



St. John the Evangelist Episcopal Church

320 Oak Street

Wisconsin Rapids WI 54494

715-423-2332

Email: stjohnchurch@wctc.net

Website: www.stjohnschurchwr.org

Facebook: St. John the Evangelist, Episcopal Church

All Are Welcome!

Welcoming, Worshiping, Serving, and Growing Together in Christ Our Lord

Worship Schedule

Sunday Eucharist 9:30 am

Wednesday 5:30 pm Adult Study

Table of Contents

Our Journey	2
Our Challenges	3
What We Offer	3
Worship Services and Fun Stuff	4
Stewardship at St. John's.....	4
St. John the Evangelist Outreach: Past and Present	5-6
St. John's Statistics	6-7
What St. John the Evangelist is seeking in a new Rector	7
Our History	8-10
Diocese of Fond du Lac	10
About the Wisconsin Rapids Area	11
Additional Information	12

Our Journey

Our commitment at St. John the Evangelist Episcopal Church is to grow in faith, and fellowship worship, so that in the future we can continue to share God's love through the outreach and ministry that we do now. Through recent discernment workshops, we have been afforded the opportunity to convene in small groups with open conversation. This exploration of spiritual growth and communal needs has allowed us to discuss what we love and what we anticipate for our spiritual future. We desire to continue to deepen our trust in God, to grow in fellowship and commitment among our members, and to encourage new members to become a vital part of our community. We also want to continue our outreach to the community at large.



St. John's, since its beginnings, has used a liturgical style that is Eucharistically centered. Our Sunday Holy Communion service is at 9:30am, and we have special services throughout the holidays and Lent. The worship service is usually Rite II, with occasional use of Rite I; and our liturgy is enhanced with an exceptional music program that includes our wonderful Walker Organ and a weekly offering of praise and worship music using guitar, and at times, other instruments. In many ways, St. John's is very traditional: our parishioners are primarily older and many are retired; we appreciate a more formal liturgical style; and we can be slow to adopt change. However, we seek to be welcoming and embrace diversity, including approving to allow same-sex marriage at St John's.

Our Challenges

No community is perfect, and that includes ours. As with many mainline congregations, St John's has greyed and seen a decline in membership over the years, taking a toll on the congregation. We at times struggle with change and have learned that we must communicate and share ideas before implementing changes. Like many Episcopal Churches, St. John's has experienced conflicts involving both parishioners and clergy in the past; and unfortunately, when these issues were not addressed properly, some left the parish. We now realize that we need to use a mediator or mentor program with both parties to come to a successful resolution rather than allow anyone to walk away displeased. This experience has taught us to not only talk but to listen and to hear!

What We Offer

While we aren't perfect, there is much we do well! St. John's is a close-knit "family" that provides spiritual and pastoral care by the congregation to the congregation in times of joy, sadness, and health challenges. This includes daily prayer, prayer lists, cards, phone calls, visits, Ladies Lunch Bunch, and other social fellowship. We are a fantastic parish, peopled by faithful, funny and warm folks who at times can get on your nerves. We are humbled by, and thankful for, God's many gifts to us. We are ready to share these gifts and talents with you, plus:

- A warm welcome to you and your family (including furry ones)
- No debt!
- An opportunity to live and serve in one of the best places on God's earth
- Permission to be who you are, express yourself.
- A group who loves to serve, worship (and dine) together
- Encouragement and respect for your privacy and self-care
- Competent, committed staff and lay leaders

Worship Services and Fun Stuff

At St. John's, we have a single Sunday service at 9:30 am, friendly for all to join. The service uses music from the 1982 Hymnal and also praises and worship music. We have acolytes, chalice bearers, worship leaders and ushers in our worship services, allowing every member to be engaged in whatever way they want to be.



Following the service, on Sundays we gather in the Parish Hall for Coffee Hour.

Wednesdays in the summer we have "Prayers on the Porch," hosted by parishioners in their homes. Evening prayer is offered at 5:30 pm with potluck and fellowship following.

Wednesdays in winter we have Evening Prayer in the Chapel at 5:30 pm, followed by an adult study course dedicated to the particular season of the year. A simple meal of soup and bread or even pizza is offered.



Wednesdays have begun with Eucharist when we have had a priest.

Thursdays our Chapel is open to everyone in the community for personal prayer and reflection, from 9 am to 1pm.

As in every parish, we celebrate all the stages of life with comforting liturgy and words. And, well, food!! We are a well-fed bunch, literally and spiritually.

