

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Periodicals

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The church office will be **CLOSED** on Thursday, July 4th in observance of the Independence Day holiday.

July Birthdays, Anniversaries & Upcoming Events

God's continued blessings to all of those celebrating birthdays and anniversaries!

75th+ Birthday



- July 1 Judy Schuster
- July 6 Joan Mays
- July 12 Tom Maloy
- July 18 Sandy Reger
- July 25 Janet Piller
- July 25 Joanne Maloy

Congratulations

Happy 50+ Wedding Anniversary!

- Ron & Marlene Egler
July 4th — 55 years
- Gerald & Sandra Eich
July 6th — 66 years
- Ron & Deb Rose
July 21st — 51 years

July

- 3 Prayer group in Chapel gam
- 4 OFFICE CLOSED — Independence Day holiday
- 8 VBS Training 6pm
- 9 VBS Training 11am
- 10 Prayer group in Chapel gam
- 10 Civic Life & Faith study 7pm
- 11 Allure worship 10am
- 11 Evening worship at Don & Karen Goy's home 8pm
- 14 Confirmation information meeting 6:30pm
- 15 Young Adult Game Night 6pm to 8:30pm
- 17 Prayer group in Chapel gam
- 17 Stonecroft worship 10am
- 17 Civic Life & Faith study 7pm
- 18 Executive Team 5:30pm / Church Council 6:30pm
- 19 Lunch in the Park 11am-1:30pm
- 22-26 Vacation Bible School 9am-12pm
- 24 Prayer group in Chapel gam
- 28 VBS kids sing during worship 9am
- 29 Evening worship at Blackstone Park 7pm
- 30 Quilting gam
- 31 Prayer group in Chapel gam



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 gam. 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.

The **Wednesday prayer group** will continue to meet from gam to approximately 9:30am every Wednesday to lift up prayers on behalf of the St. John's community. You can pray aloud or silently, come frequently, or on occasion. All are welcome!



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Dear friends in Christ,

This month our second readings will move to the book of Ephesians. I invite you to reflect on this passage, Ephesians 2:19-22 (for Sunday, July 21):

So then, you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God,²⁰ built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone,²¹ in him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord,²² in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.

The context of this passage is that Christ has come, breaking down the wall of division and bringing peace with him and between one another. I wonder what catches your attention in that passage. Read the passage again slowly, maybe even aloud to yourself.

Here are a couple reflections this text has provoked in me.

"Fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God" Over the last few weeks a number of us have been discussing a draft document on Civic Life and Faith, with a focus on our Lutheran understandings of what God desires for all of humankind and our vocation, or calling, as Christians who live in this world and are called to love our neighbor. Perhaps that's why the word "citizen" caught my attention. The definitions of "citizen" and "member" typically involve rights and responsibilities. Being "fellow citizens with the saints" means that we are in community with one another, and in the context of the whole passage, this is what Christ has accomplished for us. We are brothers and sisters not because we like each other or agree with each other, but because Christ has called us into life and community with one another. While Christ grants us access to him now and forever, we have a responsibility to each other as well. What do you think these responsibilities might entail?

My second reflection is on the nature of our being joined together. This passage reminds us of Christ's activity in our community. We "grow," which as you know is not something we are fully in control of. We can strive to provide good growing conditions, but growth in living organisms doesn't happen by willing it. Ephesians also says we are "built together." It's something that is happening to us. This is the work of Christ, who joins us together to be the dwelling place of God. In other words, our community is a place God is pre-

sent, which leads me to my third reflection.

Belonging. How do you know when you truly "belong?" When do you experience belonging? With whom? Under what circumstances? And if (since) we are a dwelling place of God, then how does knowing that shape our welcome of others? How do we let others know that God is welcoming them through our welcome? How do we let them know they have a place at the table, so to speak?

Those are some of my thoughts and questions. Please feel free to share your reflections on this passage with me verbally, by email or text. In Christ, I belong to you, and you belong to me -- and I appreciate all that you have to offer, that we may continue growing and being built into a dwelling place for God's presence and for Christ's work of loving and caring for the world we live in.

(779) 707-1324 — pastorelise@stjohnsmendota.org

Yours in Christ, Pastor Elise

Finance Report Year To Date thru May 2024:

Budgeted Income \$141,276 Actual Income \$144,851
Budgeted Expense \$141,887 Actual Expense \$131,939

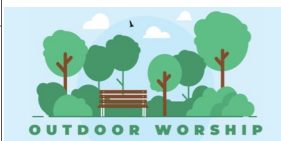
We are grateful for your continued financial support, through your offerings in person, through the mail, and through electronic giving. We are blessed to have such a faithful St. John's family.

