

THE ST. JOHN NEWS

March 2024

The Promise of Eternal Life What the Resurrection of Jesus Means

Adam and Eve saw it every day. There is no description of what it looked like. But there it was, the tree of life, in the midst of the garden (Genesis 2:9). God had planted it there for the eternal life of mankind. They could eat of it without fear and without reservation. Also in the midst of the garden was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Adam and Eve were forbidden from eating of that tree (Genesis 2:17), their only command, their test to demonstrate their loyalty to and love for God and his Word.

Tragically, Adam and Eve gave in to the temptation from the devil to eat from that forbidden tree. That one small act violated God's command and introduced sin into God's perfect creation. And with sin came its wage: death (Romans 3:23). Eternal life was now out of reach for mankind. Death must be suffered by Adam and Eve and all their descendants. In an act of mercy, God barred mankind from the tree of life. "Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever" (Genesis 3:22). God was not preventing mankind from eternal life outright, but from a life lived forever in sin and death.

Ever since that fateful moment, mankind has lived with an innate desire to live forever. No one wants to die. Death is an unknown, an event experienced only once (Hebrews 9:27). Quests have been ventured in great efforts to obtain eternal life. Ponce de Leon's name is attached to the legendary Fountain of Youth. The movie character Indiana Jones made famous the Holy Grail of Christ and the belief that drinking from it would grant eternal life. Science and technology continue to experiment and research in the hopes of curing diseases and staving off death.

As long as the world continues in its current state, mankind will continue in this quest to live forever. And every attempt will come up short, always. God has made death the punishment for sin. All are sinners and so all must die. As God is the one who has attached death to sin, so he is the only one who can break this attachment. For anyone who wants eternal life, they must do as God directs. He alone is life and he alone can grant eternal life.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke all record Jesus being asked the question, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" (Matthew 19:16; Mark 10:17; Luke 18:18). Since the questioner is seeking to do something for eternal life, Jesus gives him something to do. "If you would enter eternal life, keep the commandments" (Matthew 19:17). In order to gain eternal life, one must be perfect. Holiness is required to dwell with God forever. Of course, mankind has lost its holiness. Adam and Eve could do nothing to undo their sin. They could not go back in time. They could not become righteous again. Jesus knows this when he answers the question. The power to have eternal life does not lie in mankind. It never has. Even Adam and Eve had the tree of life they were to eat from as a gift from God.

Jesus desires for all who want eternal life to despair of themselves. Realize that eternal life is not within your grasp or your power to obtain. It is solely a gift, a gift from the God who has created you and the God who has saved you. The apostle John records Jesus' teachings on eternal life the most. Jesus first introduces the doctrine to Nicodemus in John 3. There, Jesus has equated eternal life with the kingdom of God. And he attaches eternal life to belief in himself as the Savior. "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have **eternal life**. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have **eternal life**" (John 3:15-16). Here are more passages from John's Gospel where Jesus is promising eternal life:

"Whoever believes in the Son has **eternal life**" (John 3:36);

"But whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to **eternal life**" (John 4:14);

"Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has **eternal life**. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life" (John 5:24);

“You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have **eternal life**; and it is they that bear witness about me” (John 5:39);

“For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have **eternal life**, and I will raise him up on the last day” (John 6:40);

“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has **eternal life**” (John 6:47);

“Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has **eternal life**, and I will raise him up on the last day” (John 6:54);

“I give them **eternal life**, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand” (John 10:28);

“Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for **eternal life**” (John 12:25);

“And this is **eternal life**, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent” (John 17:3).

Faith and trust and belief in Jesus Christ is what grants eternal life. This is by the power of God’s holy Word (Romans 10:17). This is his desire, to give eternal life through Jesus (1 Timothy 2:4). Jesus is the source of our eternal life because he is God in the flesh for us. He has borne our sins in his body to the cross (1 Peter 2:24). Jesus has paid the full price for our sin (Matthew 20:28). He has died the death that we deserve (Hebrews 10:12). And now he has been raised from the dead, never to know death again (Romans 6:9). Jesus has conquered sin and death. And he graciously gives that victory to all who believe in him (1 Corinthians 15:57). God’s justice over sin is met in Jesus (Luke 22:42). Jesus has been given in our stead by God’s love. You are now reconciled to God through the blood of Jesus (Colossians 1:20). You have peace with God forevermore (Romans 5:1). You have eternal life now through faith in Jesus Christ, first given to you concretely in Holy Baptism (Romans 6:5). Eternal life is given to you again and again concretely in the Lord’s Supper (John 6:53–56). Jesus has promised you eternal life and he has secured eternal life for you by his death and resurrection.

