

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

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



The Christ In Our Home daily devotional booklets for October, November, and December 2022 are available in the narthex and the church office.

We have regular print and large print copies.

Periodicals

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October Birthdays, Anniversaries and Upcoming Events

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

75th+ Birthday

- Oct. 4 J. Leonard Schaller
Oct. 5 Gene Schinzer
Oct. 10 Gary Duttlinger
Oct. 14 Richard Gansemer
Oct. 31 Jan Schuster

Congratulations

Happy "Milestone" Anniversary Wishes!

Todd & Nancy Holland
October 2nd — 40 years

October Calendar of Events

- 1 Chapel worship & Pet Blessing 5pm
6 Men's Breakfast 6am
6 All Teams meeting 7pm
8 Chapel worship 5pm
10 Office Closed—Columbus Day
10 Rebecca Circle 1:30pm
11 Quilting 9am
11 "by heart" Study 1:15pm
13 Men's Breakfast 6am
13 Heritage Health 10am
15 Chapel worship 5pm
16 Fall Festival after worship
18 "by heart" Study 1:15pm
19 Stonecroft 10am
20 Men's Breakfast 6am
20 Church Council meeting 6:30pm
22 Chapel worship "Dinner Church" 5pm
23 Confirmation Class to Boggio's 10am
25 Quilting 9am
25 "by heart" Study 1:15pm
27 Men's Breakfast 6am
29 Chapel worship 5pm
30 Reformation Sunday / Confirmation

Choir practices are scheduled for 6pm on Wednesdays, October 5th, October 19th, and October 26th.

Offering Envelopes for 2023 will be available beginning on Sunday, October 16th.

There will be a table set up in the Fellowship Hall during the Fall Festival.

The St. John's Quilting Group will kick-off the Quilt Silent Auction during the Fall Festival on Sunday, October 16th. The quilts will be displayed in the north end of the Fellowship Hall and bids can be placed any time until the First Sunday of Advent, November 27th, when we will light the St. John's Christmas Tree in the courtyard.

St. John's Lutheran Church



ST. JOHN'S EAGLE

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October 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.

QUILTING DAYS will be Tuesday, October 11th and Tuesday, October 25th.



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Just How Free is Grace?

I was a student in seminary when I first heard a discussion on "just how free is Grace," and recently, I found myself in a similar conversation. As a student, I was an absolute sponge when it came to all that I heard around me, and it was during that discussion that I became, and will forever remain, a fan of this radical thing called God's Grace. I was sitting in class and a classmate raised the following question.

"If someone rejects God's free Grace, then they are condemned. I understand that grace is freely given but we have to accept it and if someone denies it; well then, they are, are they not, condemned?" The professor paused for a moment and asked my fellow student: "Just how much do you like playing God?" To say the least, this surprised my classmate as well as the rest of us. My classmate insisted he did not think he was playing God at all. "Well then, how often do you think you sin and fall short of the glory of God?" My classmate replied, "I am sure quite often." "So you believe that God's grace and unmatched love is freely given to you, even though you sin?" asked my professor. "Perhaps in spite of my sin," the classmate said. "Yet, you believe that you, or whomever you are placing the denial of God's love upon, are capable of denying God to claim you in life and in death, as a loved child of God?" The classmate responded, "I am not sure I understand." My professor continued: "We have no power. I mean, absolutely NONE, ZILCH to deny God's love for us!"

The professor continued: "We often want to play God and decide who is saved and who is not, and that is ultimately where this line of thinking ends up. But make no mistake. God's love for us is only decided through the gift of Jesus Christ and his death and resurrection from the grave. The professor then became very personal as he continued. "Let me say this. My faith in the gift of Jesus Christ for all of us in some ways comes down to this. In my final moment, when I pass from this life to the next, I will be met by our Savior who will say to me, 'Come unto me my child for I love you now just as I loved you in your life on earth.' And I might find myself saying something like, 'But I am not worthy to stand in your presence,' and then the Savior will say, 'Don't play the role of my Father, for my Father has given you to me and no one, including you, can take you from my hand.' And then, by God's GRACE ALONE, my hand will be taken, and I shall cross over to eternal life."

This was a remarkable moment for me, and to this day, I cling to the lesson I learned that day. The truth is, we sometimes want to play God and decide who receives God's Grace and who the condemned are going to be, but these are not our decisions to make. As I reflect on this lesson, I am reminded of hymn #581 in the ELW "You Are Mine." I often find myself in tears and emotionally spent when we sing this hymn together. The first verse and chorus are below. Sing it with me.

I will come to you in the silence, I will lift you from all your fear.
You will hear my voice, I claim you as my choice.

Be still and know I am here.

Do not be afraid, I am with you. I have called you each by name.
Come and follow me, I will bring you home; I love you and you are mine.

So then, let me say: "Remember, God loves you and so do I."

~ Pastor Ken Gibson

Church Council Highlights

The following are some highlights from the September 15, 2022 meeting of our church council.


