



ST. JOHN'S EAGLE

Volume 56, Issue 5

May 2026

Special items of interest:

Worship in our Sanctuary continues each Sunday morning at 9am. If you are unable to attend, you can join us for virtual worship on our YouTube page. (Go to YouTube.com and search for St. John's Lutheran Church-Mendota)

If you would like Pastor Elise to visit when you are hospitalized or at any time please contact the church office.

St. John's offers **Electronic Giving**. If you are interested please contact Le Roy in the office. You can also **give online** through the link on our website.

The **Wednesday prayer group** meets from 9am to approximately 9:30am every Wednesday to lift up prayers on behalf of the St. John's community. You can pray aloud or silently, come frequently, or on occasion. All are welcome!



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Dear friends,

This past month a new team began its work here at St. John's. Our team is learning about "human-centered design." You might be thinking, what does that mean? Human-centered design takes the approach of listening to what people's needs are, then developing a product (or in our case ministry) that connects with people. A lot of times in churches, we decide what people need, or what we want from them, without really listening to what the real needs or concerns are. Then we wonder why something didn't connect. Human-centered design is something we in the church can learn from the business world. A wise business does not just develop a product. They first need to find out whether people need it or would want it and would pay for it.

The approach for us in ministry is not to assume that we (in leadership) know what will work for other people. We need to listen first, then adapt our ministry or create a ministry that meets people's needs. This past month our team interviewed people inside and outside of our congregation to hear their perspectives about people's lives in Mendota. (Yes, this isn't too different than the ReImagine Mendota process.) Over the next months we will prototype a ministry, and then see how it works. We will fill you in more as we go.

Many of you recognize that the way we "did church" even just a couple of decades ago, does not fit our changing landscape. People don't just "join churches" like they used to. Sunday mornings (and Wednesday evenings) are no longer "protected" time for families to be part of a faith community. Church does not have a privileged place in society like it used to. In some ways being a committed disciple of a faith community is much more like it was in the first centuries of Christianity. It takes commitment from those who feel called by Jesus to be part of the community.

It also takes flexibility and adaptability – and the willingness to invite others. That invitation might be to worship. But it might also be to a service project or Sunday School or Bible Study. There's an epidemic of loneliness and isolation in our country. We in the church know something about being community. If you have ideas about ways and places we can invite others into community and a sense of belonging, share them with me, the St. John's council and teams. Your insights and ideas are gifts of the Holy Spirit for the whole church!

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Elise



Fun on the Farm

Confirmation Students went on a trip to the Piller Farm as part of their Confirmation class on April 19th. Thank you to the Piller Family for hosting the class. Thank you to Lisa Tillman for chaperoning.

Confirmation

On Sunday, May 31, five of our young people will affirm their Baptism into Christ through the rite of Confirmation. Please pray for Lila Coss, Taylor Erlenborn, Chloe Klein, Cooper Klein, and Hunter Piller as they conclude their Confirmation studies and prepare for this milestone.

The congregation is invited to join the confirmands and their families for a cake and punch reception immediately following the service in their honor.

Seventh-grade students are asked to meet in the kitchen after worship to assist with serving and cleanup.

"Thank You!" to our Sunday School Teachers and Families!

We would like to take this opportunity to say "Thank You!" to everyone who invested their time in the faith development of our children during this Sunday School year! Thank you to the several teaching teams: Sarah Coss & Sarah Landers, Melissa Doll & Linda Erlenborn, Valerie Kromm & Lisa Martin, and Dawn Kendall & Melissa Nosalik. Thank you to James Younger for beginning each Sunday school hour with music and games, and Pastor Elise for leading our 7th and 8th graders in Confirmation.

All the Sunday School Teachers would like to thank the parents for entrusting us with your children every Sunday morning. ***Without the children, we would not be able to have a Sunday School class.***

St. John's Lutheran Cemetery Update

Due to the increased cost of cemetery maintenance in 2026, the church council voted to increase the cost of cemetery plots. This will help defray the cost of cemetery maintenance to the church. The last time the prices were increased was in 2012. The new plot prices will be \$600 for members and \$700 for nonmembers.

The price increase will take effect June 1st, 2026.

All quotes made prior to June 1st, 2026, will be honored at the previous published quotes of \$400 per plot for members and \$500 per plot for non-members.

St. John's Council also voted to approve a new policy and procedure manual for the cemetery. If you would like to have a copy, they are available in the church office.

Church Council Highlights

At its April 16, 2026 meeting, the Church Council:

- Approved a cemetery policy, effective June 1, 2026; Updated and approved the fundraising policy;
- Heard an update about the Congregations Lead Team that is learning about innovation in ministry;
- Approved having special offering for the MHS Fellowship of Christian Athletes and the Northern Illinois Synod Assembly; And is excited to encourage youth to attend the ELCA Youth Gathering in summer 2027.

Finance Report Year To Date thru March 2026:

Budgeted Income \$85,605 Actual Income \$105,998

Budgeted Expense \$89,478 Actual Expense \$98,546

We are grateful for your continued financial support, through your offerings in person, through the mail, and through electronic giving. We are blessed to have such a faithful St. John's family.

