

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Periodicals

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Please remember that the standard rule for canceling worship services & meetings is for you to stay safe! If ice, snow, or dangerously low temperatures would endanger your drive or entrance to the church, please stay home! We will do our best to have the office open during normal hours, but if school is canceled, it would be a good idea for you to phone the church office to be sure we are open before venturing out.

February Birthdays, Anniversaries & Upcoming Events

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

75th+ Birthday



- Feb. 2 Elwood Kidd
- Feb. 3 Joanne Politsch
- Feb. 4 Ron Egler
- Feb. 6 Carol Schinzer
- Feb. 17 Bruce Wilhelm
- Feb. 18 Dennis Pohl
- Feb. 23 Elizabeth Robinson
- Feb. 26 Pam Dean

- 1 All Teams meeting 7pm
- 8 Allure (Heritage Health) 10am
- 12 Rebecca Circle 1:30pm
- 13 Fat Tuesday Pancake Supper 5pm to 7pm
- 14 Ash Wednesday worship 6:30pm
- 15 Church Council meeting 6:30pm
- 18 "3rd Sunday" Coffee Fellowship after worship
- 21 Stonecroft 10am
- 21 Midweek Lenten meal 5:30-6:15pm/worship 6:30pm
- 27 Quilting 9am
- 28 Midweek Lenten meal 5:30-6:15pm/worship 6:30pm

It's Time To Order Easter Flowers!



If you would like to purchase blooming plants (Easter lily, geranium, cyclamen, begonia, chrysanthemums, tulips or kalanchoe) to help decorate the sanctuary for Easter, please fill out the order form included with our weekly worship bulletins, enclose your check (Payable to St. John's with a notation on your check "Easter flowers") and put it in the offering plate or return it to the office by Monday, March 4th. If you have any questions, please contact the church office at 815-539-5626. Thank you!

Congratulations

Happy 50+ Anniversary!

- Jim & Dawn Mathesius
February 14th — 53 years
- William & Marlene Simonton
February 14th — 64 years

St. John's Lutheran Church



ST. JOHN'S EAGLE

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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 would like Pastor Elise to visit 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.



Inside this issue:

Annual Meeting Report	2
Church Council Highlights	2
2024 Council Members etc.	2
Welcome Rev. Elise Rothfusz	3
Birthdays and Anniversaries	4
Upcoming Events	4
Time to Order Easter Flowers	4

Dear friends in Christ,

It is so good to be with you! I thank you for the warm welcome my husband, son David, and I have received, and I am grateful that God has called me to serve among you. I look forward to seeing what God has in store for us as we carry out Jesus' ministry together.

Over the next few months one of my priorities is to become more acquainted with you as individuals and as the St. John's community. While I look forward to seeing you in Sunday worship, I appreciate any opportunity to meet and talk with you. I hope you will take advantage of other times we gather so I can get to know you or stop by the office to visit with me.

We are moving into the season of Lent this month. Ash Wednesday will be on February 14. Yes, that's right Ash Wednesday falls on Valentine's Day this year. While it may not seem like the most romantic date you may have with a significant other, our Ash Wednesday evening worship is a meaningful way to spend time with those you love, especially with the One who loved us into being. Our Lent theme this year will be "Hearts, Hands, and Voices," beginning with the Ash Wednesday service. The following midweek Wednesday services will use the Holden Evening Prayer worship setting.

Please do let me know when you are in the hospital or would like a visit from me. You can reach me on my mobile phone at 779-707-1324 or email me at pastorelise@stjohnsmendota.org. I will be taking Fridays as my day off. If you reach out to me on a Friday, please be patient for a reply.

Again, my family and I thank you for your welcome and hospitality as we settle into life here in Mendota and with you!

✝ In the grace of Christ,
Pastor Elise

Annual Meeting of St. John's Congregation

The 166th Annual Meeting of St. John's Congregation was held in the Fellowship Hall following worship on Sunday, January 28th. Council President Ken Ladenburger called the meeting to order and after determining that there was a quorum, Pastor Elise Rothfusz led the opening devotion. A video message from Bishop Stacie Fidler was shown.

Council President Ken Ladenburger shared remarks about 2023: the retirement of Pastor Ken Gibson, Vicar Anthony Windau becoming our Interim Pastor until mid-August, the many pulpit supply pastors we were privileged to meet, and our Interim Pastor Karen Tews leading us up to the arrival of Pastor Elise Rothfusz. He expressed our gratitude for the members of the Transition Team and the Call Committee, as well as the dedicated staff and many volunteers who made it possible for us to continue all of our ministries and activities during the Call process. He thanked everyone who contributed the funds to repair our beautiful stained glass windows. Ken also thanked his fellow outgoing Council member Dorothy Brandner for her years of service to the church. Fun fact: Did you know that in our 166 years we have had 24 full time senior pastors?

Treasurer Jeff Simonton presented the 2023 Treasurer's Report which was approved. He noted that this is the first time in a long time that we ended the year "in the black." This was due to not having a full-time pastor. He then presented the 2024 Annual Budget which was also approved by the congregation.

