



ST. AIDAN'S

STAG & STAFF

The growing community of St. Aidan's is called to be God's light and loving presence through faith, sacrament, and outreach.

DECEMBER 2025
VOLUME XXIX NUMBER 12



DECEMBER

7 — ADVENT 2

WORSHIP 9:30 AM

SUNDAY SCHOOL

ADULT FORUM

GREENING OF THE CHURCH

14 — ADVENT 3

WORSHIP 9:30 AM

CONFIRMATION

21 — ADVENT 4

WORSHIP 9:30 AM

SUNDAY SCHOOL

24 — CHRISTMAS EVE

WORSHIP 4 PM

25 — CHRISTMAS DAY

WORSHIP 9:30 AM



First Saturdays

Men & Gnomes' Breakfast

DECEMBER 6

Celebrate St. Nick's!

Cooking 8am

Eating 8:30am



GET READY!

The BAZAAR IS COMING!

The bazaar **IS** coming!

Prep days: December 8 — 12

Mark your calendars for the hours/days you can help — it will be some of the most fun work you'll do this holiday season.

AND TELL YOUR FRIENDS!

St. Aidan's

Christmas Bazaar & Cookie Sale

Saturday -- December 13

Christmas To Do List

1. ^{BE} Buy presents
2. ^{SOMEONE IN A HUG} Wrap gifts
3. ^{LOVE} Send gifts
4. ^{DONATE} Shop for food
5. ^{MEMORIES} Make cookies
6. ^{BE} See the lights



November Memories —



This year we had double the number of family photos on the ofrenda. On some level those who have gone before remain in our hearts forever; they are never gone.

A surprise birthday celebration!



Ceremony to place dog tags on a tree near Hartford Fire Department in honor and remembrance of veterans who have taken their lives. **Bert Mendoza** and **Ron Schnorenberg** are holding flags. Each year one person associated with a military branch leads participants by sharing a brief story, a reflection, and prayer remembering someone who has taken his/her life.



Esther's Epistle

Dear Friends,

At the beginning of December, we participate in the sacred story of Advent and Christmas. Many of you know the joy of tracking days in the season of Advent on an Advent calendar! Together, on Sunday mornings in Advent, we light the candles on a wreath. This is a special season in the church and in our lives when we live in anticipation. We open our hearts to the message of God coming into the world. Then – together on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day – we celebrate the yearly festival of Christ's birth.

Many of us enjoy sharing traditional Christmas customs, and we appreciate the unchanging scene of a manger, yet we are called to look forward, as if every day is part of the Advent season. We are called to see what God is making new in the world and see holiness in the face of every person. We are called to be Christ to people who are oppressed or face discrimination. We are called to be Christ to people with whom we vehemently disagree and people we struggle to forgive. We are called to embody the Christian story long after the candles are extinguished, and we take down our Christmas decorations.

I feel privileged to be part of the on-going Christian story with the people of St. Aidan's, and I'm inspired by your dedication to living a Christian life. St. Aidan's is blessed with inquisitive children, an active ECW and women's ministries, a vibrant choir and gifted musicians, an engaged breakfast group, a committed vestry, energetic book discussion participants, dedicated readers, greeters, ushers, lay eucharistic ministers, acolytes, altar guild members, a loyal spirit guild, coffee hour hosts, counters, church cleaners, an excellent administrative assistant, and a dedicated Deacon. Let us look with Advent hope to the future and celebrate Christmas together, in Christ.

With the joy of the seasons,
Esther +



St. Aidan's Annual Giving Campaign

This year's theme for our annual parish giving campaign is inspired by a wonderful hymn and by the many stories that have become our shared experience of the divine. Near the beginning of December, look for your giving packet in the mail or pick one up at the church. On Sunday, December 7, we will ask for God's blessing on our congregation and on this campaign. In December and January you will hear stories from parishioners about their experience of God, and the way participation in the St. Aidan's faith community has made an impact in their lives. We'll celebrate and offer our collected pledges on Sunday, January 18. Please plan to give generously for the mission of St. Aidan's and for the glory of God.



Attention all St. Aidan's Singers —
JOIN US!

Choir rehearsals during December and January will be immediately after Sunday worship. 15 - 20 minutes so still lots of time for coffee fellowship afterwards.

We are incorporating new music formats so all the family can sing: **Kids, parents, singles — everyone who loves to sing come and join us!**

Pat Gardner
Music Director



From Eric's desk —

Thank you all for helping us to get ready!

