

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Thrivent Members



Please remember to designate your Choice Dollars to St. John's Lutheran Church. Thank you!

Find us on Facebook!

Search for "St. John's Lutheran Church" and join our page.



December Birthdays and Anniversaries

God's continued blessings to the following members of our congregation...

75th+ Birthday



Dec. 7 Rita Randecker
Dec. 10 Betty Croisant
Carol Fischer
Dec. 17 John Betz
Dec. 18 Kenneth Miller
Dec. 19 Myrintha Morton
Dec. 21 Carole Dancey

Happy 50+ and Milestone Anniversary Wishes!

Elwood & Jo Ann Kidd
December 6th — 63 years

Doug & Jill Anderson
December 18th — 45 years

Daniel & Rita Randecker
December 28th — 63 years

Periodicals

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Upcoming Office Closures & Information

The church office will be CLOSED on Monday, December 27th in observance of the Christmas Holiday. The office will also close at 12:30pm on December 28th, 29th and 30th.

Remember that December 31st is the last day for financial contributions for 2021.

When the snow and ice arrive this winter, please remember that the standard rule for canceling worship services and meetings is for you to stay safe! If either ice or snow would endanger your drive or entrance to the church, please stay home! Let safety be your guide.

We wish God's blessings on you and your family during this Christmas season.



St. John's staff
Pastor Ken Gibson,
Susan Garner,
Laurie Zimmerman,
Karyn Bock, Rob Guardiola,
Dawn Kendall, James Younger,
Delle Vercimak,
Vicki Wujek & Kevin Wohrley.

St. John's Lutheran Church



ST. JOHN'S EAGLE

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December 2021

Special items of interest:

- **Worship in our Sanctuary continues** each Sunday morning at 9am. If you are unable to attend, you are invited to join us for virtual worship on Facebook Live.
- **Sunday School classes for all ages begin at 10am.** Please sign-in at the table in the north fellowship hall.
- **If you want Pastor Ken Gibson to know when you are hospitalized,** please contact the church office. Because of privacy laws, the hospital will not contact us.
- St. John's offers **Electronic Giving.** If you are interested please contact Susan in the office. You can also give online through the link on our website.
- We hope you are joining Pastor Ken for **daily devotions, Monday through Thursday mornings at 8am on St. John's Facebook page.** It's a nice way to start your day!

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END OF YEAR GENEROSITY

by Pastor Ken Gibson

This time each year, my mailboxes, electronic and regular mail, are full of mail from organizations asking me and Yvonne to be generous as we consider our end of year giving. This is the time of year that many charitable organizations are planning on end of year generosity to get them over the line and balance their budgets. All the organizations that we support with our financial gifts are worthy and we are glad to be blessed to support them in the year. One of the things I have always done and will continue this year as well is remember the one place that I am most committed, that being St. John's in Mendota. The church is crucial to the success of so many. In fact, as this year comes to a close, St. John's will exceed over a hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) in benevolent giving.

This generosity is amazing, and it speaks well of our united commitment to Christ and the needs of others besides ourselves. I know that many of the people touched by these St. John's benevolences are people I will never know or have the chance to meet and that excites me. Why? Because God does not call me to know all those folks. God only calls me to serve them. We show our love of God in response to the great gift of His Son, whose birth we once again celebrate this month.

So then, consider this an invitation to join me and Yvonne and make an extra gift to your church this year end. Remember that we too are a 501C-3 and our gifts are just as deductible as any other, if needing such a tax deduction.

I only know that when I write the extra check to St. John's, a smile comes upon my face. It is a joy to give and a joy to live, in this community, at this time of year and all year long. I give thanks for you always. Merry Christmas everyone and Happy New Year! May the joy of the Christ child dwell in your heart all through the year.

An Update from St. John's Task Force

The Task Force Team donated \$250 to the Mendota Area Chamber of Commerce Operation Elf Action project and our confirmation class helped out by labeling Santa's gift bags. These gift bags will contain gifts for deserving children in the Mendota area.

We are also sponsoring Holiday Dinners for ten local families, along with \$25 Sullivan's gift cards, as part of the First Presbyterian Church Micro Pantry project. The meal will consist of a ham or a turkey and all the sides to be prepared at home. Donation total will be \$600.

St. John's is a blessed congregation, thankful for what we have and generous to those in need! Team Members: Ken & Laurie Ladenburger, Roberta Wendel, and Jeff Simonton.

Church Council Highlights

The following are some highlights from the November 18, 2021 Church Council meeting.

