

St. John's Lutheran Ministries
see - believe - receive - serve



850 ARMSTRONG STREET
PORTAGE, WI 53901

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

CORNERSTONE

JULY 2021

www.stjohnsportage.com

Resource Links

Lutheran Church Missouri Synod:
<http://www.lcms.org/>

South Wisconsin District of LCMS:
<http://swd.lcms.org/>

South Wisconsin District of LWML:
<http://www.swd-lwml.org/>

Lutheran Hour Ministries:
<http://www.lhm.org/>

Concordia University – Wisconsin:
<http://www.cuw.edu/>

Lutheran Counseling and Family Services:
<http://www.lcfswi.org>

Lutherans For Life:
<http://www.lutheransforlife.org/>

Camp LuWiSoMo:
<http://www.luwisomo.org/>

Concordia Publishing House:
<http://www.cph.org/>

Northwestern Publishing House:
<http://www.nph.org/>

Join us for worship!

+ Wednesdays 5:30 p.m.

+ Saturdays 5:30 p.m.

+ Sundays 8:00 a.m.

+ Sundays 9:15 a.m.

*with online reservations

+ Sundays 10:30 a.m.

Masks are optional at all services.

*The link for reservations is on the church website at [stjohnsportage.com](http://www.stjohnsportage.com).

www.stjohnsportage.com



Shifty Eyes

The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light.
Matthew 6:22

Eyes tell a story. When my granddaughter is tired, her eyes will show it. She will look at you with her eyes wide open and say, “See? I’m not tired!” If the weather is about to be stormy, my eyes will tell you I have a weather-related headache, and I would rather sleep. In anger, eyes will glare, or, as the saying goes, “If looks could kill, you’d be six feet under.” I thought of sixteen other descriptions, along with eyes twitch, twinkle, and sparkle with mischief.

People charged with crimes often have their pictures in the newspaper or online. Their eyes look empty or void

of emotion. I think they look as though they have no Jesus. Other individuals’ pictures reflect the light of hope, joy, life. Their eyes seem to say, “I know Jesus!”

Likewise, a nervous individual’s eyes seem to shift from one thing to another. A friend of mine shared an acronym for shift. In times of stress, we can relate to SHIFT: staying **hopeful in frustrating times**. I sometimes like to switch it to seeing **Him in frustrating times**.

Not only do they emit emotions, but eyes focus on objects, the path ahead; and so, we see. Our focus needs to be on our triune God in all circumstances. Jesus has promised to be with us always. He gets us through everything. We do not remain stuck in a situation; we get through it, endure with an end in sight. Sight—there it is again! Let’s shift our eyes to Jesus and stay hopeful, seeing Him in frustrating times.

As we watch any fireworks this holiday, and we raise our eyes to the heavens, let’s remember to give thanks, not only for our freedom but also to our triune God. The Holy Spirit has blessed us with eyes of faith. May that light of faith beam from within, with our eyes wide open, the lamp of our body.

Connie Streich
Author

Pray, Praise and Give Thanks

A name has a lot more packed into it than we often realize. It carries a person’s reputation, authority, and power with it. In ancient magical lore, if you know a person’s true name, you can have power over them. God’s name is the most important of all, not because it is magical, but because God has promised to hear us when we call to him.

The Second command is all about using God’s name in prayer, to act as his tools in this world to bring the Gospel to the lost and do his will as we serve him and our neighbors. We baptize in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We teach all that he commands us to teach. When we make promises to tell the truth and make promises to each other in his presence, we commit ourselves to keep them.

The problem is our sinful nature wants to use God’s name to cover lies and to make people believe we intend to do what we have no intention to do. We want God to

give us things that we desire, treating God as if he were some kind of cosmic vending machine – insert prayer, believe you will get it and it will come to you. We are inclined to say “O my God” when we are surprised or shocked rather than as a prayer for help. These uses are misuses of God’s name and what the command tells us not to do.