We had a great Regional Meeting on Saturday Nov. 22nd. People from across the Kettle Moraine Region of the Diocese joined us to learn about methods of Christian Formation. Many compliments on our facility and hospitality. AND, I believe I was the only one who left with red dye from the chairs on my clothes. Win!

We have also had great help in getting ready for next year at the church.

First with the leadership of our Junior Warden, Laura, we are looking at the physical needs of our church. Working out not only cost, but divvying things up between want to's and have to's.

Second, two full meetings from members of the congregation to complete next years budget. Thank you so much to everyone who helped us walk through this project. Join us at the Annual Meeting for the big reveal.

Third, other members of the congregation coming together to help and plan for the upcoming Giving Campaign. What a Blessing we had as a congregation eight years ago to raise the money needed for paying off our mortgage. What freedom this now gives us in choices for our stewardship.

I hope all your planning is going great for the Holiday Season and we'll see you at Church.

Eric Wetzel
Senior Warden





Cree Fiester, daughter of **Scott and gail Hefti**, her husband Taylor, and their son Miles, welcomed their daughter, Marley Elizabeth, on October 19, 2025. Congratulations from the St. Aidan's family!



Mary and Mike Moran were excited to welcome their newest grand son, Rowan Moran, into the world on November 3. Dad and mom, Erica and Ben, are doing well. Good news, indeed!



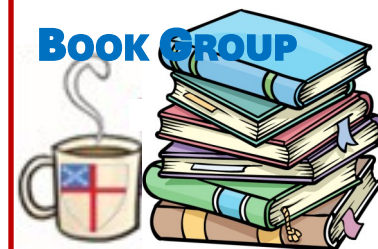
November 30, the church begins its new liturgical year with Advent, which means *coming near*. During these four weeks, we prepare our souls to welcome Emmanuel - God with us - as a newborn at Bethlehem. But we also, like Mary, make room in our souls for Christ to dwell within us now and eagerly look forward to the day when Jesus will come again in glory.

The music for Advent expresses our longing for hope, peace, joy and the love of God. The Trisagion (triss EYE yawn in Greek) is the Thrice Holy prayer to the Triune God: **Holy Lord, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One, have mercy upon us.**

Legend has it that in the fifth century during the reign of Emperor Theodosius II, Constantinople (present day Istanbul) was shaken by a violent earthquake. The emperor, the priests, and the people who crowded into the great Holy Wisdom Cathedral, were terrified and crying for God to save them. Suddenly a little boy was miraculously raised high in the air and seen talking with angels. When he came back down to ground, he said the angels had taught him a song: **Holy Lord, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One, have mercy upon us.** Everyone began to sing this prayer of worship and deliverance - over and over they sang, louder and louder. The shaking stopped. The tremors ceased. The earth stood still. The people and the city were saved.

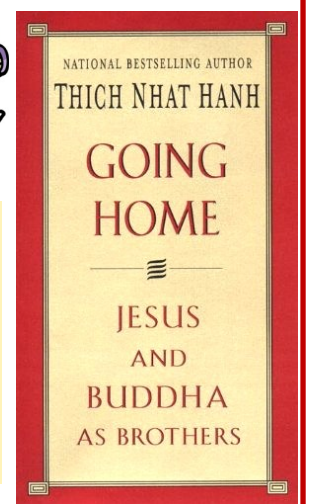
Today our nation, cities, and world are convulsed on so many levels. Using the beautiful arrangement by Russian composer Alexander Archangelsky, let's us understand this ancient song in a deeper way and sincerely mean what we sing.

Pat Gardner
Music Director



Please join us!

FRIDAY
JANUARY 9
12:30 pm
FELLOWSHIP HALL



ST. AIDAN'S MINISTRIES SCHEDULE

December 2025

| | 7 | 14 | 21 | 28 |
|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Reader | S. Schmidt | E. Wetzel | D. Beml | L. Daley |
| Prayers | C. Gardner | K. Fairchild | L. Molenda | D. Beml |
| Acolyte | J.P. Schrunck | L. Daley | A. Schrunck | S. Schmidt |
| Usher | L. Molenda | J. Pierce | Pollocks | R. Schnorenberg |
| LEM | B. Schrunck | M. Hoffmann | J. Pierce | L. Johnston |
| Counters | A. M-Meigs/Hoffmann | Gardner/Schnorenberg | K. Fairchild/M. Weber | M. Moran/J. Pierce |
| Cleaning | | Weber | Schnorenberg/Johnston | |
| Altar | Pollock | | | |
| Coffee Hour | Weber/Dinco | Xmas Bazaar | Moran/Morgan | Mendoza |