Stewardship at St. John's

Realizing that stewardship is about more than money, many of our projects involve parishioners' time and talents over a wide range of activities. We believe in promoting and welcoming congregants' gifts, hoping that eventually financial generosity will follow. Several years ago, we committed to funding outreach not as a budgetary line item but as dedicated fundraising projects, which have raised more funds and involved more individuals inside and outside our parish family. In the past, we found it difficult to talk about raising money for our parish needs, which made our stewardship campaigns less effective. We focused more on outreach than in-reach. We are now trying to be more transparent and proactive.

St. John the Evangelist Outreach: Past and Present

Neighborhood Table

In 2003, Ginny Steen, a member of St. John's, with the support of the priest at that time, Fr. Ken Hunter, and the Reverends Paul and Wanda Veldman of the First Congregational/UCC Church, along with people from United Methodist Church, First English Lutheran Church, and other interested community leaders, joined together to start a meal program called The Neighborhood Table. The congregation of St. John the Evangelist hosted The Neighborhood Table, (TNT), an independent 501(c)(3) organization for its first 11 years. The first meal was served on December 31, 2003. TNT began with two meals a month, and since then has grown to be a large community and ecumenical project, serving over 400 meals (including carry-outs) every Thursday, and on the last two Tuesdays of each month. Due to the increased use of St. John's kitchen, grants through the Community Foundation of South Wood County and The Episcopal Church's United Thank Offering were written and approved to help finance the remodeling and improvements to the kitchen. Construction began in the summer of 2005 and was completed in the late fall. On January 1, 2015, the Neighborhood Table decided to move from St. John's to the United Methodist Church, 441 Garfield St. and continues to serve meals.



Personal Essentials Pantry

From the years 2006 to 2016, St. John's was the home of the Personal Essentials Pantry. At the time, the Personal Essentials Pantry was only one of three such pantries in the state of Wisconsin. This Essentials Pantry provided families with personal and household cleaning supplies, including laundry soap, dish soap, toilet paper, and tooth paste. In 2016 the Essentials Pantry served almost 700 families and, joining with S.W.E.P.'s (South Wood County Food Pantry), now shares one building.



South Wood County Literacy Council



Presently, St. John's is the home of the SWCLC. Their primary focus is helping adults learn to read and reach their goals in order to succeed in today's jobs and employment training programs, manage their daily health care needs, manage their household and personal finances, and understand current events in their community.

Our Outreach Team Today

This change in the pantry location did not stop the people of St. John's from performing other outreach in the Wisconsin Rapids area.

The Outreach Team continues to this day, using monthly donation baskets at the front of the nave for SWEP, MOMs of the Military, the Backpack program and other community projects. These projects are funded by the Team's brat fries and cranberry nut pie sales during community events. St. John's cranberry nut pies have become famous in town! The Outreach Team considers all areas of need for all God's people.



St. John's also opens its doors with music from our organ, and offers cookies and hot chocolate to families that attend the Rekindle the Spirit Parade. This parade kicks off the Christmas season in Wisconsin Rapids.

St. John's, in addition, has a talented group of people who crochet prayer shawls for those in need of a warm hug. These shawls come in all shapes and sizes and colors with a prayer card attached.

As in every parish, we celebrate all the stages of life with comforting liturgy and words. And, well, food!! We are a well-fed bunch, literally and spiritually.

St. John's Statistics

The Vestry: The Vestry meets on the third Monday of each month. We are a team that is made up of Senior Warden, Junior Warden, 4 Vestry Members, and our Treasurer. This group handles most budget issues and each member has a duty to report about things happening at St. John's. We are developing a structure where each Vestry Member is responsible for an area of parish life such as I.T., outreach, and education.

Our Finances

Essential Elements	2010	2013	2015	2016	2017
Pledged Income					
# Pledged Units	36	31	30	29	27
Pledged for Next Year	78,089	59,956	67,812	65,062	75,673
Actual Pledge Income	85,614	74,628	80,785	71,369	81,791
Property Improvements	1,575	--	2,225	8,346	29,024

*All financial documents are available for viewing should there be any further questions. Attached to this profile is our year end summary for 2017

Attendance: This chart below provides information about our Congregation.

