

## St. John's Worship Offerings

Live Streamed on our Facebook page and website

Along with In person Worship

Sunday morning at 10:00 a.m. and

Compline Monday & Friday evenings at 8:00 p.m.

You don't have to sign up with Facebook to watch. As long as a person has internet access and a computer, tablet, smartphone or other device, they can watch. Sunday service can also be viewed on our website at [www.stjohnsmasoncity.org](http://www.stjohnsmasoncity.org)

Join us for in person worship in the Sanctuary at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday.



Find us on  
**Facebook**

Join us at <https://www.facebook.com/stjohnsmcia/>

## Dismantling Racism Training

If you need to update your or have never taken the training, here is an opportunity. Saturday, February 22, 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. training is being offered online by the Episcopal Diocese of Iowa.

This training is required for all who serve in the Episcopal Church in any capacity.

## Teams

**Worship Team:** Mara Linskey-Deegan, Stephanie Prohaski, George Riesen, Sue Stone  
(planning worship services)

**Regional Missioner Team:** Karen Jacobs, Katherine Evans, Jan Willeke  
(meeting with Rev. Stephen Benitz)

**Transition Team:** Jeanne Cornick, Dale Schirmer, Jane Reynolds  
(meeting with Meg Wagner from the Diocese of Iowa, planning the search for a priest)

**Fellowship Team:** Terry Allen-Burns, Sue Stone, Parish Members (food activities)

## St. John's Episcopal Church

120 First Street NE, Mason City, Iowa 50401-3302

Phone: 641.424.1300 E-mail: [sjcemc@gmail.com](mailto:sjcemc@gmail.com)

[www.stjohnsmasoncitysecureversites.net](http://www.stjohnsmasoncitysecureversites.net)

Office Hours: Monday–Friday 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

## Clergy, Staff, and Ministry Volunteers

The Rt. Rev. Betsey Monnot, Bishop of Iowa

The Rev. Barbara M. McCaulley, Priest Associate \* The Rev. Kathryn S. Campbell, Priest Associate

The Rev. Canon Elliot Blackburn, Rector Emeritus

Susan Stone, Parish Administrator \* Dan Hardy, Treasurer

The mission of St. John's is to welcome and reach out with the love of God to all our neighbors



February 2025

Volume 95 Issue 2

The WORD

St. John's Episcopal Church  
120 First Street NE  
Mason City, IA 50401-3302

## "Where the Spirit Leads"

There are moments in life when we think we know exactly where we're going—when we have a plan, a destination, and even a well-marked path. And then, something happens. The road ahead is closed. A door that seemed wide open suddenly shuts. And we find ourselves standing still, wondering, "What now?"

In Acts 16:6-15, we find Paul and his companions in just such a moment. They are traveling through Asia, spreading the Gospel, but twice the Holy Spirit blocks their way. Twice, their plans are interrupted. And then, in the night, Paul has a vision: a man from Macedonia pleading, "Come over to Macedonia and help us."

So, without hesitation, Paul and his companions set sail, trusting that this unexpected turn of events is the Spirit's leading. They end up in Philippi, a Roman colony, where they meet Lydia, a woman who will become one of the first converts in Europe. This chance encounter—this seemingly small shift in plans—becomes a moment of great significance in the spread of the Gospel.

Now, I don't know about you, but I like a good plan. I like knowing what's next. Whether it's planning a family gathering, organizing the week ahead, or even setting up the schedule for our pickleball play in the parish hall, there's something comforting about order and structure.

But the Holy Spirit doesn't always operate according to our plans. Sometimes, the Spirit is more like a board game from our Wednesday group of Settlers of Catan than a well-scripted itinerary. You think you're building the longest road, and then suddenly, someone puts a settlement right in your path! And you have to rethink your whole strategy.

Or maybe it's like knitting a scarf. You start with a pattern, confident in where it's going, but then—maybe halfway through—you realize you've made a mistake several rows back. You could unravel everything, or, as many experienced knitters will tell you, you could "make it work," turning a mistake into a creative new design.

God's Spirit often works in the same way. Just when we think we have everything figured out, the Spirit redirects us, leading us toward an opportunity we never expected. The real question is: Are we willing to trust where God is leading?

Lydia, the woman Paul meets by the river, is a great example of this trust. She is a dealer in purple cloth—a successful businesswoman. She is already a worshiper of God, but when she hears Paul's message, the Lord "opens her heart" to receive the Gospel. She doesn't resist. She doesn't say, "Well, this wasn't in my five-year plan." She simply listens, responds, and then offers hospitality to Paul and his companions, opening her home as a place of ministry.

