

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Find us on Facebook!



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

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

St. John's staff

*Pastor Ken Gibson, Vicar Anthony Windau,
Melissa Nosalik, Laurie Zimmerman, Susan Garner,
Karyn Bock, Rob Guardiola, Dawn Kendall,
James Younger, Delle Vercimak,
Vicki Wujek & Kevin Wohrley.*

**December Birthdays, Anniversaries
and Upcoming Events**

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

75th+ Birthday

Dec. 7 Rita Randecker
Dec. 10 Betty Croisant
Carol Fischer
Dec. 19 Myrintha Morton
Dec. 21 Carole Dancey



**Happy 50+ and Milestone
Anniversary Wishes!**

Elwood & Jo Ann Kidd
December 6th — 64 years

Daniel & Rita Randecker
December 28th — 64 years

Duane & Dawn Kendall
December 29th — 30 years

December Calendar of Events

- 1 All Teams meeting 7pm
- 3 Chapel worship 5pm
- 4 Spaghetti Dinner 4:30pm to 7pm
- 4 MHS Madrigal Singers 7pm
- 7 Soup & Bread Supper 5:30pm to 6:15pm
- 7 Midweek Advent worship 6:30pm
- 8 Heritage Health 10am
- 10 Chapel worship 5pm
- 11 Quilt Silent Auction ends
- 12 Rebecca Circle at Simonton's 6:30pm
- 13 Quilting group 9am
- 13 Bible Study 1:15pm to 2:15pm
- 14 Soup & Bread Supper 5:30pm to 6:15pm
- 14 Midweek Advent worship 6:30pm
- 16 HS Christmas Breakfast After Finals!
- 17 Last Chapel worship 5pm
- 18 Confirmation Christmas Party 10am
- 20 Bible Study 1:15pm to 2:15pm
- 21 Stonecroft 10am
- 21 Soup & Bread Supper 5:30pm to 6:15pm
- 21 Midweek Advent worship 6:30pm
- 22 Blue Christmas worship 6:30pm
- 24 Christmas Eve worship 4:30pm & 7:30pm
- 25 Christmas Day worship 9am
- 26 Office Closed
- 27 Bible Study 1:15pm to 2:15pm
- 27-29 Office Closing at 12:30pm

Periodicals

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**Upcoming Office
Closures & Information**

The church office will be CLOSED on Monday, December 26th in observance of the Christmas Holiday. The office will also close at 12:30pm on December 27th, 28th and 29th.

Remember that December 31st is the last day for financial contributions for 2022.

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.



St. John's Lutheran Church



ST. JOHN'S EAGLE

Volume 52, Issue 12

December 2022

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 STJ LUTHERAN MENDOTA.)
- **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.
- **DECEMBER QUILTING DAY** will be Tuesday, December 13th.



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Advent... Christmas...

In light of the recent announcement that I will be stepping down as your Senior Pastor here at St. John's, perhaps some of you are asking the question: "*Well, now what do we do?*" I have asked myself the same question, and the truth is, for me at least, only God knows. However, for St. John's, the answer is: we do what we have always done. We celebrate the seasons of Advent and Christmas together, and all of the things that this church has done for over 163 years, we continue to do now. The reality is that we do what Christ compels us to do. We worship him and we carry out the mission of St. John's together.

As I shared in the letter you should have all received by now, we do ministry like we are going to be there forever. There is much truth in this statement. I know that even though my time as your pastor will come to an end in mid-January, my time with you and all the saints of God are destined for eternity. I know that my call to love each of you is something I have done with my whole heart, and that love will continue even if the date on a calendar says we are no longer pastor and congregation. We are forever sisters and brothers in Christ and for that truth I give thanks to God.

Yvonne and I, and our entire family, thank all of you for your care and concern the past ten months since the loss of Lauren and especially for the outpouring of support that has been shown to us in these most recent days.

May you always know with complete confidence that God loves you and so do I! And as Luther would state it: "This is most certainly true."

Thank you from the depth of my soul. So now, let's enjoy Advent and Christmas and even a little Epiphany together.

~ Pastor Ken

Church Council Highlights

The following are some highlights from the November 17, 2022 meeting of our church council.

