

St. John's Journal

Volume 49, Issue 5

“HE DESCENDED INTO HELL”

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As often as we Christians repeat the Apostles' Creed, we confess of Jesus Christ that “He descended into hell.” People sometimes have questions about this, and understandably so; it's not one of the easier teachings of the Bible. So where does this come from in the Bible, what does it mean, and why was it included in the Creed?

The only direct Scriptural reference to Christ's descent into hell, as far as we are aware, is 1 Peter 3:18-20. It reads: “because even Christ died for sins once for all, a righteous Man in the place of unrighteous ones, that He might present you to God, having been put to death in the body but made alive in the spirit, in which He also went and preached to the spirits in prison, to those who disobeyed long ago when the patience of God was waiting for them in the days of Noah while the ark was being prepared.”

As you can see, this passage is not particularly simple, and does not give us many explicit details. It does tell us this much, though: Sometime after Jesus died on the cross and came back to life, He went and preached to the spirits in prison. Since these spirits were the souls of people who disobeyed way back in the days of Noah, that is, who refused to believe and would not repent, their “prison” must refer to hell. That much is clear.

Precisely what it was that Jesus preached to them is not told us. We can only surmise the content of Jesus' preaching. We know from other portions of Scripture (Heb. 9:27, for example) that Jesus did *not* go there to tell them about a “second chance” for their salvation. Given the circumstances, that Jesus had just come back to life from the dead, we presume He would have preached something about that – that His death and resurrection were His triumph over sin, death, and hell, thus confirming their just condemnation and punishment. We simply don't know for sure.

But whatever it was that Christ preached to the spirits in prison, *the very fact that He did it demonstrates His power over hell!* For Jesus alone has done this – descended into hell, preached to the spirits there, *and then came back!* Everyone else who goes to hell goes on a one-way ticket. They stay there, and cannot cross over to the other side. (Luke 16:26) But Jesus went there and came back as He pleased, thus demonstrating His complete mastery over the place! Jesus claimed the same when He asserted, “I have the keys of Death and of Hades.” (Rev. 1:18)

This explains why our ancient Christian forefathers considered it important to include “He descended into hell” in the Apostles' Creed. It is strong declaration of our living Lord's victory and power over hell! Because Jesus has full control over hell, we who believe in Him can rest assured that we are *not* going there! It's just as we joyfully sing in the beautiful and vivid poetry of one of our great Easter hymns: “He closed the yawning gates of hell.” (TLH 210:4)

Our *Formula of Concord*, which is one of our official Lutheran confessions found in *The Book of Concord*, contains what is perhaps the very best explanation and advice for us Christians concerning Christ's descent into hell. It reads in part:

“This article... cannot be comprehended with our sense and reason, but must be apprehended by faith alone. Therefore it is our unanimous opinion that we should not engage in disputations concerning this article, but believe and teach it in all simplicity...”

It is enough to know that Christ went to hell, destroyed hell for all believers, and has redeemed them from the power of death, of the devil, and of the eternal damnation of the hellish jaws. How this took place is something that we should postpone until the other world, where there will be revealed to us not only this point, but many others as well, which our blind reason cannot comprehend in this life, but which we simply accept.” (*Formula of Concord, Epitome IX:2,4*)

So rejoice this Easter season in our triumphant Savior Jesus Christ, who descended into hell!