So, then, do we go the other way, as Judaism does, and not even use his name at all? No, God wants us to use his name. We call to him in trouble. We are comforted when in his name our pastors forgive our sins. We draw strength when we remember that he came to us in our Baptism and put his name on us that in his name we are saved. We call his name like we call a beloved father, mother and grandparent, knowing we are loved and they want to share our lives. We use his name to praise him and thank him for his love and mercy.

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Walk Through the Liturgy: The Sermon

The Holy Gospel is the central reading to which all the other readings for the day point. It is likely that the sermon will be based upon the reading of the Holy Gospel.

What should a sermon do? The sermon and the preaching thereof should proclaim Christ's person as well as his active work bringing about the salvation of humanity. That means the sacrificial death of Jesus on the cross, or in other words, the atonement, should be on full display. Not only should the sermon bring Christ's work to light, but it should shine a light on how Christ is active in bringing this salvation to bear in our lives today.

For example, on the 3rd Sunday in Lent, the 3-year lectionary has John 4 as the Gospel reading. Jesus meets the Samaritan woman, who has a less than spectacular past. The Old Testament lesson has the story of Israel complaining and testing the Lord has Massah and Meribah. Both stories work together in bringing to light that no one has a perfect past, but indeed we are all sinful in many and various ways. Yet, our Lord Jesus is

gracious and merciful, not destroying Israel or the woman for her past indiscretions. Instead, he brings to light the fact that she is a sinner in need of the water that gives eternal life. A drink that only he gives. Water (and blood) that is poured out for the world at cross.

How Jesus calls us out of the darkness of our sins and into his marvelous light to receive rightly the water that endures unto eternal life, will likely be a major component of this sermon. Jesus uses his preachers to preach the Law as well as the Gospel. Bringing sins to light that they might be dealt with, and once they are, bringing the sweet news of the Gospel that Jesus has not only died for our sins but that "you are forgiven for Christ's sake."

The Gospel proclamation does not end there, but continues with how Jesus actively seeks us out still today, and grants to us grace through the very means of Grace, like Baptism and the Lord's Supper which our eyes begin to turn in the sermon as the tangible Gospel, the flesh and blood of our Lord Jesus will be given to us to eat and to drink in short order. That we might continue to grow in the faith as well as fervent love towards our neighbors.