Parish Numbers	2010	2013	2015	2016	2017
Total Members	108	83	82	39	40
Average Sunday Attendance	36	31	30	29	27
Baptized Members	101	82	82	40	39
Baptism of Children	4	0	1	1	0
Communicants Added	0	0	0	3	1
Sunday Eucharist	42	65	51	52	53

What St. John the Evangelist is seeking in a new Rector

We seek one to urge and encourage us to lead a life worthy of God, who calls us into his own kingdom and glory. - 1 Thess. 2:12

We are united in the knowledge that, with God's help, we are changing our world one step at a time. These key areas have been identified as areas needing improvement led by a new rector and the Vestry.

- 1) Expanding Christian education and programs for youth and young adults
- 2) Encouraging and embracing the diversity of our parishioners
- 3) Maintaining present social outreach ministries and building additional ones
- 4) Providing worship experiences that feed the needs of the younger generation.

Creating a vibrant and relevant future that serves the needs of both younger and newer members, as well as those who have been with us for many years, will mean a future that may look somewhat different from our past. Our desire for an engaging and

energized future may well require us to re-examine some of our long-held traditions, which may no longer be relevant. We realize that this transition may cause some distress and we want a rector who can help us be and remain a healthy community in Christ.

Collaborative Leader, Teacher, Motivator and Preacher

We seek a rector with the vision and enthusiasm to guide St. John's into the future and the experience to lead us to realize our goals: someone who can motivate us through gifts of teaching and preaching. We appreciate and thrive most with collaborative models of leadership and a pastor who will work with us, inspiring and mentoring both vestry and congregation.

We desire a priest who is easily approachable, with a good sense of humor, a strong character and spiritual integrity. As we are committed to being a place for people of all ages and backgrounds, we seek a rector who is able to communicate, educate and be sensitive to the needs of both newcomers and longtime members. We would like our new rector to be familiar with Cursillo and help our parish to continue this faith journey.

For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. - Jeremiah 29:11

Our History

St. John the Evangelist had its start in the 1870s when the present Wisconsin Rapids area was first settled. At that time there were two settlements, Centralia and Grand Rapids, on opposite banks of the Wisconsin River.

In 1875, the Rezin and the Albee families organized a mission and gathered donations of \$225, forwarding the money to the Endowment Fund of the new Diocese of Fond du Lac, thus insuring the mission's inclusion in that diocese. In 1876, Bishop Brown, first Bishop of Fond du Lac, visited Grand Rapids, baptizing and celebrating the Holy Eucharist. The following year the Bishop returned and organized the mission officially.

The first Rector was The Reverend James Madison Johnson, who came to serve St. John's in 1925 and stayed nineteen years. During this time there was steady growth, and it was decided that a new church building was needed. The community of Wisconsin



Rapids showed support by contributing more funds than the members of the parish. The construction was hastened because a fire destroyed the old church edifice.

The new church building, which is still in use, was built in the English Perpendicular Gothic design. Its beauty is enhanced by the unity of its interior furnishings. The Florentine artist, Giovanni Mazzini, carved in oak the Stations of the Cross, the Rood, statues of St. John, Our Lady of Mercy, and our Lord with children. The windows are Bohemian glass, the only similar ones in the Midwest being in the University of Chicago's Rockefeller Chapel. The building was consecrated, debt free, in 1931.

In 1941, the members of St. John the Evangelist rejoiced in its growth from mission to parish status. During World War II, St. John's chapel was given over to the community as 24-hour a day shrine of prayer. Fr. Johnson retired in 1944. The Reverend Beauford L. Marceil was called as Rector, and served faithfully for 28 years. Those years saw great growth. New membership highs were attained. The Sunday school flourished. An antique sale became an event of great popularity. A new parish hall was built, as was a new rectory. For his great accomplishments, Father Marceil was named Rector Emeritus upon his retirement in 1972.

Fr. Marceil was succeeded by The Reverend Lawrence Boyd was called in 1972. He oversaw the restoration of the magnificent windows, protecting and preserving them for years to come. He led the parish in meeting the challenges and storms in church and society of the 1970s. Fr. Boyd accepted a call to another parish in 1978. The Reverend. J. Lewis Warren, PhD. Became the rector in 1979. Fr. Warren instituted community outreach programs such as contributions to the local Food Pantry, the use of parish facilities for community activities, and sponsorship of children through the Christian Children's Fund. The lawns around the church were landscaped; a garden and a columbarium were added. The parish hall and church were insulated and other

