

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Periodicals

St. John's EAGLE (USPS 639-560) is published monthly by St. John's Lutheran Church, 607 10th Ave., Mendota, Illinois 61342-1935.

Periodicals nonprofit postage paid at Mendota, IL 61342-7935.

Postmaster, please send address change to St. John's Lutheran Church, 607 10th Ave., Mendota, IL 61342-1935. Melissa Nosalik, editor.



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



January Birthdays

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

75th+ Birthday



- Jan. 1 Steve Dancey
- Jan. 4 Shirley Pierson
- Jan. 5 Betty Lou Radefeld
- Jan. 13 Joanne Miller
- Jan. 14 Ron Hohertz  
Ron Reger
- Jan. 23 Pastor Ken Gibson
- Jan. 24 Leon Mosier
- Jan. 25 Rich Wujek
- Jan. 29 Vicar Anthony Windau

If you ordered a beautiful poinsettia to decorate the sanctuary for Christmas, you may take one home with you after worship on January 1st or you can stop in the church office during office hours.



THE ANNUAL MEETING OF  
ST. JOHN'S CONGREGATION  
IS SCHEDULED FOR  
SUNDAY, JANUARY 22ND  
FOLLOWING WORSHIP.

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.

The church office will be CLOSED on Monday, January 2nd in observance of the New Year Holiday.

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 53, Issue I

January 2023

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.)
- **Sunday School classes for all ages will resume on January 8th and begin at 10am.** Please sign-in at the table in the north fellowship hall.
- **If you want Pastor Ken Gibson or Vicar Anthony Windau 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.

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New Year and New Beginnings

As this will be the last article I write as your Senior Pastor, let me first lovingly share what an honor it has been. This is a different type of departure for me, as I am not heading to a new congregation. As most of you know, I am moving into a new phase of life as I strive to spend more time with my family.

Yvonne and I will always cherish our time here with you, and we thank God for each of you. As I have shared in the past, St. John's is a special place and it is made special because of the people who make up this church and care for her mission. Our life together at St. John's has been full, even in the time of Covid separations. We seemed to find a way to be together and that speaks volumes about who we are as a community.

I will be serving in some capacity somewhere in the future. I just do not know where yet. I only know it will not be full time. Karen Goy shared a comment with me this past month. She said: "Don't think God is done using you yet, Pastor Ken." Those were words I needed to hear at that moment, and they will be with me as I venture into the time ahead.

Allow me to close with a note that I found as I was cleaning out my things and preparing for the move ahead. It was written by my dear Lauren, and I am guessing that she was about 10 years old when she penned it. Her words brought tears of sadness and joy when I found it, and I present it here just as she wrote it, spelling and grammatical errors included.

"Now children, can you tell me your favirots Color?" said the teacher. Why don't we start with Tommy... GREEN screamed Tommy. Blue said Nancy. Yellow said John. Red said Mickal. And so on. Unlike these children, God has no favirots. He loves all children, God Loves all colors, Blue, Red, Green, Yello. He loves all children from you to a starving child left alone in a terrible war. God loves all people, God loves all numbers. God loves all animals. He loves all things from a dying tree to a seedling tree. God has no favirots. He is there for a dying person as well as a suffering animal. The most important thing you need to know in life is Jesus loves you. The best song is not one from the Backstreet Boys or the Spice Girls or Hanson. It is by a very young composer who wanted to make a point. I think he did."

"Jesus loves me, yes, I know for the bible tells me so...."  
Lauren Gibson

Yes, Lauren, and, yes, saints of St. John's, God does love you and so do I.

PK

### Church Council Highlights

The following are some highlights from the December 15, 2022 Church Council meeting.

- The Council recognized and thanked the two members who will be going off of Council at the end of January: Gary Duttlinger and Dawn Kendall.
- Assistant to the Bishop, Rev. Jen Beamsley, joined Council and shared that she will preach on January 22nd and stay for the annual meeting to outline the steps of our transition.
- A Call Committee will be formed after the new Council is organized following the annual meeting.
- Todd & Monica Zimmerlein agreed to lead the Confirmation class after Pastor Ken leaves. We are planning for Confirmation on Pentecost Sunday, May 28th. Vicar Anthony will remain with the High School youth.
- There will be no All Teams meeting in January.
- The Task Force reported on their final distributions (\$2000 to Catholic Charities Behavioral Health, \$500 to Illinois Valley PADS, \$250 to Mendota Chamber Operation Elf; and \$175.26 to Mendota Area Christian Food Pantry).
- Saturday Chapel worship will end after December 17th until further notice.