The Book of Revelation

The book of Revelation Bible Study continues each Wednesday at 7PM, with a video presentation and discussion. You are welcome to join at any time. You can bring your own Bible or borrow one.

The final session will be June 3.

Young Adult Bible Study

All young adults out of high school are invited to share in a Bible study. The group meets at St. John's every other week at 6:00 PM and is led by Ted Landgraf and Tim Miller.

The next dates are May 12 and 26.

What Are Your Gifts?

As the church, we combine our talents and skills for a thriving ministry that shares Jesus' love with our neighbors. How might you offer your gifts at St. John's? On **Thursday, May 7 at 7:00 PM**, we gather to discuss our ministry and the roles teams and individuals play. **You are invited to JOIN US!**

We will talk about plans for the summer and fall months: how we serve our neighbors, how we invite others, how we will worship, and take care of our property. Your voice and your presence matter to us. Share your thoughts and together we will be led by the Spirit.

Invitations to Generosity

As Christians we are united with all Christians around the world. Together we are called to love God and love our neighbor. Here are some ways this month that you can support Christian neighbors:

Last year **Mendota High School** began a Fellowship of Christian Athletes chapter. We will provide them a donation to help fund their activities, snacks, and Bibles. There will be a basket in the narthex for this offering on Sunday, May 17.

The **Northern Illinois Synod Assembly** will gather on June 12 and 13 and will receive both a regular and an in-kind offering of tangible gifts. The In-Kind Offering supports Lutheran Social Services of Illinois with \$25 gift cards or through their Mindful Giving wish list (giftlist.lssi.org); The assembly monetary offering will support our two Synod Authorized Worshipping Communities, communities of faith designed to reach neighbors who might not feel at home in a traditional church setting: Becoming Oswego (Oswego) and Iglesia San Jose Obrero (serving the Quad Cities). You can find more information at www.nisynod.org/pages/2026-offering.

We will collect for the Synod Assembly offering between May 24 and June 7.

Youth Progressive Bike Dinner

On Sunday, April 12th, St. John's youth and some friends enjoyed biking around Mendota to different locations for snacks, games, dinner & dessert. Thank you to everyone who helped make the Youth Progressive Bike Dinner possible!

A big shout out to the Goy's, Holland's, Betsy Westrick, Lynette Piller and Todd Zimmerlein for all the help and support.

A special thank you to Monica Dankenbring- Zimmerlein for all your hard work and planning.



ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Find us on Facebook!



Search for our page "St. John's Lutheran Church, Mendota, IL" and join us.

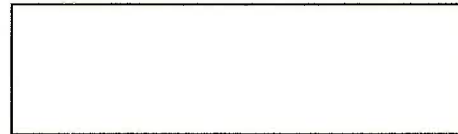
Upcoming Readings for Sunday Worship

- May 3 – Acts 17:16-31
- May 10 – Philippians 1:1-18a
- May 17 – Philippians 2:1-13
- May 24 – Acts 2:1-21, Philippians 4:4-7
- May 31 – John 16:12-15

**Save the Date: Friday, July 17th
Lunch in the Park sponsored by
St. John's Youth.**

Periodicals

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May Birthdays, Anniversaries & Upcoming Events

God's Blessings to all who are celebrating !!

75th+ Birthday



- May 2 Barb Anderson
- May 5 Dotti Scholz
- May 7 Ken Betz
- May 9 Jim Piller
- May 10 Bob Kreiser
- May 24 Gene Orstead
- May 25 Otto Meyer
- May 30 Mary Jo Escatel
- May 31 Janice Vegetabile
- May 31 Nancy Grote

Happy Anniversary!

- May 3 John & Kris Baird 29 years
- May 13 Rob & Sue Guardiola 31 years
- May 14 Peter & Theresa Komitas 21 years
- May 15 Bill & Denise Garthe 44 years
- May 18 Liam & Josephine Bogle 2 year s
- May 28 Don & Karen Goy 43 years
- May 29 Jon & Joyce Dinges 67 years
- May 31 Ken & Laurie Ladenburger 46 years

May

- 3 Last Day of Sunday School/Confirmation class
- 6 Prayer Group in Chapel 9am
- 6 Revelation Bible Study 7pm
- 7 Sarah Circle at Stonecroft 1pm
- 7 All Team's Meeting 7pm
- 11 Rebecca Circle 130pm
- 12 Young Adult Bible Study 6pm
- 13 Prayer Group in Chapel 9am
- 13 Revelation Bible Study 7pm
- 14 Allure 10am
- 14 Grad Pics due to office
- 20 Prayer Group in Chapel 9am
- 20 Stonecroft 10am
- 20 Revelation Bible Study 7pm
- 21 Executive Team 530pm/Council 630pm
- 26 Quilting 9am
- 26 Young Adult Bible Study 6pm
- 27 Prayer Group in Chapel 9am
- 27 Revelation Bible Study 7pm
- 31 Confirmation of 8th Graders at 9am worship