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July 1

Donald and Jeanette Witt

July 5

Dylan and Amanda Bell

James and Sheila Fredrick

July 6

Larry and Linda Tessman

July 7

Lamont and Kathryn Colucci

Henry and Elizabeth Mootz

Cody and Stephanie Reynolds

Charles and Dawn Weyh

July 8

Virgil and Gladys Chance



July 09

Roy and Gretchen Halvorsen

July 10

Keith and Julie Horan

Len and Diane Strozinski

July 11

Andy and Rebecca Arkin

July 13

Brian and Stacie Wheeler

July 15

Charles and Marlene Dehmlow

July 16

Phillip and Joyce Kleist

July 17

Kyle and Kathleen Bernander

July 18

Donald and Carol Kohrt

July 23

Douglas and Diane LaVigne

July 26

John and Beverly Baerwolf-Pickel

July 27

Alex and Carol Swanson

July 28

Timothy and Danielle Burrow

July 29

Michael and Kelly Behnke

July 30

Olen and Deidre Lang

July 31

David and Eleanor Mendel

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|----|--|----|--|
| 02 | <i>Melissa Chvojicek</i>
<i>Christine Stark</i>
<i>Bradley Wilson</i> | 15 | <i>Brenda Barreau-Zickert</i>
<i>Robert Fairfield</i>
<i>Kathy Gerstenkorn</i>
<i>Lucas Kreuziger</i> |
| 03 | <i>Debra Baker</i>
<i>Michele Lendobeja</i>
<i>Merrienne Mlsna</i>
<i>Dawson Zimmerman</i> | 16 | <i>Catherine Kampen</i>
<i>Bruin Kassner</i>
<i>Larry Schumann</i>
<i>Jeanette Witt</i> |
| 04 | <i>Tammy Conley</i>
<i>Cody Gordon</i>
<i>Glenda Johnson</i>
<i>Lucinda Stanford</i> | 17 | <i>Jack Eicher</i>
<i>Virginia Laing</i>
<i>Dean Simonson</i> |
| 04 | <i>Alice Welsh</i> | 18 | <i>Monica Neumann</i>
<i>Kennedy Popp</i> |
| 06 | <i>Justin Mommens</i>
<i>Craig Osterholt</i>
<i>Jackie Raimer</i>
<i>Walter Smith</i> | 19 | <i>Phillip Rygiewicz</i> |
| 07 | <i>Beckie Johnson</i>
<i>Arlene Lesser</i>
<i>Beckett Raimer</i>
<i>Maya Schroeder</i>
<i>Leah Winecke</i> | 20 | <i>Paige Yahnke</i> |
| 08 | <i>Howard Dehn</i>
<i>Kayla Hornat</i>
<i>Dorothy Neitzel</i>
<i>Sherry Oeftger</i> | 21 | <i>Eva Chvojicek</i>
<i>Karen Morgan</i>
<i>Ryan Paske</i>
<i>Linda Tessman</i> |
| 09 | <i>Jason Beckius</i>
<i>Matthew Rohrbeck</i>
<i>Boden Schmidt</i> | 22 | <i>Kristine Daugherty</i> |
| 10 | <i>Rubie Kohn</i>
<i>Deidre Lang</i> | 23 | <i>Lorraine Stevens</i>
<i>Erica Zellmer</i> |
| 12 | <i>Amy Brown</i>
<i>Carol Hamele</i>
<i>Lacey Koehler</i>
<i>Dennis Raimer</i> | 24 | <i>Dawn Wilcox</i>
<i>Anthony Yahnke</i> |
| 13 | <i>Deanna Houck</i>
<i>Joyce Kleist</i> | 25 | <i>James Genrich</i>
<i>Grayson Kempley</i>
<i>Adrienne Snyder</i> |
| 14 | <i>Cullen Kiefer</i> | 26 | <i>Julie Gussel</i>
<i>Kimberly Krueger</i> |
| | | 27 | <i>Nathaniel Fredrick</i>
<i>Kenzie Lehman</i>
<i>Kara Rietmann</i>
<i>Bobbi Wolfgram</i> |
| | | 28 | <i>Scott Jones</i> |
| | | 29 | <i>Alan Volpentesta</i>
<i>Gary Witt</i> |
| | | 30 | <i>Nola Tennyson</i>
<i>Chad Wilcox</i> |
| | | 31 | <i>Brent Smith</i>
<i>Samuel Windus</i> |

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Luther's Large Catechism

In this edition of the Cornerstone, we will begin to publish portions of Luther's Large Catechism for your continued growth in God's Word. We begin with the First Commandment.

The text for this series is taken from the Triglotta, a public domain version of The Book of Concord.



The First Commandment.

Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.

That is: Thou shalt have [and worship] Me alone as thy God. What is the force of this, and how is it to be understood? What does it mean to have a god? or, what is God? Answer: A god means that from which we are to expect all good and to which we are to take refuge in all distress, so that to have a God is nothing else than to trust and believe Him from the [whole] heart; as I have often said that the confidence and faith of the heart alone make both God and an idol. If your faith and trust be right, then is your god also true; and, on the other hand, if your trust be false and wrong, then you have not the true God; for these two belong together, faith and God. That now, I say, upon which you set your heart and put your trust is properly your god.

Therefore it is the intent of this commandment to require true faith and trust of the heart which settles upon the only true God, and clings to Him alone. That is as much as to say: "See to it that you let Me alone be your God, and never seek another," *i.e.*: Whatever you lack of good things, expect it of Me, and look to Me for it, and whenever you suffer misfortune and distress,

creep and cling to Me. I, yes, I, will give you enough and help you out of every need; only let not your heart cleave to or rest in any other.