measures were taken for energy conservation and economy



Fr. Warren left in December of 1982. The fifth Rector was The Reverend D. J. Dunlap, who assumed duties on Palm Sunday, 1983. The parish entered a program of evaluation and planning of its ministry. In order to meet the needs those who have of impairment of movement, a new handicap entrance was built and a bathroom

equipped for special needs was added to the main level of the Parish Hall. Fr. Dunlap was instrumental, along with an organ committee and the vestry, to negotiate for a new tracker organ. A representative of the Walker Organ Company of England came and presented a proposal to the committee and vestry. It was accepted and a fund raising campaign began. At the organ dedication The Right Reverend Russell Jacobus stated that it was to be shared with the community. We have had several organ recitals and on 4th of July we celebrate with the community offering patriotic music and verse. Fr. Dunlap served St. John's for fourteen years.

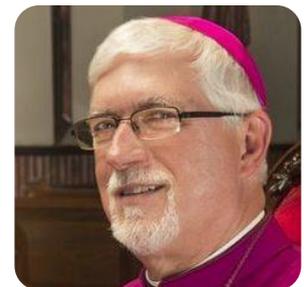
The Reverend Kenneth E. Hunter became the sixth Rector of St. John the Evangelist August 16, 1997. The church began a new curriculum for Vacation Bible School, outreach programs were offered to the parish and community. Under Fr. Hunter's leadership a parking lot and a vestibule were added. Fr. Hunter accepted another call in 2003.

St. John the Evangelist's recently retired rector is The Rev. Vicki J. Natzke. Pastor Vicki quickly inspired the congregation to do significant work on the church building. She organized our community outreach and was involved in many community organizations. Pastor Vicki was an advocate of the Cursillo movement and helped to develop *Kairos* within the Diocese of Fond du Lac. Through her encouragement, many parish members have made and worked on Cursillo. Pastor Vicki began her duties on Palm Sunday, 2004, and retired on December 31, 2017.

The Diocese of Fond du Lac

The Episcopal Church in northeast Wisconsin since 1875

The Diocese of Fond du Lac is a diocese of the Episcopal Church encompassing northeast Wisconsin. The Diocese contains about 5,550 baptized members worshipping in 37 locations. The Right Reverend Matthew Gunter has served as its eighth bishop since 2014. The Cathedral Church of St. Paul the Apostle is in Fond du Lac and the Diocesan Office is in Appleton. Bishop Matt has called the diocese to be "a people of God's mercy and delight" through vital congregations, prayer, worship, and mission. The Diocese is in a companion diocesan relationship with the Diocese of Masvingo, Zimbabwe. Learn more about who we are and what we do at diofdl.org



About the Wisconsin Rapids Area

In 2012, an estimated 45,741 people lived in the south Wood County area. Wisconsin Rapids and its surrounding communities offer an array of diverse industry, beautiful



scenery, and a great variety of unique experiences to be enjoyed throughout the year. Companies specializing in cranberries, papermaking, and educational software products offer a wide variety of business and industry workforce opportunities.

Our school system is considered very strong. LHS students have earned a high degree of respect for honors earned in regional, state and national competition. For the second year in a row we were recognized as a top 30% high school by US News & World Report. Wisconsin Rapids is also home to Mid-State Technical College which offers a range of opportunities to people in all walks of life. The Wisconsin Rapids area is served by the Aspirus Riverview Hospital, Aspirus Clinics and Marshfield Clinic, which are some of the best consortiums in the state of Wisconsin.

Year-round recreational activities are enjoyed by members in the community, and there is something to do each season! The area offers miles of biking, hiking trails, ATV and snowmobile trails, and lakes for swimming, boating, and fishing, area campgrounds, a baseball stadium featuring a Northwoods League team (Rafters), several beautiful golf courses, and many seasonal fairs and festivals for the entire family to enjoy.



Incourage Community Foundation (www.incouragecf.org) is a local organization helping to respond to the changing needs of the south Wood County area. Through partnerships shared with residents and local organizations, Incourage works diligently to engage community-wide efforts to connect local and national resources and transform our local economy and culture in positive ways.

The Boys & Girls Club and the YMCA are joining together in a new venture with a new building as well as all the services they currently provide. Other community organizations like the United Way of South Wood County and Family Center help in providing assistance in providing resources to the area.

As in most cities and towns, you can find more information about Wisconsin Rapids and St. John the Evangelist on Facebook.

We like living here!!!

Additional Information



To make an inquiry about this position
Contact the Transition Ministry Officer
The Rev. Meredyth Albright at transition@diofdl.org.