St John Church of Christ September 26, 2021



Welcome to Worship!

We're glad you're here. Bible classes begin at 10:00. For kids, Pete & Penelope, our children's puppet program, is followed by songs and classes.

Join us this fall as we dig into the fascinating book of Revelation. Perhaps no other book of the Bible has been as abused at Revelation. Come learn how a better understanding of "apocalyptic literature" can open doors of insight into the last book of the Bible. Class begins at 10:00 A.M. with worship following at 11:00 A.M.

If you are unable to be with us in person, our worship is shared through our website:

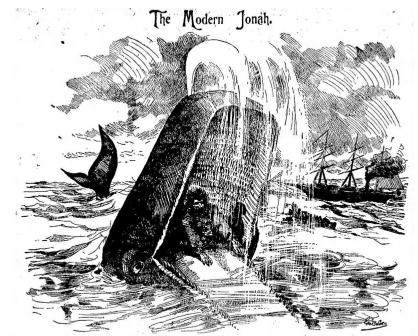
www.StJohnChurchOfChrist.org

Simply select "Sermons" from the menubar at the top, or click this link to visit our page on YouTube:

St. John Church of Christ

Believe It or Not!

John McKeel



DISAPPEARING VIEW OF JAMES BARTLEY, AN ENGLISH SAILOR, WHO WAS RESCUED ALIVE, AFTER BEING IN A WHALE'S BELLY THIRTY-AX HOURS, AS VOUCHED FOR BY THE SCIENTIFIC EDITOR OF THE JOURNAL DES DEBATS, THE WELL-KNOWN FARIS NEWSPAPER.

Do you remember reading Ripley's Believe It or Not? Every day, in the comic section of the newspaper (do you remember newspapers?), Ripley would publish strange and amazing stories. Naturally, that was in the time before, and sometimes people would uncritically accept his assertions as the truth. After all, "I read it in the newspaper." It must be true! Of course, the same thing happens today; it just happens at the speed of light on the internet.

It's amazing what people believe. "They've found Noah's Ark!" I was told. "An archaeologist knows where the Ark of the Covenant is hidden!" There are two monasteries in Egypt, and each one claims to have the head of the Baptist. One is much smaller than the other, and a sincere monk explains, "Yes, this one is from when he was a boy."

Matters of faith are "confirmed" by strange events, and one of the most bizarre stories involves a modern Jonah – a sailor was swallowed by a sperm whale and saved days later. It happened in 1891 when the ship, Star of the

Continued from front page

East, was whaling off the Falkland Islands in the South Atlantic. They spotted a giant sperm whale (think Moby Dick).

> "Two longboats were dropped, and the hunt was on. Two harpoons, one from each longboat, were sunk into the whale, which fought hard. The whale dived, and the harpooners started to pull the slack line back into their boats when the whale re-surfaced and started to beat wildly with its tail. One of the longboats managed to get away, but the other was struck by the animal's nose and tipped over... by the time the second longboat could perform a rescue, one man had drowned, and one was missing and presumed drowned.

> "Within a few hours the dead whale was pulled alongside the Star of the East, and the crew was busy cutting it up and retrieving the fat. The job took up the rest of the day, and a good part of the night, and then work resumed about noon the next day. It was on the second day that something strange was discovered; as the stomach was freed and brought to the deck for rendering, it was seen that something bunched up within it was showing spasmodic signs of life. When the stomach was cut open, they discovered the missing sailor -- James Bartley -- curled up and still alive, though just barely, thirty-six hours after he went missing!

"He was laid out on the deck and splashed with seawater; the whale's gastric juices had bleached Bartley's face and hands to a deathly white and wrinkled them. For two weeks he was kept in the captain's cabin; physically, he recovered fine, but mentally he was unstable. But by the third week, Bartley had fully recovered and had resumed his duties." [1]

This story has been endlessly repeated in sermons around the world and reported as true in *The Princeton Theological Journal* (October 1927). Sadly, the story is false. We have the crew list and the "modern Jonah," James Barley, wasn't onboard. Many other facts have come to light since then discrediting this story, but it's one of those yarns that is too good to let die.

Christians need to be especially careful when they share "facts." Don't just naively share things on social media, even when they come from other Christian friends and people you trust. Take a moment to verify the story because something that isn't true is a lie and we know where liars are bound – even well-intentioned ones.

[1] The story of James Barley comes from http://anomalyinfo.com/Stories/1891-february-james-bartley-modern-jonah

Prayer Requests

Chet and Marla's son-in-law's mother, Chrissy, is still struggling with cancer. She thought things were going better, but found out cancer has grown. She would like to have prayers on her behalf.

Terry and Joy are continuing to recover from covid, but it is a long-haul. Please remember them in your prayers.





2021 Kansas Ministry Retreat

ane Perkins is the featured keynote speaker for this year's men's retreat at Silver Maple Bible Camp, Sunday October 17th - Tuesday October 19th.

Zane is the Director of Advancement Relations at SIBI - the Sunset International Bible Institute in Lubbock, Texas.

This year's program begins informally Sunday evening at 6 pm at the Pizza Hut in Kingman and then runs Monday and Tuesday at camp. The cost is only \$75. More information is posted on the bulletin board in the foyer.

Calling All Teens

The Eastwood church of Christ in Hutchinson is hosting the monthly Midwest Teens for Christ/Super Sunday *today* from 3-6pm. Matt Carden, their youth minister reports: "We will have lots of games, pizza, and worship for grades 6-12. Everyone is welcome! Topic of the night is Spiritual Warfare"