This I must unfold somewhat more plainly, that it may be understood and perceived by ordinary examples of the contrary. Many a one thinks that he has God and everything in abundance when he has money and possessions; he trusts in them and boasts of them with such firmness and assurance as to care for no one. Lo, such a man also has a god, Mammon by name, *i.e.*, money and possessions, on which he sets all his heart, and which is also the most common idol on earth. He who has money and possessions feels secure, and is joyful and undismayed as though he were sitting in the midst of Paradise. On the other hand, he who has none doubts and is despondent, as though he knew of no God. For very few are to be found who are of good cheer, and who neither mourn nor complain if they have not Mammon. This [care and desire for money] sticks and clings to our nature, even to the grave.

So, too, whoever trusts and boasts that he possesses great skill, prudence, power, favor, friendship, and honor has also a god, but not this true and only God. This appears again when you notice how presumptuous, secure, and proud people are because of such possessions, and how despondent when they no longer exist or are withdrawn. Therefore I repeat that the chief explanation of this point is that to have a god is to have something in which the heart entirely trusts.

Besides, consider what, in our blindness, we have hitherto been practicing and doing under the Papacy. If any one had toothache, he fasted and honored St. Apollonia [macerated his flesh by voluntary fasting to the honor of St. Apollonia]; if he was afraid of fire, he chose St. Lawrence as his helper in need; if he dreaded pestilence, he made a vow to St. Sebastian or Rochio, and a countless number of such abominations, where every one selected his own saint, worshiped him, and called for help to him in distress. Here belong those also, as, *e. g.*, sorcerers and magicians, whose idolatry is most gross, and who make a covenant with the devil, in order that he may give them plenty of money or help them in love-affairs, preserve their cattle, restore to them lost possessions, etc. For all these place their heart and trust elsewhere than in the true God, look for nothing good to Him nor seek it from Him.

Thus you can easily understand what and how much this commandment requires, namely, that man's entire heart and all his confidence be placed in God alone, and in no one else. For to have God, you can easily perceive, is not to lay hold of Him with our hands or to put Him in a bag [as money], or to lock Him in a chest [as silver vessels].

Continued on page 8...

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 Kids in the
 Divine Service
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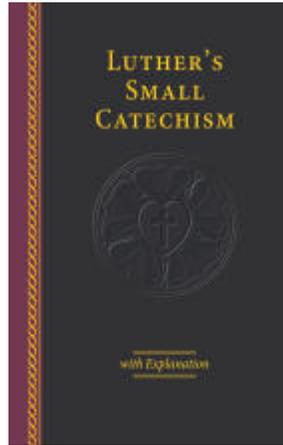
living immoral lives. Martin Luther wrote the catechisms to instruct people in the basics of the Christian faith, that they might know Christ and His forgiveness and live accordingly. We still use Luther's Large and Small Catechisms so that we never forget those things that are necessary for faith in Christ.



Parents: Consider these words from Luther: "I, too, am a theologian who has attained a fairly good practical knowledge and experience of Holy Scriptures through various dangers. But I do not so glory in this gift as not to join my children daily in prayerfully reciting the Catechism. ... For God gave the Word that we should impress it on ourselves. ... Without this practice our souls become rusty, as it were, and we lose ourselves" (Plass, Ewald M., What Luther Says vol. 1 [St. Louis: Concordia, 1986], 125–26).

What is a "catechism"?

A catechism (pronounced KAT-eh-kizm) is a book of instruction usually written in question and answer form. The word "catechism" comes from the Greek word katekhein, which means "to instruct." A catechism teaches the basics of the Christian faith.



Why do we need catechisms?