You need not seek out the Fountain of Youth or the Holy Grail or any other alleged giver of eternal life. It belongs to you already because of Jesus. You will live on forever in a perfect world, paradise as Jesus called it to the thief on the cross. A new garden will be your dwelling place forever, where there will be no trackage of time, for that life will never end just as God never ends. That promise is yours, locked up tight in the blood of Jesus, poured out on you in Baptism and poured into you in his Supper.

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia! This, our Easter cry, will be our cry forever, as we remember for all of eternal life what Christ has done for us. He is the Resurrection and the Life and he has given that life to you, now and eternally.

In the shadow of Christ’s cross and the light of his empty tomb,

Pastor Caithamer

Let Us Pray

For Peace and Comfort: Jay & Stephanie and family at the death of Stephanie’s father Roger

Hospitalized: Bob -father of Amanda

For Healing and Recovery: Patty, Jan, Jim-brother of Karla , Kaylianna -great granddaughter of Bob & Joan , Robin , Karla, Charlene, Brian, Teresa-godchild of Bob & Joan, Barbara - family friend of Bob & Joan, John, Hendricks -grandson of Dan & Joanie, Maria, Merv, Rebecca -daughter of Marvin & Esther, Roy - father of Anne, Todd-grandson of Harold, Brett -cousin of the Kindts’

For Successful Treatments: Kevin , Dan , Nancy, Barb, Luke , Earl, Linda, Joan, Jeanette , Nancy

For our Military: Nick D, Nick F, Andy, Brandon, Zachary, David

For our Missionaries: Pastor Randrianasolo Dembiniana Havanjanakary and the Madagascar Lutheran Seminary, Pastor Magnus Bengston and Lielsalaca Lutheran Church in Latvia, Pastor Obot Ite and the Lutheran Mission in Kingston, Jamaica Lielsalaca Lutheran Church in Latvia, Pastor Obot Ite and the Lutheran Mission in Kingston, Jamaica





March Music Notes



March Choirs Schedule

Sunday, March 10 (<i>Lent 4</i>)	10:45am service	Alleluia Ringers (10:00 warmup)
Wednesday, March 13	6:00pm	Alleluia Ringers rehearsal
Sunday, March 17 (<i>Lent 5</i>)	8:00am service 12:00pm	Mixed Choir (7:30 warmup) Easter Instrumentalists rehearsal
Wednesday, March 20	6:00pm	Alleluia Ringers rehearsal
Thursday, March 21	6:00pm	Singing Choirs rehearsal
Sunday, March 24 (<i>Palm Sunday</i>)	8:00am & 10:45am 12:00pm	Palm Sunday Procession Choirs and Trumpets at start of services Handbells at 10:45 (Baptism) Easter Instrumentalists rehearsal
Wednesday, March 27	6:00pm	Alleluia Ringers rehearsal
Thursday, March 28 (<i>Maundy Thursday</i>)	6:00pm 6:45pm 7:15pm	Singing Choirs rehearsal Alleluia Ringers warmup Alleluia Ringers & Choir
Friday, March 29 (<i>Good Friday</i>)	6:00pm 7:15pm service	Singing Choirs rehearsal Choir
Saturday, March 30	T.B.D.	Easter Instrumentalists rehearsal
Sunday, March 31 (<i>Easter</i>)	6:00am service 8:00am service 10:45am service	Instrumentalists Handbells & Instrumentalists Choirs & Instrumentalists

Our Bach exploration continues! On March 17 we will hear Bach's lovely "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring," and during the education hour Keith will be discussing Bach's Lutheran theology and his life as Kantor in Leipzig. On Good Friday choirs and congregation will be singing the chorales from Bach's *St. John Passion*, which was first performed on Good Friday 300 years ago. Organ preludes throughout Lent and on Easter will focus on Bach's music as well.