How often do we resist the Spirit because it doesn't fit into our expectations? How often do we miss an opportunity to share God's love because we are so determined to stick to our own plans?

Maybe the Spirit is nudging us to invite that new person at coffee hour to join in the reading of scripture and dwell in the living word. Maybe we're being called to put down our own agenda and listen to someone who just needs to talk. Maybe we are being led to try something new—whether it's a new way of serving, a new way of worshiping, or even a new way of seeing those around us.

God is always leading us toward something. Our job is to pay attention—to be open, like Lydia, and to trust, like Paul, that when one door closes, God is opening another.

So this week, I invite you to be on the lookout for those unexpected turns, those moments when the Spirit is nudging you toward something new. Maybe it will happen on the pickleball court, in the quiet rhythm of knitting, or around a table with friends and a board game. Wherever it is, may we have the faith to follow where God leads, knowing that the journey is always worth it.

And may the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.

## Good Stewards of the Church Building

Since we have a cleaning crew twice a month it is important for us to be good stewards of our building.

A couple reminders when the building is used:

After any event involving food, please be sure the trash is taken out. Our custodial service is here twice a month so trash (especially food items) needs to be taken out to the big dumpster in the alley. Recyclables go in the smaller bins in the alley. One bin for metal, glass, plastic and the other is for cardboard and paper. Please place things in the bins accordingly. If you need trash bags, they are kept in the cabinet next to the Treasurer's office.

**White long tables** are being kept along the cabinets in the old kitchen area. They do not go in the table storage closet. Stack chairs go in the East corners of the Parish Hall and folding chairs go in the storage closet on the West end of the Parish Hall.

**Filling paper towel dispensers** can be done by placing the key (attached to a ruler, in the cabinet next to the treasurer's office) in the top of the dispenser. Packs of folded paper towels are also in that cabinet.

In the cabinet next to the Treasurer's office are paper products for the church. In the old kitchen (silver cabinet) you will find cleaning supplies.

Make sure to **turn lights off, close all inside doors** and be sure **outside doors lock** behind you.

By doing these things, keeps the building ready for the next meeting or event.

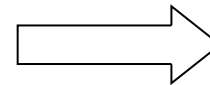
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## To Make a Monetary Donation to St. John's Episcopal Church

Your check can be mailed to  
St. John's Episcopal Church  
120 1st Street NE  
Mason City, IA 50401

You can go to [Tithe.ly](https://tithe.ly)  
to make a monetary donation to  
St. John's  
or go to [www.stjohnsmasoncity.org](http://www.stjohnsmasoncity.org)

Use this QR Code to make a  
contribution to St. John's



# How can I help?



## Coffee Hour is in the Parish Hall

Thank you to all who have signed up to serve as host at Sunday Coffee Hour. There are many dates left to choose from. No experience is required. Treats are not necessary.

## Collecting Coats for the Winter Free Coat Rack Continues

The coats found new homes very quickly. Hats and gloves leave as quickly as they are clipped to the rack. Thank you to all who have donated winter wear.



## 1st Congregational UCC Church Food Cupboard

Thank you for your continued support. The cupboard continues to feed those in need.



## Hygiene Pantry Needs:

Laundry pods or powder

Dish soap (liquid)

We are blessed to have plenty of other items at this time



## St. John's Kitchen Shopping List

The parish kitchen is always in need. If you would like to help out the kitchen, the following items are always needed.

- Zip food storage bags in quart and gallon size
- Plastic food wrap
- Rolls of paper towels
- Paper drink cups for hot or cold (no styrofoam)
- Coffee (prefer a dark roast)
- Creamer and sweetener packets for coffee
- Aluminum foil
- Napkin bundles

## St. John's Vestry Update

Thank you to Vickey Basgall and Linda Willeke for completing their terms on St. John's Vestry.

Newly Elected Vestry members are Dale Schirmer and Jane Reynolds.

Sr. Warden is Jeanne Cornick

Vestry Clerk is Mara Linskey-Deegan

Jr. Warden is Laura Bernemann

Recording Secretary is Mary Pieper

Thank them all for their service.

## An Evening of Music with the Nonsemble Band

Saturday, March 1

6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

St. John's Parish Hall



## PICKLEBALL

Submitted by Vickey Basgall

This is the second year of play on our Humble Pickleball Court in the Parish Hall. We got off to a little late start this year, the warm fall weather allowed players more time outside and we needed time to complete an adjustment to the court. Pickleball is scheduled Tuesday evenings from 5:30 to 7:30 and Saturday mornings from 10:00 to Noon.