While visiting local churches, Martin Luther found many pastors and their church members were unaware of the true teachings of the Bible. Because of this, the people were

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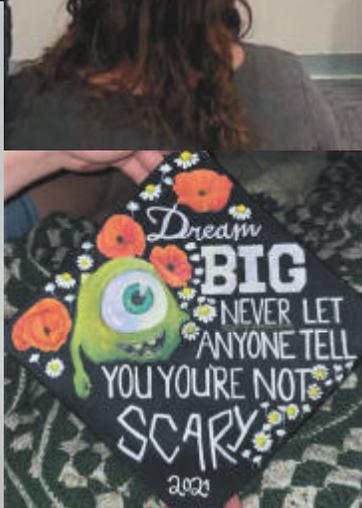
Celebrating our Students Past & Present

St. John's is blessed with many talented students at our school and in our congregation. If you have a student you would like to celebrate, please email the church office, churchoffice@stjohnsportage.com.

This month, we would like to introduce you to Rubie-Ann. Rubie-Ann is a recent graduate of Portage High School. She recently had the opportunity to have her artwork displayed at Portage Center for the Arts. Here is what she had to say about her artwork and having the opportunity to show off her art for our community.

I am an all-around artist. I use multiple different 2-d mediums such as graphite, digital, colored pencils, acrylic, oil paint, and pastels, etc., as well as 4-d materials, such as ceramics, resin, and glass. However, most of my works do happen to be Acrylic paint. I find inspiration through the world around me, especially nature and current events. God is also a very big inspiration for me as I like to bring some of my favorite Bible stories to life. For example, my Judges 14 acrylic painting. I understand that my abilities within the arts are not just my own but God's as well. I want to give it back to him in any way I can. My family plays a great role as well. They constantly encouraging me to continue to practice what I love, and are always giving me great ideas. One of the current goals on my list for

my art is to find a way to start selling it by making prints and eventually finding the courage to sell some of my original pieces. For the long term, my dream is to one day to work with the many creative workers within Pixar studios who constantly produce many beautiful animations that inspire millions. My art really does mean the world to me. It is my way of expressing my emotions and bringing my imagination to life. I am excited for my future education within the arts and look forward to being allowed creative freedom in my future careers.



But to apprehend Him means when the heart lays hold of Him and clings to Him. But to cling to Him with the heart is nothing else than to trust in Him entirely. For this reason He wishes to turn us away from everything else that exists outside of Him, and to draw us to Himself, namely, because He is the only eternal good. As though He would say; Whatever you have heretofore sought of the saints, or for whatever [things] you have trusted in Mammon or anything else, expect it all of Me, and regard Me as the one who will help you and pour out upon you richly all good things.

Lo, here you have the meaning of the true honor and worship of God, which pleases God, and which He commands under penalty of eternal wrath, namely, that the heart know no other comfort or confidence than in Him, and do not suffer itself to be torn from Him, but, for Him, risk and disregard everything upon earth. On the other hand, you can easily see and judge how the world practices only false worship and idolatry. For no people has ever been so reprobate as not to institute and observe some divine worship; every one has set up as his special god whatever he looked to for blessings, help, and comfort.

Thus, for example, the heathen who put their trust in power and dominion elevated Jupiter as the supreme god; the others, who were bent upon riches, happiness, or pleasure, and a life of ease, Hercules, Mercury, Venus, or others; women with child, Diana or Lucina, and so on; thus every one made that his god to which his heart was inclined, so that even in the mind of the heathen to have a god means to trust and believe. But their error is this, that their trust is false and wrong; for it is not placed in the only God, besides whom there is truly no God in heaven or upon earth. Therefore the heathen really make their self-invented notions and dreams of God an idol, and put their trust in that which is altogether nothing. Thus it is with all idolatry; for it consists not merely in erecting an image and worshiping it, but rather in the heart, which stands gaping at something else, and seeks help and consolation from creatures, saints, or devils, and neither cares for God, nor looks to Him for so much good as to believe that He is willing to help, neither believes that whatever good it experiences comes from God.

Besides, there is also a false worship and extreme idolatry, which we have hitherto practiced, and is still prevalent in the world, upon which also all ecclesiastical orders are founded, and which concerns the conscience alone, that seeks in its own works help, consolation, and salvation, presumes to wrest heaven from God, and reckons how many bequests it has made, how often it has fasted, celebrated Mass, etc. Upon such things it depends, and of them boasts, as though unwilling to

receive anything from God as a gift, but desires itself to earn or merit it superabundantly, just as though He must serve us and were our debtor, and we His liege lords.