Soli Deo Gloria,
Keith

IMPORTANT BULK MAIL UPDATE:

Due to Bulk Mail updates, we are making some changes on how you can receive the monthly newsletters. You can continue to receive your newsletter through the mail, but we are now offering the option for it to be emailed if that is your preference. Please contact the church office to let us know how you would like to receive your newsletters moving forward.
Churchoffice at stjohn-lcms.church or (217) 359-1123

2024 Easter Season Schedule

Palm Sunday	<i>March 24</i>	8:00am & 10:45am
Maundy Thursday	<i>March 28</i>	3:00pm & 7:15pm
Good Friday	<i>March 29</i>	3:00pm & 7:15pm
Easter Sunday Sunrise	<i>March 31</i>	6:00am
Easter Brunch in between services		
Easter Sunday	<i>March 31</i>	8:00am & 10:45am

Sunday School Egg Hunt Donations—

We are planning an Easter egg hunt on Easter Sunday, March 31st during the Sunday School hour. Donations should be placed in the box in the coat room no later than March 17th. Thank you for your support.

Stewardship Corner—Mark 9:6 – "For he did not know what to say, for they were terrified." Soon enough, the disciples' terror turned into joy, for when Jesus is with us, there is no need to fear. He loves us and cares for us and will never abandon us. That assurance is the basis of all generosity — for only those who are set free from worry can learn the joy of giving.

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

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|---|--|
| 2 Roger | 23 Kathy, Keelyn |
| 3 Megan | 25 Madelynn, Roger |
| 4 John, Judy, Aimee, Tara | 26 Bill |
| 5 Sheree, David, Rollin | 27 Audrey, Alex |
| 7 Nick, David, Cole, Maxine | 28 Chuck, Fionna, Amelia, Isabelle, Jake, Teri |
| 8 Zachary, Lauren, Dale, Dan, Bryan, Zach | 29 Caitlyn, Jaxon, Judy, Shirley |
| 9 Lucas, Kathy, Tracy, Vicky | 30 Chris, Jed |
| 10 Nick | 31 Kevin, Bob, Lois, Gale, Angi |
| 12 Anna, David, Rick | |
| 13 Richard, Kristina | |
| 14 Don, Nancy, Jackie, Zachariah | |
| 15 Jesse, Clinton, David | |
| 16 Ruth, Kathy | |
| 17 Adam, Daniel | |
| 18 Oscar | |
| 19 Scott, David, Michael, Arnold | |
| 20 Will | |
| 21 Olivia, Rachel, Kim | |
| 22 Dan, Kendall, Pam, Isaac | |

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

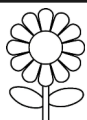
- 2 Larry & Marilyn (50)
- 3 David & Anthea (12)
- 4 Greg & Sue (47)
- 11 Craig & Shirley (24); Roger & Karen (47)
- 23 Taylor & Christina (11)
- 25 Lon & Betty (29)
- 29 Brian & Donna (21)

St. John Athletics

St. John Track Invite – Come be a part of our premier event in track & field - often described as the best meet of the year! Join us on Saturday, March 23 at the U of I Armory to help make this event a success. Morning, afternoon or all day volunteer positions are available for a variety of jobs at all skill levels (admissions, hospitality area, field events). Contact the school office if you are interested in helping.



Spring Break - No School
Monday-Friday, March 11-15



Dough-livery Date:
Wednesday, March 6



The March E.A.T. Night will be at Texas Roadhouse
Monday, March 18, 4-10pm

Texas Roadhouse is giving back at least 10% of our purchases. We will receive a larger percentage with more Dine to Donate patrons, so spread the word. Bring in the flyer or show it on your phone to make sure that the proceeds will be donated to St. John Lutheran School. Flyers are available on the narthex table and on the school website www.stjohnls.com. This fundraiser applies to dine-in and carry out purchases. Thank you for your continued support of these events.

Don't forget to get your \$25 Gift Card from Ram Rebate in the school office.



