

March 17, 2024



# 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. \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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## 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](http://stjohnsportage.com/live).

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

## Weekly Events

### 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

### Monday (18)

- 9:00 a.m. Strong Bodies, Church Narthex
- 1:00 p.m. Pastor's Open-Door Office Hours 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- 3:00 p.m. Evangelism, Church CLC

### Tuesday (19)

- 6:30 a.m. Men's Bible Study, Portage Airport
- 9:15 a.m. Tuesday Morning Bible Study, Church CLC
- 1:00 p.m. Pastor's Open-Door Office Hours 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- 1:30 p.m. Women's Guild, Church CLC

### Wednesday (20)

- 9:00 a.m. Walkie Talkies, meet at St. John's
- 10:00 a.m. Lent Midweek Service, Church Sanctuary
- 12:00 p.m. Weekly Announcements Deadline, Email: [churchoffice@stjohnsportage.com](mailto:churchoffice@stjohnsportage.com)
- 1:00 p.m. Pastor's Open-Door Office Hours 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- 4:30 p.m. Lent meal prep, Church CLC
- 5:00 p.m. Handbells, Church Balcony
- 5:30 p.m. Lent Supper hosted by Sherry A. and Amanda C., Church CLC
- 6:30 p.m. Lent Midweek Service, Church Sanctuary
- 7:15 p.m. Adult Choir, Church Balcony

### Thursday (21)

- 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. Columbia County Healthcare Worship

### Friday (22)

**Church office closed**

### Sunday (24)

- 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](mailto: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.*

### Other

*Jackie Bauman*, received a call to teach 5th grade in Davenport, IA

*Pastor Hovland* is deliberating a Divine Call to Redeemer Lutheran Church, Manitowoc, Wisconsin.

### Medical:

*Don Witt*

### Long-term Illness/Treatment:

*Stacie Wheeler, Tom Waddell,*

Ned Seymour (father of *Kathleen Bernander*)

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

Lisa Priske (daughter of *Betty Mootz*)

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

Mary Maldonado (friend of *Gretchen Halvorsen*)

### 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.

## Easter Flower Fund

If you are interested in donating to the Altar Guild Easter Flower Fund, please fill in the information below and return it to the church office by March 25. Please make checks payable to **St. John's Altar Guild**.

A gift in loving memory of:

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Given by:

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## Ash Wednesday and Lent Service Schedule

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

March 20  
Sympathy (Luke 23:26-34)

## Lent Fellowship Dinner

Fellowship dinners are held on Wednesdays during Lent from 5:30 p.m. to 6:15 p.m.

March 20, hosted by Sherry A. and Amanda C.  
Serving: Goulash, Salad, and Garlic Bread

## Easter Schedule

### Maundy Thursday Service

March 28 at 10:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.

### Good Friday Tre Ore Service

March 29 from 12:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

### Saturday Service of Word and Sacrament

March 30 at 5:30 p.m.

### Easter Sunrise Service

March 31 at 6:00 a.m.

### Easter Day Service of Word and Sacrament

March 31 at 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

**Easter Breakfast** will be served at 9:00 a.m. in the Christian Life Center.

**Easter Egg Hunt** will be held at 9:15 a.m. in the School Gym.

### Easter Breakfast

Volunteers are needed for Easter Sunday Breakfast.

- ⇒ Serving
- ⇒ Cleaning up
- ⇒ Donations: doughnuts, sweet rolls, and coffee cake
- ⇒ Monetary gifts are welcomed to defray the costs of food items.

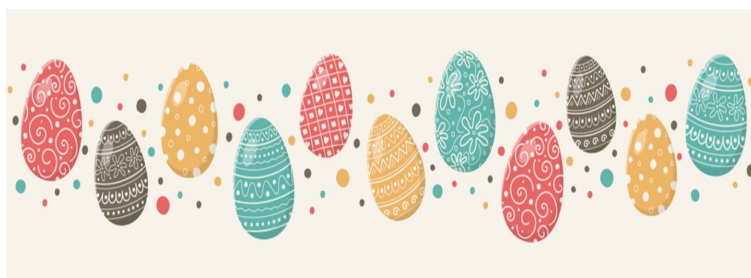
If you can help or offer donations, please contact Gary Zastrow, 608-683-4361.

God's blessings to you.

### Easter Egg Hunt, hosted by Youth Group.

In addition to the egg hunt, we will have refreshments and Easter crafts.

**Donations to fill 1000 Easter eggs are greatly appreciated. A box will be labeled in the church coat room for all Easter Egg Hunt donations.**



## School Calendar

**March 18–22**

- Spring Break

**Thursday, March 28**

- Butter Braid delivery

## School Growth Committee

**Are you interested in helping grow our Christian School?**

We need your positive ideas, outreach into the community, and team efforts to start the School Growth Committee. If interested please sign-up at the Welcome Center or contact Jim Atkinson 608-697-7052 [jim@atkinsonrealtor.com](mailto:jim@atkinsonrealtor.com).



**Saturday, April 6, 2024**

**6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.**

St. John's School Gym

**Join the St. John's Youth Group for food & the final 4 games!**

Free will suggested donation of \$5 per person

Enter the chili cook-off and showcase your favorite chili at our Chili Madness event. Email [youth@stjohnsportage.com](mailto:youth@stjohnsportage.com), text 608.697.2649, Sign-Up Genius link:

<https://shorturl.at/nxyEI>, or QR code.

Include: your name, chili name, chili recipe, and category: spiciest, unique, or best all around.