Players sign up on an app called Playtime Scheduler, each two hour session is limited to 8 players.

Several of our players from last year, have returned to play again this year and we have added several new players this year. We receive free will offerings to help pay for balls and other supplies. One of our players dry mops the floor after every session. If interested in playing or knowing more, chat with Vickey Basgall.

## Pancake Day Sign Up for Volunteers

A sign up sheet will soon be posted for volunteers to help on Tuesday, March 4 for Shrove Tuesday Pancake Day. If you are able to help any time of the day at any of the various tasks, please sign up.





# Dates to Remember. ....

## February

- 2 - Holy Eucharist 10:00 a.m.
- 4 - Lectio 1:00 p.m. in the Parlor
- 5- Game Night 6:00 –8:00 p.m.
- 9 - Holy Eucharist at 10:00 a.m. on Facebook & St. John’s website  
Vestry Meeting following Worship
- 13 - Centering Prayer 6:00 p.m. in St. John’s Chapel
- 16 - Holy Eucharist 10:00 a.m. Livestream on Facebook & St. John’s website
- 19 - Game Night 6:00 –8:00 p.m.
- 23 - Morning Prayer at 10:00 a.m. on Facebook & St. John’s website
- 25 - WORD deadline

- March 1** Nonsensical Concert 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall
- 4 Shrove Tuesday Pancake Day
  - 5 Ash Wednesday

**Wednesday Chapel a time of prayer, scripture & silence 12:10 p.m. Wednesdays**  
**Join Compline on Facebook weekly Monday-Friday at 8:00 p.m.**

### Weekly Community Group Meetings at St. Johns

- Tuesday** Pickleball in the Parish Hall 5:00 –7:30 p.m.
- Thursday-10: 00 a.m. to noon Knitting Group “Natter of Knitters” in the Kuhn Room (weekly)
- NOON AA Meeting in the Parlor (weekly)
- 5:00 p.m. TOPS Meeting & weigh in, in the Parlor (weekly)
- Friday** **The group that met here no longer is using St. John’s**
- Saturday 9:00 a.m. Alanon Meeting in the West Alley basement (weekly)
- Pickleball in the Parish Hall 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.**

### Memorial Candle

*Bringing back these items after the pandemic*

Did you ever notice the candle that hangs in the sanctuary to the left, facing the altar? To keep that candle burning all week long, St. John’s offers to members the opportunity to sponsor the candle and have your loved ones name prayed for in the worship weekly prayer list. The cost is \$10 per week. If you have a date you would like to reserve please contact Sue Stone in the Parish Office. Let us fill every Sunday.



## LECTIO

Please join us for Lectio-inspired Reflection, the **first Tuesday of the month at 1:00 p.m.** in St. John’s Parlor or via Zoom. Park and enter from the east side / Pennsylvania, the north door. If in need of an accessible option, there are ramped entrances. Be prepared with a pen for writing.

## Evening Centering Prayer

the **second Thursday of the month in St. John’s Chapel** and the fourth Tuesday of the month at St. Joseph’s Catholic Church Chapel. Both opportunities begin at **6:00 PM.**

Please join us for one or both!

Questions? Contact Laura Bernemann

## St. John’s Game Night

Join the fun on the **1st & 3rd Wednesdays from 6:00-8:00 p.m.** in the Kuhn Room. Bring your favorite game, a beverage and treat, and invite a friend.



## A “Natter of Knitters”

If you would like to learn knitting, have a project you need help with, or are an experienced knitter, you are invited to join the group 10:00 a.m. to Noon in St. John’s Kuhn Room. Great conversation is had and friendships are formed. Coffee and often times treats are served.



## EPISCOPAL DAY AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Each year, Episcopalians gather at the Capitol with Bishop Betsy Monnot, our diocesan lobbyists, and fellow Episcopalians and advocate for public policy with our legislators. This year (2025) we will again join with Interfaith Alliance of Iowa and our Lutheran siblings for the day, and it is also One Iowa’s LGBTQ+ Day on the Hill. We go over some bills before the General Assembly, look at where our diocese stands on them, hear from lawmakers, and then each have an opportunity to try to meet face to face with our senators and representatives to share our positions with them. Whether it’s your first time at the Capitol or you’d consider yourself a “regular,” all are welcome to join! Keep an eye out for more information, including a general schedule for the day, soon.