For in [Christ] all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. Colossians 1:19-20

2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat																																																																																																									
<p>Church Office 359-1123</p> <p>School Office 359-1714</p>	<p>Pastor Caithamer's day off: Fridays</p>				<p>1 5:00 Youth Group</p>	<p>2</p>																																																																																																									
<p>3 3rd Sunday in Lent 8:00 Holy Communion 9:30 Adult Bible Class, Sunday School 10:45 Holy Communion 1:00 New Member Class</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5 10:00 Adult Bible Class 5:15 Fellowship Board 6:00 Trustees, School Board</p>	<p>6 8:10 Chapel 3:30 Lenten Service 5:45 Midweek School, Lifelight 7:15 Lenten Service</p>	<p>7 10:00 Lifelight</p>	<p>8 Day School Early Dismissal @ 11:30am</p>	<p>9</p> 																																																																																																									
<p>10 4th Sunday in Lent 8:00 Holy Communion 9:30 Adult Bible Class, Sunday School 10:45 Holy Communion</p> <p>Daylight Savings Time Begins</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12 6:00 Elders</p>	<p>13 10:00 Adult Bible Class 3:30 Lenten Service 4:45 LWML 5:45 Lifelight 7:15 Lenten Service</p>	<p>14 7:00 Men's Prayer Breakfast @ Sammy's 10:00 Lifelight</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>16</p>																																																																																																									
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<p>17 5th Sunday in Lent 8:00 Holy Communion 9:30 Adult Bible Class, Sunday School 10:45 Holy Communion 1:00 New Member Class</p>	<p>18 4:00 E.A.T. Night @ Texas Roadhouse</p> <p>Newsletter Deadline</p>	<p>19 10:00 Adult Bible Class 6:00 Council</p>	<p>20 8:10 Chapel 3:30 Lenten Service 5:45 Midweek School, Lifelight 6:00 Handbells 7:15 Lenten Service</p>	<p>21 10:00 Lifelight</p>	<p>22 5:00 Youth Group</p>	<p>23 11:00 St. John Track Invitational @ U of I Armory</p>																																																																																																									
<p>24 Palm Sunday 8:00 Holy Communion 9:30 Adult Bible Class, Sunday School 10:45 Holy Communion 1:00 New Member Class</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26 6:00 Parish Ed</p>	<p>27 8:10 Chapel 10:00 Adult Bible Class 5:45 Midweek School 6:00 Handbells</p>	<p>28 Maundy Thursday 3:00 Holy Communion 7:15 Holy Communion</p> <p>Day School Early Dismissal @ 11:30am</p>	<p>29 Good Friday 3:00 Service 7:15 Tenebrae Vespers</p> <p>No School Church Office Closes at Noon</p>	<p>30</p>																																																																																																									
<p>31 Easter Sunday 8:00 Holy Communion 9:30 Adult Bible Class, Sunday School 10:45 Holy Communion</p>	<p>Apr. 1 Easter Monday No School Church Office Closed</p>			<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="7">February 2024</th> </tr> <tr> <th>S</th> <th>M</th> <th>T</th> <th>W</th> <th>T</th> <th>F</th> <th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> <td>6</td> <td>7</td> <td>8</td> <td>9</td> <td>10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11</td> <td>12</td> <td>13</td> <td>14</td> <td>15</td> <td>16</td> <td>17</td> </tr> <tr> <td>18</td> <td>19</td> <td>20</td> <td>21</td> <td>22</td> <td>23</td> <td>24</td> </tr> <tr> <td>25</td> <td>26</td> <td>27</td> <td>28</td> <td>29</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	February 2024							S	M	T	W	T	F	S					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29			<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="7">April 2024</th> </tr> <tr> <th>S</th> <th>M</th> <th>T</th> <th>W</th> <th>T</th> <th>F</th> <th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> <td>6</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>7</td> <td>8</td> <td>9</td> <td>10</td> <td>11</td> <td>12</td> <td>13</td> </tr> <tr> <td>14</td> <td>15</td> <td>16</td> <td>17</td> <td>18</td> <td>19</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>21</td> <td>22</td> <td>23</td> <td>24</td> <td>25</td> <td>26</td> <td>27</td> </tr> <tr> <td>28</td> <td>29</td> <td>30</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	April 2024							S	M	T	W	T	F	S								1	2	3	4	5	6		7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30					
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