Free will suggested entry fee donation of \$5 per chili.



## Pizza Ranch Fundraiser

**Bring your family, bring your friends, and most importantly, bring your appetite!** The 7th and 8th grades are raising money for their class trips, so every bite counts! Join them for dinner, **March 25 from 4:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.** at Pizza Ranch in Portage.

## Thank You

On behalf of Gideons International, I would like to thank everyone who donated recently for Bibles and New Testaments. So far the amount has totaled \$1,936.00 and that will continue to grow. Thank-you for your continued generosity. May many lives be impacted by receiving and reading God's Word!

Ken Manthey - Portage Gideon Camp

## Every One His Witness

**Join us for a one-day Every One His Witness class on Saturday, April 6, 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, April 3.** To sign up for Every One His Witness, contact Jim Atkinson at 608-697-7052, email [jim@atkinsonrealtor.com](mailto:jim@atkinsonrealtor.com), or sign up at the Welcome Center.

## Divine Call

**Pastor Hovland is deliberating a Divine Call to Redeemer Lutheran Church, Manitowoc, Wisconsin.** Please pray for St. John's, Redeemer, and Pastor's family. Pastors in the LCMS do not seek calls or apply for positions from other congregations. His name was either submitted for consideration by a congregation member or the district.

## Women's Guild

**Women's Guild meets on Tuesday, March 19 at 1:30p.m. in the Christian Life Center.** We will continue working on the book marks for the hymnals.

## FAQs About the Bible

**QUESTION: How can we be sure the biblical accounts of Jesus' death are accurate? I understand the books of the Bible were used for basis of fact for the movie, "The Passion."**

**If so, were not they taken from the biblical author's best recollections "decades" after the event? Even if these recollections were the "inspired" word of God, how then do we know for sure these biblical accounts were not "skewed" because of the author's cultural/spiritual prejudices of his time or simply subject to error because of the length of time after the fact?**

**ANSWER:** First, it is important to recognize that belief in the Scriptures as God's Word and the certain conviction that they do not lie to us come to an individual only when the Holy Spirit works in that person's heart as a result of faith in Jesus Christ created through the Gospel.

No amount of reasonable, historical arguments — however helpful they may be — will ultimately convince anyone of the truth of the scriptural writings.

Skeptics, whatever their intellectual or personal presuppositions may be, will never be convinced on the basis of reason. We need to remember that in Jesus' time even the religious authorities, who always sought "signs" to prove everything, would not be convinced even "if someone should rise from the dead" (Luke 16:31).

This being said, anyone who has carefully looked at the history of the biblical canon will quickly discover that the biblical writings were not mere "recollections" that came into being decades after the events recorded in the sacred text.

Those who want to disparage the Bible have long used this argument, which is easily discounted even with casual familiarity with the way the biblical writers approached their task. Take for example, the first four verses of Luke's Gospel. They reveal a careful and meticulous historian at work.

It will always be mystifying to Christians why the skeptics among us are far more ready to accept as historical other ancient documents, the texts of which date centuries — not mere years-from the date of their purported happening.

All this said, however, in the end the conviction that the Bible is God's truthful Word is a faith — conviction arrived at apart from merely intellectual endeavor.

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



## Weekly Offerings

**March 10**

In-person Attendance: 521 (includes Lent midweek service)

Unrestricted Unified Received: \$11,809.99

Restricted Contributions Received: \$525.00

TOTAL: \$12,334.99

**Weekly Unrestricted Unified Needed: \$12,885.00**

YTD Unrestricted Unified Giving: \$485,061.04

**YTD Budgeted Unrestricted Unified Need: \$476,745.00**

(week 37)

## Daily Lectionary

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

### Sunday,

Ex. 1:1-12 &  
Mark 14:12-31

### Tuesday,

Ex. 2:23-3:22 &  
Mark 14:53-72

### Friday,

Ex. 5:1-6:1 &  
Mark 15:33-47

### Monday,

Ex. 2:1-22 &  
Mark 14:32-52

### Wednesday,

Ex. 4:1-18 &  
Mark 15:1-15

### Saturday,

Ex. 7:1-25 &  
Mark 16:1-20

### Thursday,

Ex. 4:19-31 &  
Mark 15:16-32

## LCMS Memory Verse Challenge

*But he was pierced for our transgressions;  
he was crushed for our iniquities;  
upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,  
and with his wounds we are healed.*

Isaiah 53:5

## Stewardship Thoughts

**Mark 10:45** – “For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” Jesus gives everything He has: He gives Himself. That self-giving is the model for our giving in all aspects of our lives. In our family, in our church, and in the world at large, Jesus calls us to follow His example of self-giving. We can only do this if we are connected to His self-giving in faith.

## Life Thoughts

**March 17 – Lent V** – Jesus Christ embodies the God who abides beside us in our ailments and frailties. Our incarnate and crucified Savior suffers with and for those who cannot sustain or save themselves. He regards even human beings beset by weakness or sickness high enough to take on our condition Himself (Hebrews 5:7-9). The Gospel just leaves no room for abortion or assisted suicide.

## 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.

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

**March 17**  
Open

**March 24**  
LWML

**March 31**  
Easter Breakfast

## Contact us: 608-742-9000

### Church: option 4

Office Hours:

M—Th 8:00a–3:30p

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

Rev. Greg Hovland,  
Senior Pastor

(c) 608-571-3360

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

### 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)

### School: option 3

Office Hours:

M—F 7:30a–3:15p

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

Jim Krupski,  
Principal

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