- Pastor Bishop

Christian Education

Matthew

Mark

Luke

John

Sunday School Perfect Attendance March 2022

None

MAY BIRTHDAYS



May 01

Lyle Smith

May 02

Elijah Kesselmayr
Jayson Memken

May 03

Jaylynn Fahnestock
Lainey Jensen
Cory Pfanz
Julie Wagner

May 07

Jordan Snoble

May 08

Janelle Hopping
Tracy Glass

May 09

Shana Friedinger

May 10

Elizabeth Ward
Emily Ward
Lori Fricke Schiavone

May 11

Shirley Wendland

May 12

Jeremy Winstead

May 13

Keith Gleason
Diane Lee
Nancy Swearingen

May 14

Jacob Gould
Trevor Rodriguez
Ann Wilson
Pamela Woolsey

May 15

Lennon Blome

May 16

Sheryll Hillman

May 17

LeeAnn Walsh

May 18

Del Beideck
Renee Hayden
Micaylan McDonald

May 19

Lance Anderson
Paula Jensen

May 20

Matthew Buster

May 21

Paul Widby

May 22

Marcia Hubbs

May 23

Wendy McDonald

May 24

Debra Pitchford

May 25

Alexis Daniels

May 26

Cailin Wilson

May 27

Melissa Flatley
Colleen Gardiner
Jordan Jensen
Amanda Webb

May 28

Barbara Rosa

May 29

Dale Schott, Jr.
Ruthanne Scott
Kelley Ward

May 30

Joel Bonnette
Noah Dingerson
Sharon Ives

MAY ANNIVERSARIES

May 06

Robert & Donna Hurst
Jeff & Susan Jackson

May 14

Paul & Shantel Tackmann

May 23

Steve & Jane Heberer

May 26

Jim & Sheri McCann

May 30

Rodney & Penny Bollinger

PARISH NOTES



Church Attendance

Mar 2023 - **634**- 17 services
 Mar 2022 - **708** - 17 services
 Mar 2021 - **578** - 17 services

Sunday School Attendance

Through Mar 2023: 519
 Through Mar 2022: 477
 Through Mar 2021: 431

Videographers — May

Rod Bollinger

Worship Committee— May

Diane Gould

Elders

Communion Assistance

May 7

8:00 a.m. Tom Ivey
 10:30 a.m. Jon Bolt

May 18

7:00 p.m.

May 21

8:00 a.m. Randy Couch
 10:30 a.m. Ross Gould



THE ASCENSION OF OUR LORD

The Festival falls on Thursday, May 18, this year.

Ushers – May

8:00

Jerry Bohannan
 Randy Couch
 Noah Kesselmayr
 Steven Kesselmayr

10:30

Jacob Gould
 Ross Gould

Acolytes—May

May 7

8:00 a.m. Elizabeth Sayles
 10:30 a.m.

May 21

8:00 a.m.
 10:30 a.m. Elizabeth Sayles

SHUT-INS for the MONTH: Even though some of our members cannot attend church, we want to keep them in our thoughts and prayers and let them know they are not forgotten. Please send a card or pay a visit to these shut-ins this month.

Shut ins for May are:

Sharon Parry, 1721 Valle Vista, Pekin; Sheryl Riley, UAW Apartments, 444 S. Parkway Dr., Pekin and Ben Urish, Lewis Memorial Christian Village, 3300 W. Washington St., Springfield, IL 62711

Thank you St. John's Ladies Guild.

Transferred To The Church Triumphant

Eugene Woolsey
 June 11, 1932
 April 1, 2023

TREASURER'S REPORT

March, 2023

	<u>March</u>	<u>Y-T-D</u>
INCOME	28,719.00	90,369.00
EXPENSES	31,875.39	92,050.96
INCOME-EXPENSES	<u>(3,156.39)</u>	<u>\$(1,681.96)</u>

General Fund	15,325.03
General Fund Total	15,325.03

Ed Grant Fund Checking	2,948.56
Ed Grant CD LCMS 12/21	51,928.87
Ed Grant CD LCMS 12/22	51,900.80
Ed Grant Fund #2-Vanguard	63,421.15
Educational Fund Total	170,199.38

East Bluff Property-Vanguard	38,622.86
East Bluff CD LCMS 12/21	53,808.61
East Bluff CD LCMS 12/22	53,837.70
Cat Stock at FMV	84,442.15
East Bluff Property Fund	230,712.15

Memorial Fund Checking	29,221.92
Memorial Vanguard	97,636.12
Memorial Fund Total	126,858.04

Building Fund Checking	23,496.25
S S Fund Checking	12,356.66

TOTAL ASSETS **578,947.51**

Checking Account Balance	83,348.42
TOTAL	83,348.42

LIABILITIES

Payroll Liabilities	2,736.45
Misc LCMS Orgs Fund	81.72
TOTAL LIABILITIES	2,818.17

FUND BALANCE

Net Income (Loss)	(4,565.92)
Capital Accounts	580,695.26
TOTAL FUND BALANCE	576,129.34

TOTAL LIABILITIES & FUND BALANCE **578,947.51**

**ST. JOHNS'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
VOTERS ASSEMBLY MINUTES
April 10, 2023**

Mike Nauth called the meeting to order. A quorum was not present so all motions will be carried over to the May meeting. Pastor Bishop opened with devotions.

The March Parish Report was reviewed.

The March meeting minutes were reviewed.

Treasurer's Report – Daryl Dagit presented the March Treasurer's Report.

Board of Trustees – Gary Pool reported that the men's restroom in the church basement is finally finished. He thanked Dave and Steve Kesselmayr for all the work they did on the restroom. The Trustees are planning to have a work day (cleaning, painting, etc.) at the church on a Saturday in May. More information will be in the bulletin. Volunteers are welcome!