- Council reviewed the Building Use/Covid-19 Restrictions. All pews are now open. We ask you to spread out and use the entire sanctuary which includes using the pews at the front.
- The EMT reported that Sunday School is going well. James Younger is working with the children on the Christmas Pageant.
- Lynette Piller, our new Youth Coordinator, will begin her work with us in January.
- Council approved the quilt silent auction beginning on Sunday, November 28th.
- The Council was made aware of a recent incident with a mentally unstable visitor to the church office. Out of an abundance of caution, the exterior door from the courtyard to the office will remain locked. We will be installing a buzzer with an intercom, but until the work is completed we ask for your patience when you come to the office. Continue to ring the doorbell and someone will open the door for you.

Finance Report Year To Date thru October 2021:
Budgeted Income \$307,183 Actual Income \$300,762
Budgeted Expense \$322,317 Actual Expense \$295,672

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



The Angel Tree has returned to St. John's!

We invite you to come to the Fellowship Hall for the return of the Angel Tree. Once again, you can help brighten the lives of residents at Heritage Health with gifts listed on the Angel Tree tags. Our high school Sunday School class will be replenishing tags on the tree and will assist with the sorting and delivery of gifts to Heritage.

Items needed include: hand lotion (must NOT say "keep out of reach of children"), soft candy (regular and sugar-free), circle word puzzles, large print books or magazines, stamps, stationery, diabetic socks, sweatshirts (adult XL, XXL, XXXL). Instructions are by the tree. Please bring your unwrapped items to the large box marked "Angel Tree" in the Fellowship Hall by December 12th. And then count yourself as a Christmas angel. Thank you!



We thank everyone who returned their completed Time & Talent sheets and Financial Commitment forms. If you are still working to complete yours, please bring it to the office as soon as possible. The forms are used in scheduling our worship volunteers.

Advent & Christmas Worship Services
by James Younger, Director of Worship & Music

We have some wonderful Advent and Christmas worship services planned and you are invited to join us.

The four Sundays in Advent will use a modified liturgy incorporating wonderful Advent and Christmas hymns. We will have some of our families participate in lighting the Advent Wreath each Sunday. Please plan on attending these 9am services to prepare yourself for the coming of Christ.

On Wednesdays during Advent (December 1st, 8th, 15th, and 22nd) we will offer a brief service at 6:30pm using *The Holden Evening Prayer* by Marty Haugen. This service is beautiful and serene. Consider bringing your family or friends to this service and give yourself the opportunity to slow down during this busy season.

Christmas Eve will have two very different services. At 4:30pm, we will have our Sunday School Christmas Pageant. There will be a live Nativity presented by our Confirmation youth, and a fun, family-friendly service to share the story of Jesus' birth.

There will be a traditional Christmas Eve service offered at 7:30pm with lots of carols, lessons, and music. We will conclude this service with the traditional congregational candle-lighting.

During the season of Advent, the Adult Choir will rehearse at 5:30pm and the Praise Band will rehearse at 7:15pm. If you are interested in participating in either of these groups, please contact me.

God bless, and I hope to see you at worship this Advent!



St. John's Youth News
"Growing Together in our Faith as we Serve Others"



No Sunday School classes on December 26th or January 2nd.
Classes resume on Sunday, January 9th.

Lighting of the St. John's Courtyard Christmas Tree

Wow! What a wonderful way to kick off the Advent season!

The lighting of our courtyard Christmas Tree was held on the first Sunday of Advent, November 28th. Everyone gathered in the courtyard, enjoyed hot chocolate and cookies, sang carols, and counted-down to the moment that several children flipped the switch to light the tree.

We extend a big "Thank You!" to those who were involved in making this special courtyard event happen.

If you were unable to join us, we invite you to visit St. John's Facebook page where you will find a video of the Christmas Tree lighting.

Our courtyard event for December will be a live nativity by our confirmation students prior to the 4:30pm Christmas Eve worship service.






SILENT AUCTION

The Silent Auction of beautiful quilts created by our St. John's Quilting Ladies will be held in the north fellowship hall beginning on Sunday, November 28th. Stop in to check them out and place a bid on your favorite! The auction will continue on Sunday, December 5th; and final bids will be accepted on Sunday, December 12th. All proceeds from the silent auction will benefit St. John's Youth.


We thank our Quilting Ladies for their efforts in creating the quilts and for their continued generous support of our youth.



CHRISTMAS PARTY!

The Confirmation Class will celebrate Christmas with a party at the parsonage during Sunday School class on December 19th. There will be plenty of food and fun! Those attending are asked to bring a gift (not to exceed \$10) for our gift exchange.

Advent Calendars Are Available



For the whole year, fix the star in the east and have come to worship Him. Matthew 2:1-12

To assist you in your advent time of waiting, we have Advent Calendars available for you to share in your home.

Pick up yours in the Narthex, on the Sunday School sign-in table, or stop in the church office during office hours.