about the death of a loved one makes it sound like only our spirit matters. Yet God did not make us to be spirits only, but both body and spirit. Death unnaturally separates the two. But on the last day, when death is defeated, we will be restored, and our bodies glorified like that of Jesus. Job's prophecy will come true for him — and for us. (Job 19:25-27) Our bodies are good, even if the evils of this world mar them. We can accept ourselves the way he made us.

We also can live life in hope of the next. We do grieve when death separates us from loved ones. But we will see them again, quicker than we suppose. We can face down the demands of an evil world, knowing it is temporary and life eternal awaits. Best of all, we will live forever with him who bought us, shed his own blood for us and broke the power of sin and death over us. He is with us always, today and forever.

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#### Office Hours:

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### St. John's Elder Directory

The elders listed below are available to talk and pray with you. Feel free to contact us wherever you are, with whatever you may be going through.

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