- The Worship Team reported that we will offer a “Blue Christmas” worship service on Thursday, December 22nd at 6:30pm.
- The Youth Huddle reported that our Spaghetti Supper will be held on Sunday, December 4th. The “freewill offering” meal will be offered from 4:30pm to 7pm. The MHS Madrigals will perform in the Sanctuary at 7pm.
- Council was joined by Rev. Jen Beamsley, Assistant to the Bishop. Pastor Ken read his letter of resignation to the Council; and Pastor Jen then led Council through the “Congregation in Transition” worksheet. A Transition Team will be formed.

Finance Report Year To Date thru October 2022:

Budgeted Income \$301,295 Actual Income \$259,303
Budgeted Expense \$315,459 Actual Expense \$311,087

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.

You are Invited!

On behalf of the youth of St. John’s, I would like to invite you to supper. A spaghetti supper, that is. By now, many of you know that on December 4th the St. John’s youth is hosting its beloved Spaghetti Dinner followed by a performance of the MHS Madrigals. It is going to be an exciting and fun night. If you’re on the fence, this is your sign to join us!

If you miss out on this, no worries. In January, the High School Youth will begin selling pizzas for the Super Bowl — just like last year! If there’s one thing we like to do here at St. John’s, it’s eat good food! All donations and proceeds go to fund our 2023 Mission Trip to Altoona, PA and various other Middle and High school events.

~ Bring your appetite! Vicar Anthony

Thank You!



We thank everyone who returned their completed Time, Talent & Giving form. 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. If you would like information on automatic giving, please speak to Susan Garner.

The Angel Tree Has Returned!



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.

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, sweat-shirts (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 11th. And then count yourself as a Christmas angel. Thank you!



The Silent Auction of beautiful quilts created by our talented St. John’s Quilting Ladies will begin on Sunday, November 27th. Stop in the Fellowship Hall to check them out and place a bid on your favorites! The auction will continue on Sunday, December 4th; and final bids will be accepted on Sunday, December 11th. 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.



St. John’s Youth News

"Growing Together in our Faith as we Serve Others"



No Sunday School classes on December 25th or January 1st.
Classes resume on Sunday, January 8th.

Congratulations to our 2022 Confirmation Class!



Pictured with Pastor Ken Gibson & Vicar Anthony Windau are (L to R): Sarah Brown, Addyson Champlin, Ally Denault, Alex Holland, Grady Jones, Gracie Politsch, Meredith Politsch, Joshua Shakespeare, and Aden Tillman.

JOIN TEAM ALTOONA!



All current 8th graders and high school students are encouraged to join Team Altoona!! We will spend a week in July 2023 with TEAMeffort in the community of Altoona, PA.

Typical projects include painting, home repairs, and building wheel-chair ramps as well as working alongside local churches and missions to help maintain and improve their facilities.

More information about serving in Altoona, PA can be found at www.teameffort.org/altoona-pa.

High School Students!!



St. John’s high school students are invited to the Fellowship Hall on Friday, December 16th for “Christmas Breakfast After Finals!” Stop by immediately following your last final exam (9:20am-ish) for a delicious, relaxing breakfast, games and fellowship before starting your Christmas break. Your friends are welcome to join us, too!! Let Vicar Anthony know if you’ll be there so we can be sure to have enough food.

Confirmation Students!!



The 7th & 8th Grade Confirmation Class will celebrate Christmas with a party at the parsonage during Sunday School class on December 18th. There will be plenty of food and fun! Those attending are asked to bring a gift (not to exceed \$10) for our gift exchange.

Spaghetti Dinner

Our annual **Spaghetti Dinner** will be held on Sunday, December 4th from 4:30pm to 7pm. We will be serving you a delicious dinner of spaghetti with meat sauce, breadsticks, salad, and homemade dessert. Our junior high and high school students are looking forward to serving you at your table again this year. Please invite your family and friends to join you for this freewill offering meal. All proceeds will support the 2023 Mission Trips and other youth activities. Following the dinner, you are invited to join us in the Sanctuary for a special performance by the Mendota High School Madrigal Singers.

Our talented St. John’s Quilting Ladies will have several handmade quilts on display as part of a Silent Auction that will conclude on December 11th. We hope you will take some time to enjoy the beauty of these quilts, and place bids on your favorites. Proceeds from the Silent Auction will be donated to the Youth.

Students — *Please plan to arrive in the Fellowship Hall by 4pm on December 4th. We’re looking forward to another fun and successful event!*