All of the Team reports were approved. The 2024 Ballot was presented and voted upon favorably. We need an additional Synod Delegate. If you are interested, please contact the office.

Todd Zimmerlein presented the Benevolence/Ministry Enhancement Distribution for 2024 which was approved. Todd also thanked outgoing Council President, Ken Ladenburger, for his two terms on Council.

New Business — Thank you to Todd Zimmerlein and family for installing the new huge tv monitor in the Sanctuary. There is another monitor yet to be installed. The next annual meeting is scheduled for Sunday, January 26, 2025.

It was noted that Pastor Elise's birthday was on January 23rd — "Happy Birthday" was sung by all!

Copies of the 2023 Annual Report are available in the church office.

Church Council Highlights

The following are some highlights from the January 28, 2024 organizational meeting of our Church Council:

- The Council elected officers who comprise the Executive Team (*listed below*).
- Council appointed Jeff Simonton to serve as Treasurer.
- Council approved the annual "Fat Tuesday Pancake Supper" scheduled for February 13th, and the Midweek Lenten Meals and Worship Services beginning on February 21st.

The next Council meeting will be held on Thursday, February 15th.

2024 St. John's Church Council, Delegates & Committee Members

The newly-elected Church Council gathered following the Annual Meeting on January 28th for a brief organizational meeting.

Executive Team includes: President—Tony Troyer; Vice President—Todd Zimmerlein; and Secretary—Roberta Wendel. The Church Council also includes: Melissa Doll, Carole Eich, Sandi Maas, Tom Meinhardt, Dennis Politsch, and Garret Zinke.

We thank the following members for volunteering to serve St. John's as committee members and delegates: Nominating Team - Dorothy Brandner, Ken Ladenburger; Northern Illinois Synod Assembly Delegates - Dennis Bieser.

We Hope You'll Mark Your Calendars! Fat Tuesday Pancake Supper Community Event Tuesday, February 13th — 5pm to 7pm St. John's Fellowship Hall

We hope you'll invite your family and friends to join you in allowing our St. John's Youth and Youth Huddle members to serve you a plate of warm pancakes, grilled sausage patties, and applesauce in a bright, festive room with others as we prepare to enter into our Lenten journeys. Feel free to dine in or carry dinner out. Meals will be offered to anyone for a freewill donation of any amount.

New this year — We will be collecting items to be donated to the Micropantry located at the First Presbyterian Church. Everyone is invited to participate as you choose. The Micropantry ministry offers families in need the ability to access food and other items, at any time of the day, for no cost. This ministry serves a great number of people in our community. Items that are in high demand at the Micropantry include: canned meats (such as tuna and chicken); Lunchables; peanut butter; jelly; granola bars; pasta sauce and pasta; oatmeal packets; individually packaged fruit cups or applesauce; canned veggies (including black beans and chickpeas); packets of snack crackers (cheese, peanut butter, etc.); saltine crackers (they put these out instead of bread). The Micropantry does have coolers so they can also accept items such as milk and cheeses that need refrigeration. They will also accept baby formula, paper products (toilet paper, Kleenex), and personal care items.

All proceeds from our Pancake Supper will be tithed to a ministry voted upon by the youth. The remainder will be used to fund future youth mission projects, ministries, and mission trip opportunities. If you'd like to donate items to serve at the event (pancake mix, applesauce, milk, etc.), please see the sign-up sheets on the Information Booth in the Fellowship Hall or contact the church office. Thank you in advance for your support!

Midweek Lenten Meals and Worship Services

Soup Supper from 5:30pm to 6:15pm
Holden Worship at 6:30pm in the Chapel

If your Team, Family, or Friend Group would like to provide a soup supper or simple meal on one of the available dates (Feb. 28, Mar. 6, 13, 20), please contact the church office. Our Church Council will provide the meal on the first Wednesday, February 21st.

Welcome Rev. Elise Rothfusz to St. John's!



Sunday, January 28th was the beginning of a new chapter in the life of St. John's Lutheran Church. We are excited to introduce our new pastor, Rev. Elise Rothfusz, and are looking forward to many years of partnering in ministry!

Pastor Elise's husband, John, is the new pastor at Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church in Sandwich. They are parents of three adult children, Daniel, David, and Anna.

Thank you, St. John's!!!

St. John's is a wonderful congregation to serve. Over these past several months I have been blessed to worship with you, get to know some really wonderful people, teach the Confirmation Class, and be part of your ministry. Thank you for this wonderful opportunity to walk alongside of you during your time of transition.

Thank you for the many cards and gifts. The expressions of appreciation for my ministry mean so much. Thanks to the Confirmation Class for the box of candy and the inspirational message. Right now it sits on a table in my living room - and next time I serve a congregation it will sit on my desk as a wonderful reminder of the Confirmation Class.

And thanks to the congregation for the very generous gas gift card. It will fuel the car for trips to see my daughters, and a springtime vacation.

I will continue to hold you and Pastor Elise in prayer, as you get to know each other and embark on the journey of faith and service that God has in store for you.

Blessings in Christ,
Pastor Karen