A Message from Amanda White, Director, Congregational Generosity - ELCA World Hunger

"Dear partner in mission, We're thrilled to share that you are among the most generous congregations to ELCA World Hunger and Lutheran Disaster Response! That's right — your congregation is one of the most faithful supporters of these ministries in the entire ELCA! We're so glad to have this opportunity to thank you personally.

Your partnership is especially meaningful this year as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of ELCA World Hunger. Generous congregations such as yours have enabled this ministry to reach millions of our vulnerable neighbors across the globe. Because of you, our church will continue changing lives through ELCA World Hunger, now and into the future. Thank you."

Midweek Outdoor Worship



Enjoy your love of the outdoors with your love for God at our midweek worship; perfect for those who cannot worship with us on Sunday mornings!

Thursday, July 11th at 8pm "Grow and Glow" at Don & Karen Goy's home (2102 Stroble Avenue); please bring your own chair and carpool if you can. Glowsticks for all children at heart!

Monday, July 29th at 7pm "Pray and Play" at Blackstone Park; please bring your own chair, balls, frisbees, etc.

St. John's Scholarship Fund Recipients

Scholarships in the amount of \$19,500 were awarded to several young church members. Congratulations to: *Bailey Baird* (University of St. Francis), *Jace Baird* (IVCC), *Logan Brandner* (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee), *Sophie Holland* (Southern Illinois University-Carbondale), *Samantha Katschke* (Millikin University), *Landon Kreiser* (Joliet Junior College), *Maya Martin* (Loyola University-Chicago), *Alayna Nosalik* (Aurora University), *Laurel Politsch* (St. Ambrose University), *Garret Zinke* (IVCC), *Gracie Zinke* (Texas A&M University-Galveston).

Young Adult Game Night



A game night for young adults (ages 19 to 30) will be held in the fellowship hall on Monday, July 15th from 6pm to 8:30pm. Snacks and board games provided but you are welcome to bring your favorites as well as a friend! Hosted by Pastor Elise.

Lunch in the Park — July 19th



St. John's Youth will be providing Lunch in the Park on Friday, July 19th from 11am to 1:30pm. Our young people will be serving freshly grilled hot dogs, hamburgers, brats and pork chop sandwiches along with chips, desserts, and drinks. We hope you'll mark your calendars and plan to join us for lunch and fellowship... and bring your friends, neighbors, and coworkers! The monies raised will help with the costs of our many youth activities and service projects.

We would welcome any donations of bottled water, soda or iced tea; ice; buns; individually bagged assorted chips; and individually wrapped desserts such as bars, cookies, or cupcakes.

Volunteer & donation sign-up sheets are posted in the Narthex and on the Information Booth, or you can email the church office.

Thank you! See you in the Park!!

Confirmation Information 2024-2025

An information session for parents of confirmation students (grades 7 and 8) will be held twice; please come to the one that works best for your schedule:

Sunday, July 14th at 6:30pm
OR

Tuesday, August 6th at 6:30pm

Thanks from Pastor Karen

I want to extend my thanks to you, again, for your affirmation and encouragement during the time that I served as your supply pastor and then your Interim Pastor. Because of your affirmation and encouragement, I made myself available for a call to serve a church. I have been called by St. Andrew's Lutheran Church in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, and will begin on 15 July.

I want you to know how much I appreciate your encouragement, which led to my call to serve a church. Thank you! I hold you and your ministry in my prayers.

Blessings in Christ,
Pastor Karen E. Tews

Vacation Bible School July 22nd to July 26th



All children who have completed Kindergarten through 5th grade are invited to join us for a super fun week of Vacation Bible School!! We will meet Monday, July 22nd to Friday, July 26th from 9am to noon. Our theme this year is **SCUBA — diving into friendship with God**. Registration is available online at www.myvbs.org/stjohnsmendota. We have room for 30 children, and spots are already filling up!

VBS is also a great opportunity for older youth and adults to volunteer. Everything is prepared for you and you will always have helpers to assist you. If you are available to volunteer ahead of time, or during VBS week, please speak to Melissa Nosalik. It takes many hands to make this week a success!

Highway Cleanup

St. John's highway cleanup crew met recently to pick up trash on a 2-mile stretch of 251 (south from the viaduct). Thank you to Roberta Wendel, Abby Kunz, Ty Florschuetz, Anna Rothfusz, and Pastor Elise Rothfusz, Todd & Monica Zimmerlein (not pictured).