Board of Elders – Tom Ivey reported that the Elders served the Lent dinner on the 12th of March. Funds from the meal were deposited into the Elder's Care Fund to assist people with requests throughout the year.

Board of Finance – No report.

Board of Christian Education – Leslie Hauk reported that the GSLS Dining Out day this month is at Double D's on April 11th. There are flyers on the bulletin board. The auction theme for 2024 is '80's Night Out With Ewe'. The Youth Group is exploring interest in a trip to Six Flags in June. Anyone interested (any age) should contact the church office so that we can compile a list of potential attendees. The Youth Group activity for May is yard cleanup for seniors. The board will have more details for Vacation Bible School at a later date.

Board of Worship – Diane Gould reported that the Worship Committee will meet on Thursday, April 13th.

Board of Evangelism – Pastor Bishop reported that the committee meets tomorrow morning.

Board of Stewardship – Barb Theleritis reported that they distributed 4 food baskets. In addition, on-line giving is currently being set up on the church's website.

Long Range Planning Committee – No report. Ross Gould will be conducting a brief meeting after tonight's Assembly Meeting to give some direction to all committees.

Educational Grant Fund Committee – Ross Gould will also be discussing proposed wording changes to the Educational Grant Fund to allow for money to be given to GSLS for the purpose of providing grants after tonight's Assembly Meeting.

East Bluff Property Committee – No report.

Constitution By-laws Committee – No report.

Unfinished business – NA

New business – Gary Pool wanted to thank everyone who helped with the serving of the Easter Breakfast this year. Also, Mike Nauth thanked Pastor for his uplifting sermons and the committees for all their work during this Easter season in decorating the church, special music, etc.

The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Wagner
Secretary

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LIBRARY CORNER
By Eileen Tiona



*"God saved us through the washing of re-
birth and renewal by the Holy Spirit"*
Titus 3:5

I haven't any new books to report on this month, but you are welcome to come into the Library and check out all the wonderful books that are available for your enjoyment.

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SHARE PROGRAM

We would like to replenish the following items:
toilet tissue, dishwashing liquid, instant mashed potatoes, ce-
real, hamburger helper, vegetable soup, apple sauce, canned
fruit, peanut butter, pasta sauce, Gatorade (all flavors other
than lemon-lime), Ensure or Boost (or generic equivalent).
Monetary donations are always accepted.

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Received thank you notes from the following:



Please receive our gratitude for your gift of \$104.17. Your fellowship and encouragement affirm that life issues involve real people, precious treasures, and not simply political controversy or personal choice. Lutherans for Life.

THANK YOU for your gift of \$187.50 to Concordia Seminary. Vicki Biggs, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO

Dear Saints of St. John, Thank you for your continued support. Your gifts allow our student to attend tuition free.
God Bless You! Rev. Paul Hopkins

ORGANIZATIONS

LADIES' GUILD

The St. John's Ladies Guild will hold a bake sale on Sunday, May 7 between services in the gym.

The St. John's Ladies Guild will meet on Thursday, May 25, at 6:00 p.m. in the church basement.



YOUTH GROUP

Spring Clean Up Day—May 21, 2023

The Youth Group will do yard work, window washing, or other chores for seniors or other members of the congregation who could use our help.

Contact Pastor Bishop if you would like the Youth Group to help out around your home.

After we're done, we will come back to the church for pizza.

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St. John's Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML)

St. John's LWML will meet June 3 at 10 a.m. in the church basement.

All ladies of the congregation are welcome.

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Mother's Day Diaper Shower: Peoria Area Lutherans for Life is again sponsoring a diaper shower on Mother's Day, **May 14th**. The purpose is to collect as many disposable diapers as possible (infant, child and adult sizes) that will then be distributed to local charitable organizations who serve women and their children, as well as seniors. Agencies we have helped in past years include Women's Care Center, Esther House, Empower Life Center, Lutheran Hillside Village, Washington Christian Village, and Living Alternatives Pregnancy Resource Center. These are all worthy life-affirming organizations we intend to help again this year as we are enabled through your generosity. May the Lord of life bless you as you help us make this event a success again this year.

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IN OUR PRAYERS

If you know of anyone who needs to be added, please let the church office know.