What is this but reducing God to an idol, yea, [a fig image or] an apple-god, and elevating and regarding ourselves as God? But this is slightly too subtle, and is not for young pupils.

But let this be said to the simple, that they may well note and remember the meaning of this commandment, namely, that we are to trust in God alone, and look to Him and expect from Him naught but good, as from one who gives us body, life, food, drink, nourishment, health, protection, peace, and all necessaries of both temporal and eternal things. He also preserves us from misfortune, and if any evil befall us, delivers and rescues us, so that it is God alone (as has been sufficiently said) from whom we receive all good, and by whom we are delivered from all evil. Hence also, I think, we Germans from ancient times call God (more elegantly and appropriately than any other language) by that name from the word *Good*, as being an eternal fountain which gushes forth abundantly nothing but what is good, and from which flows forth all that is and is called good.

For even though otherwise we experience much good from men, still whatever we receive by His command or arrangement is all received from God. For our parents, and all rulers, and every one besides with respect to his neighbor, have received from God the command that they should do us all manner of good, so that we receive these blessings not from them, but, through them, from God. For creatures are only the hands, channels, and means whereby God gives all things, as He gives to the mother breasts and milk to offer to her child, and corn and all manner of produce from the earth for nourishment, none of which blessings could be produced by any creature of itself.

Therefore no man should presume to take or give anything except as God has commanded, in order that it may be acknowledged as God's gift, and thanks may be rendered Him for it, as this commandment requires. On this account also these means of receiving good gifts through creatures are not to be rejected, neither should we in presumption seek other ways and means than God has commanded. For that would not be receiving from God, but seeking of ourselves.

Let every one, then, see to it that he esteem this commandment great and high above all things, and do not regard it as a joke. Ask and examine your heart diligently, and you will find whether it cleaves to God alone or not.

If you have a heart that can expect of Him nothing but what is good, especially in want and distress, and that, moreover, renounces and forsakes everything that is not God, then you have the only true God.

If, on the contrary, it cleaves to anything else, of which it expects more good and help than of God, and does not take refuge in Him, but in adversity flees from Him, then you have an idol, another god.

In order that it may be seen that God will not have this commandment thrown to the winds, but will most strictly enforce it, He has attached to it first a terrible threat, and then a beautiful, comforting promise which is also to be urged and impressed upon young people, that they may take it to heart and retain it:

To be continued in the August Cornerstone.

SERVING THE LORD IN CZECH REPUBLIC

NEWS FROM CINDY ZIRBEL WRUCKE
May 2021



New Czech Pastors



Martin and Dominik stand at the Baptismal font in St. Michael's church, Prague.

Many Lutherans do not remember their Baptism Day firsthand because they likely were infants. But for Martin Damašek and Dominik Žbanek, the day is quite memorable, since they came to faith and were baptized as adults. They both currently serve as Czech deacons in the Lutheran church in Prague, and recently passed their exams to become Lutheran pastors. They will be ordained Oct. 3, 2021, along with a new Slovak pastor.

I work with both Martin and Dominik in the Evangelická Církev Augsburgského Vyznání v České Republice (ECAVvČR) in Prague. Though they both grew up in atheist families, their journeys to become pastors are quite different.

Martin first went to church when he was a foreign exchange student in high school, placed with a Lutheran family in Illinois. He was baptized on Dec. 17, 1998, at Trinity Lutheran Church (LCMS), Centralia, Illinois. He went to college, then worked as a schoolteacher and politician. He still serves as a city councilman for the Prague 5 district. He joined St. Michael's church in Prague, became a deacon in 2019 and began his pastoral studies immediately. Because he is fluent in English, Martin has attended symposiums at Concordia Seminary in Fort Wayne, as well as theological conferences throughout Eurasia.