- Council continues to monitor the Covid-19 situation in our area.
- The Property Team reported that they are addressing an issue in the fellowship hall ceiling that's caused by a leak in a second floor storage room. Council approved Mauch Carpentry to repair this situation and also inspect/make minor repairs to the flat roofs.
- The Stewardship Team reported that the PADS homeless shelters in Peru & Ottawa are in need of paper products. Council approved placing a collection bin in the fellowship hall for donations of toilet paper, paper towels, paper plates etc.
- The Outreach/Evangelism Team is considering developing a Book Club for the fall—watch for more information. Also, the Quilting Ladies will hold a Silent Auction of handmade quilts beginning at the Fall Festival on October 16th and continuing until the Christmas Tree Lighting on November 27th.

Finance Report Year To Date thru August 2022:

Budgeted Income \$241,037 Actual Income \$213,783

Budgeted Expense \$252,500 Actual Expense \$245,586

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.

 **Back for its second year is St. John's Fall Festival!** Join us in the courtyard after worship on October 16th (23rd as rain date) to enjoy the bounty of the Fall. We'll have lots of things for people of all ages to enjoy including hot dogs & fresh apple cider, the chili cook-off, an apple & pumpkin dessert competition, games, pumpkin painting, touch-a-tractor, and more! We promise you'll have a fun time! If you're interested in helping out the day of the Festival, please contact Vicar Anthony or members of the Youth Huddle (Karen Goy, Dorothy Brandner, Roberta Wendel). Sign-up sheets for the chili cook-off and baking competition are available on the Information Booth in the Fellowship Hall.

Worship Opportunities

One of the main reasons we exist as St. John's is to regularly and faithfully worship as the gathered community. We come as we are, doubting or steadfast, oldcomer or newcomer, knowing that where two or three are gathered, God will be present. It is important to gather, not only to worship God, but to grow in community with one another.

This October we continue our Saturday evening and Sunday morning services, but with a special event or two added in. On **Saturday, October 1st, we'll have a pet blessing**, in honor of St. Francis. I invite you to bring your pet along (leashed), or a picture of them. Together we'll celebrate the joy pets and God's creation gives us, and along with Daisy and Chick, I'll give each one a blessing. On **Saturday, October 22nd, we are going to try "Dinner Church"** where we gather around tables and share a meal while incorporating worship! I'll need some volunteers to ensure we have food, but usually it's a potluck. Contact me if you're interested.

Another special occasion is **Sunday, October 30th, Reformation Sunday/Confirmation**, when we commemorate the start of the Protestant Reformation, and also hold the affirmation of faith for our confirmands. I hope to see you in worship, especially at our pet blessing, Dinner Church, or Reformation Sunday/Confirmation.

Peace, Vicar Anthony



St. John's Youth News

"Growing Together in our Faith as we Serve Others"



FALL FESTIVAL

Make plans for your family to join the fun at
St. John's **FALL FESTIVAL** on Sunday, October 16th

~ Sunday School Dismissing Early ~

Sunday School classes will dismiss at 10:30am so that our students, teachers & their families can enjoy all of the activities in the courtyard.

~ Activities for the Kids ~

There will be lots of kid-friendly fun including pumpkin painting, touch-a-tractor, games, and more!

~ Chili Cook-off ~

Be sure to taste each of the entries and cast your vote for your favorite chili! The winner gets bragging rights for the year!

~ Apple & Pumpkin Dessert Competition ~

Some of the very best bakers at St. John's will be bringing apple and pumpkin treats to compete for favorite dessert!

~ Fall Display Photos ~

Be sure to snap a photo at our beautiful Fall Display.

~ Support Dist. 289's Backpack Blessings Program ~

Our elementary school district's "Backpack Blessings" program supports children & families who suffer with food insecurity. Many of these children rely on the school district for their breakfasts & lunches, and the families really appreciate the food items that are discretely placed in the child's backpack on Fridays to get them through the weekend. We will be collecting kid-friendly food items to donate to this program. (See the back of this flyer for a list of recommended items.)



Hot dogs & apple cider will be available for everyone.

College Student Addresses

We hope that all of our college students are getting settled into their new routines at school, keeping up with their studies, and having fun, too! We would appreciate receiving current mailing addresses for our students who are away from home, and will share them with the congregation with hopes that you will reach out with a card or note of encouragement. We have received the following addresses:

Samantha (Sammi) Katschke
Millikin University
1184 W. Main Street
Decatur, IL 62522

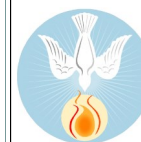
Cole Zimmerman
136 Longridge Lane
Ormond Beach, FL 32174

BOGGIO'S Orchard & Produce

Our 7th & 8th grade Confirmation Class is planning for a really fun day at Boggio's Orchard on Sunday, October 23rd. We will meet at church following worship at 10am, have a bite to eat, and then hit the road! We will return by 2pm. Please wear comfortable shoes & dress in layers.

NOTE: If the Fall Festival is rained-out on October 16th, the rain date is October 23rd. If this is the case, our orchard trip will have to be postponed.

2022 Confirmation Class Information



Plan to join us on Reformation Sunday, October 30th as we celebrate the Confirmation of *Sarah Brown, Addyson Champlin, Ally Denault, Alex Holland, Grady Jones, Gracie Politsch, Meredith Politsch, Joshua Shakespeare, and Aden Tillman*. Please keep each of them in your prayers as they prepare for this special day.

On Saturday, October 22nd at 10am, these students will be fitted for their robes and put together their special stoles. They will also be able to walk through their part of the service as a little rehearsal.