All our shut-ins

Pastor Niemann	Sandy Morgan
Billie Jackson	Flo McClure
Robert Rilea	Rhonda Lappie
Peggy Farlin	Jeff Ferree
Marlana Montgomery	Paula Jensen
Addie Burling	Julie Rilea
Gabriella Kesselmayer	Eileen Tiona
Jack Hall	Jean Jarvis
Lois Becker	Virginia Tackmann
Debi Thome	Pat Proehl
Suzanne Reising	Kellen Norman
Mark Reising	Joyce Barnes
Lee Morgan	Carol Long
Wilmadean Habberfield	Carl Hauk

Camp CILCA

May 28 Hog Roast

- Adults \$10, Children \$8
- 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
- Pulled Port, sides, drinks & desserts!

May 27-29—Great CID Campout!

- **Outdoor recreation:** hiking, fishing, boating, swimming, disc golf, squishy ball, campfire devotions, Sunday worship for campers (10:30 a.m.) and Christian fellowship.
- **Beach:** open daily from 1 to 4 p.m.
- Campsites, cabins and hotel-sytle rooms in the Christian Growth Center are available. *Contact the camp office (217-487-7497 / camp@cilca.org) for reservations.*

Anytime: Resister for Summer Camp!

- **Preschool—4th grade:** Generations
- **1st 0 4th Grades:** Pathfinders
- **4th—6th Grades:** Bold Spirits, Aqua Week
- **6th—8th Grades:** Art, Drama & Athletics; Night Owl: Dauntless Souls
- **High School:** Intrepid Hearts, Junior Counselor, Joyful Hearts Volunteer

Find out more at www.cilca.org

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GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN SCHOOL

- May 6 GSLS Auction at the Paradise Ballroom
- May 12 School Improvement Day (PreK early dismissal @ 12 N — K-8 @ 12:30 p.m.
- May 23 Last day for Preschool,
- May 25 8th Grade Graduation Ceremony @ 6:30 p.m.
- May 26 Final Attendance Day (Early dismissal K-8 @ 12:30 p.m.

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to all our grade school, high school and college graduates.

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LCMSFoundation

Twenty-three years ago, Frieda and Herman put their estate plan together with their attorney, right when Herman retired. Last month, the Lord called Herman home and now Frieda has an appointment next month to go to the attorney to have her will redrafted. The thought of taking Herman’s name out of her will pains her. Yet, she is confident that he lives on in Jesus. She is working through that change.

The second thing she is pondering is that in her last will, it referenced all three of their children. Frederick died as a hero in Afghanistan fifteen years ago. As with Herman, Frieda clings to the resurrection hope in Jesus about Frederick as well.

In recent days, she has been considering that in the past, their estate was to be equally divided in three parts to their three children. Frederick passed without a wife or children. Frieda has a desire to make his share become a personal endowment to offer support to her congregation to assist those going through grief, all to make sure people can find their comfort in Jesus, just as she has. Her congregation is talking about a new Stephens ministry program, part of which will be directly focused on grief care. She wonders if her endowment could pay for her congregation enrolling in that program.

She scheduled an appointment with her LCMS Foundation Gift Planning Counselor for tomorrow to discuss this. For the first time in weeks, she is feeling great energy and joy about her life, working toward this goal. Your LCMS Foundation Gift Planning Counselor can help you too. Contact Scott Radden by emailing scott.radden@lfd.org or calling his cell phone at 618-977-4049.

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VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Opening day for Vacation bible School is Sunday, June 4 at 5:45 p.m. and run through Thursday, June 8. Hours are 6 to 8 p.m.

A team is need to prepare, serve and clean up after snack. Please contact Sandy Tennell at 202-9302 if you can help.

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St. John's Lutheran Church
711 Court St.
Pekin, IL 61554

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Pekin, IL
Permit No. 146

(Address Service Requested)

Bible Wordsearch

Wordsearch 259

Matt.12:29-40

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Sign of Jonah

BELLY	ACCOUNT
BRINGS	AGAINST
BROOD	ANSWERED
CARRY	ANYONE
DAYS	ANYTHING
EARTH	CARELESS
EITHER	FORGIVEN
EVERY	GATHER
EXCEPT	JUDGMENT
FRUIT	OVERFLOW
JONAH	PHARISEES
MOUTH	PROPHET
SPEAKS	SPOKEN
SPIRIT	STORED
UNLESS	STRONG
VIPERS	TEACHER
WICKED	SCATTERS

After you find all the hidden words the left over letters spell out a
Bible verse reading from the top left to the bottom right

MORE PUZZLES AT:

<http://biblewordgames.com>

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