Dominik was baptized at the age of 33. He said, "I found my way to God only in adulthood. It happened during a period of hardship in my life. It wasn't until much later that I began to understand how the Triune God communicated with me. I knew that He had worked with me even at a time when I did not want or need to know Him. But these moments led me to repentance."

Dominik became a deacon at St. Michael in 2010. He later became interested in studying to become a pastor. When he looks to the future and where he might be called to serve, he says, "It is a great adventure for me to wait with joy on what God has prepared and has not yet revealed to me."

Both Martin and Dominik are thankful for your prayers while they studied and took their pastoral exams. Please continue to keep them in your prayers as they prepare for ordination and calls to Czech congregations.

Continue on page 11...

July Ministries Calendar

July—10

- Th 01 Heritage House Monthly Worship**
11:00 a.m., Heritage House
Thirsty Souls Bible Study
5:30 p.m., Christian Life Center
- Sa 03 Service of Word and Sacrament**
5:30 p.m., Sanctuary
- Su 04 Service of Word and Sacrament**
8:00 a.m., 9:15 a.m., & 10:30 a.m., Sanctuary
- Tu 06 Men's Bible Study**
6:30 a.m., Portage Airport
Tuesday Morning Bible Study
9:15 a.m., Christian Life Center
Weekly Announcement Submission Deadline
12:00 p.m., churchoffice@stjohnsportage.com
- W 07 Individual//Household Communion**
4:00 p.m.–4:30 p.m., Sanctuary
Service of Word and Sacrament
5:30 p.m., Sanctuary
Youth Group
7:00 p.m., School Gym
- Th 08 Thirsty Souls Bible Study**
5:30 p.m., Christian Life Center
- 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 Service of Word and Sacrament**
5:30 p.m., Sanctuary
- Su 11 Service of Word and Sacrament**
8:00 a.m., 9:15 a.m., & 10:30 a.m., Sanctuary
- M 12 Tivoli Monthly Worship**
10:00 a.m., Tivoli
- Tu 13 Men's Bible Study**
6:30 a.m., Portage Airport
Tuesday Morning Bible Study
9:15 a.m., Christian Life Center
Weekly Announcement Submission Deadline
12:00 p.m., churchoffice@stjohnsportage.com
Executive Committee
6:00 p.m., Christian Life Center
- W 14 Individual//Household Communion**
4:00 p.m.–4:30 p.m., Sanctuary
Service of Word and Sacrament
5:30 p.m., Sanctuary
Youth Group
7:00 p.m., School Gym
- Th 15 Thirsty Souls Bible Study**
5:30 p.m., Christian Life Center
Board of Trustees
6:00 p.m., All Purpose Room
- Sa 17 Service of Word and Sacrament**
5:30 p.m., Sanctuary
- Su 18 Service of Word and Sacrament**
8:00 a.m., 9:15 a.m., & 10:30 a.m., Sanctuary
- Tu 20 Men's Bible Study**
6:30 a.m., Portage Airport
Tuesday Morning Bible Study
9:15 a.m., Christian Life Center
Weekly Announcement Submission Deadline
12:00 p.m., churchoffice@stjohnsportage.com
- W 21 Individual//Household Communion**
4:00 p.m.–4:30 p.m., Sanctuary
Service of Word and Sacrament
5:30 p.m., Sanctuary
Youth Group
7:00 p.m., School Gym
- Th 22 Thirsty Souls Bible Study**
5:30 p.m., Christian Life Center
- Sa 24 Service of Word and Sacrament**
5:30 p.m., Sanctuary
- Su 25 Service of Word and Sacrament**
8:00 a.m., 9:15 a.m., & 10:30 a.m., Sanctuary
- M 26 Board of Finance,**
4:30 p.m., Christian Life Center
- Tu 27 Men's Bible Study**
6:30 a.m., Portage Airport
Tuesday Morning Bible Study
9:15 a.m., Christian Life Center
Weekly Announcement Submission Deadline
12:00 p.m., churchoffice@stjohnsportage.com
- W 28 Individual//Household Communion**
4:00 p.m.–4:30 p.m., Sanctuary
Service of Word and Sacrament
5:30 p.m., Sanctuary
Youth Group
7:00 p.m., School Gym
- Th 29 Thirsty Souls Bible Study**
5:30 p.m., Christian Life Center
- Sa 30 Service of Word and Sacrament**
5:30 p.m., Sanctuary

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.