#### Finance Report Year To Date thru November 2022:

Budgeted Income \$331,423    Actual Income \$288,252  
 Budgeted Expense \$346,938    Actual Expense \$338,938

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.

### Youth in the New Year

It is not always easy to see the effects of our ministry at St. John's, but whether we see the fruits of our labor or not, we trust that the Holy Spirit is deeply active. One thing I truly love about this congregation is its dedication to its youth. From toddlers to college students, it's clear you care about them. I am excited to continue working with the High Schoolers in the New Year, teaching them about God, forming relationships, and preparing for the summer Mission Trip. The Confirmation class will continue being taught and preparing for their affirmation of baptism, and all the other kiddos keeping on with their Sunday School classes. Our Youth program is drawing people in because they can see God at work. Thank you for your continued support of it! We give thanks to God for our Youth and you! 😊

Peace! Vicar Anthony



**Thank you** to everyone who helped with Christmas preparations at St. John's. Our worship services were filled with beauty and inspiration. As a congregation, we also touched the lives of many, many people beyond our walls by our gifts to Heritage Health through the "Angel Tree" project, and our other outreach ministries.

**Pastor Ken & Yvonne, Vicar Anthony and the entire St. John's staff gives thanks** to all of you for the cards, gifts and Christmas blessings so generously poured out during this holiday season! We appreciate you and pray for God's leadership and guidance in the new year.

Dear St. John's,

We are eternally thankful for the time Pr. Ken and Yvonne have spent with us, and we will celebrate our shared ministry on his last day on January 15, 2023. As we begin to walk through the transition of Pr. Ken embarking on a new journey, there are a few points of information I'd like to share.

-Moving forward, we will honor Pr. Ken's departure allowing time to adjust to new relationships, holding each other in care and compassion.

-Vicar Anthony will become our interim minister, appointed by the Northern Illinois Synod and approved by the Council. He has been given permission to preside over Baptisms and Communion, and will take over other pastoral acts.

-Please contact Vicar Anthony or the Church office if you are in need of pastoral care or anything else.

More information will be shared as it becomes available as we move forward.

In Christ, Ken Ladenburger, Council President



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December 20, 2022

Dear Congregational Members,

We are contacting all members to remind you that our **Annual Congregational Meeting** will be conducted on **Sunday, January 22, 2023** immediately following the 9am worship service.

Annual Reports should be available by January 15th. We'll acknowledge our past year as well as celebrate a New Year of ministry together. All this and much more will be covered at the **meeting on January 22nd**.

Please pray for this meeting to give us the excitement and motivation to do great things for our Lord in 2023 here at St. John's. Your involvement is needed!

We will move to the Fellowship Hall following worship, so everyone will have a chance to grab a cup of coffee before getting comfortable at a table. Assistant to the Bishop, Pastor Jen Beamsley will preach during the service and join us for the annual meeting to share a brief outline of the next steps of the transition.

God's Blessings,

Ken Ladenburger  
 President, Church Council



We hope you will join us following worship on Sunday, January 15th for a reception honoring Pastor Ken and Yvonne and thanking them for their time serving alongside our St. John's family.

Cake, coffee and punch will be served. There will be a basket available for a Card Shower for PK and Yvonne. Any financial gifts can be made to either Lunches for Learning or Sky Ranch.

Sunday School classes for all ages will meet until 10:30am. Students will then be dismissed to join their family at the reception.



Thank you to everyone who joined us at the Spaghetti Dinner and/or participated in the Quilt Silent Auction which benefitted our Youth.

Because of your generosity, approximately \$2,000 (Spaghetti dinner) and \$1,200 (Quilt Auction) was donated to our St. John's Youth. These funds will support the high school mission trip to Altoona, PA in July and many other youth events and activities.