My first Czech congregation meeting

The Czech congregation of the ECAVvČR held their annual voter's meeting for the first time since 2019, due to Covid. Attendees had to wear masks and observe social distancing in the church since government regulations were still in effect.

The meeting reminded me of American church meetings in many ways. We received the agenda and various leader reports via email a few weeks before the meeting; we could email our opinions about any of the topics to the head of the congregation and the church administrator ahead of time. When we arrived at the meeting, we had to sign in next to our names on a membership roster. Out of 99 official members, only 11 attended this year.

Church leaders presented reports, members discussed and voted on the agenda items, and projected budgets were discussed. One of the key differences between the church here and in America is that the Czech government pays restitution to the churches for the

confiscation of their property under communism. The payments are based on the number of church members and will continue for a few more years. After that, the church will need to find ways to cover any shortfall.

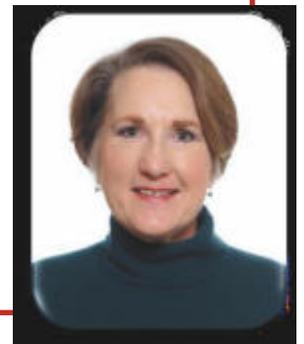
The final discussion centered around calling a parish pastor. We have been without a permanent pastor since August 2019. After much discussion, it was decided to wait until after the ordination of the new pastors this fall to consider calling one of them.

This month we remember the importance of community:

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Ephesians 2:10 (ESV)

- Cindy Zirbel Wrucke



<p>May Memorial</p> <p>Organ Fund \$20.00 In memory of <i>Peggy Martin</i></p>	<p>Offering for May</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Unified Fund</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$57,003.00</td> <td>School Tuition Relief</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$430.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Capital Improvements</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$705.00</td> <td>Pennies for Preachers</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$0.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Missions</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$130.00</td> <td>Organ</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$50.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Almoners Fund</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$60.00</td> <td>Total Contributions</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$58,583.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Orphanages</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$205.00</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Unified Fund	\$57,003.00	School Tuition Relief	\$430.00	Capital Improvements	\$705.00	Pennies for Preachers	\$0.00	Missions	\$130.00	Organ	\$50.00	Almoners Fund	\$60.00	Total Contributions	\$58,583.00	Orphanages	\$205.00		
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St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church
850 Armstrong Street
Portage, Wisconsin 53901
phone (608) 742-9000
fax 742-7154
Rev. Greg Hovland,
Senior Pastor
(c) 608-571-3360
ghovland@stjohnsportage.com
Rev. Rod Armon,
Pastoral Care
rarmon@stjohnsportage.com
Jenni See,
Business Manager
jsee@stjohnsportage.com
Catharine Daily,
Ministries Coordinator—Church
cdaily@stjohnsportage.com
Office Hours: M—Th / 8:00a–3:30p

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Amanda Kohn,
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akohn@stjohnsportage.com
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Debra Drew,
Director
ddrew@stjohnsportage.com
cdcoffice@stjohnsportage.com
Center Office Hours: M—F / 6:00a–5:30p

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. We CARE and are here for you:
Ken Chvojicek 697-2102
Robert Griepentrog 566-9810
Gene Thompson 697-4786
Mark Witt 697-0224
Bob Fairfield 296-4012
David Hall 493-2125
Pete Smith 697-3807
Ron Mueller 369-1845, Chair



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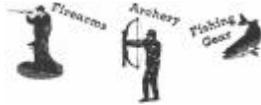
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