JANUARY 2026

| | 4 | 11 | 18 | 25 |
|-----------------|-------------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Reader | B. Pollock | B. Schrunck | M. Hoffmann | B. Mendoza |
| Prayers | E. Schmidt | T. Schlaefer | B. Pollock | L. Schrunck |
| Acolyte | J.P. Schrunck | L. Daley | A. Schrunck | S. Schmidt |
| Usher | Schmidts | Webers | Schruncks | L. Molenda |
| LEM | M. Hoffmann | M. Weber | B. Schrunck | J. Thorbahn Pierce |
| Counters | A. M Meigs/K. Fairchild | Hoffmann/Gardner | Pierce/M. B. Moran | Schnorenberg/Weber |
| Cleaning | TBA | TBA | TBA | TBA |
| Altar | Susan Trewyn | | | |

If you cannot serve your appointed time, please arrange for a substitute. Thank you.

Any **permanent** changes to the schedule should be reported to

Gail Hefti at gail.hefti@gmail.com or 920-740-3997.



PARISH EVENTS — DECEMBER 2025

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|--|--|-----------|--|--|---|--|
| | 1 | 2 | 3  St. A. B'fast Main St. Café 7 - 9 am | 4 | 5 | 6  Men's B'fast 8:30 am |
| 7 Advent 2 Worship — 9:30 am Sunday School Adult Forum Greening of the Church Choir Practice  | 8  Kitchen Open for Baking 9 am—2 pm | 9 | 10 St. A. B'fast Main St. Café 7 - 9 am | 11 | 12 | 13  Christmas BAZAAR! 9 am—2pm |
| 14 Advent 3 Worship — 9:30 am Confirmation Choir Practice  Stag & Staff articles due | 15 | 16 | 17  St. A. B'fast Main St. Café 7 - 9 am | 18 | 19  | 20 |
| 21 Advent 4 Worship — 9:30 am Sunday School Vestry Meeting Choir Practice  | 22 | 23 | 24 Christmas Eve 4 pm | 25 Christmas Day 9:30 am | 26 | 27  Community Lunch 11:30 am 1st United Methodist |
| 28 Worship — 9:30 am Choir Practice  | 29  | 30 | 31  St. A. B'fast Main St. Café 7 - 9 am | JANUARY 2026  A New Beginning <i>Be strong and of a good courage... God is with thee</i> | | |



St. Aidan's Office Hours

Wednesdays — 9 am to Noon

Fridays — 9 am to Noon

Or by appointment

How to reach us —

Church Mailing Address:

670 E. Monroe Avenue

Hartford, WI 53027

Church Office E-mail:

secretary@staidans-hartford.org

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Mary Beth Moran, Treasurer

Vestry Wardens

Eric Wetzel, Senior Warden

Laura Johnston, Junior Warden

Vestry

Geri Kelly

Lynn Molenda

Mike Morgan

Mike Weber

Stag and Staff — St. Aidan's Newsletter

Published monthly

Deadline: Third Sunday of the month

Micki Hoffmann, Editor

Contact: mphoffmann70@gmail.com

or 262-673-2903

Weather Cancellation Information

If the weather outside is frightful, check your email for service cancellation information from the church.



Prayer Chain

If anyone has a prayer need for someone or something, please call **Alice Pollock** [262-707-3456] or the church office.

Mondays --
AA 7 - 8 pm Parish Hall

Tuesdays --
Women's AA Noon Parish Hall

Wednesdays
Office Open 9am - Noon

Thursdays
Choir Practice 6:30 pm Sanctuary

Fridays
Office Open 9 am - Noon

First Saturdays
Men B'fast 8 am Parish Hall

Sundays
Worship Service 9:30 am

For information about groups or scheduling the building, contact the Church Office.

Good Samaritans' Favorite Sign of the Month



**Call the Good Samaritans for help.
414-416-9118**



Birthdays & Anniversaries

| | |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| 1 Susan Trewyn | 11 Fred Paddon |
| 2 Vivien Olson | 13 Virginia Komp |
| 4 Sarah Stage | 20 Linda & Mike Weber |
| 8 Lisa Lake | 22 Gabriel Mercado |



Alice's Restaurant

The weather has taken a turn toward winter. There is frost on the grass in the morning, the ginkgo leaves are all down, and the dog is getting very efficient in his outdoor excursions in the cold. Fortunately, I got my garden put to bed for the winter before the temperature dropped.

I am looking for a bit of peace and quiet, but I know it won't happen for a while. There is just too much going on this time of year. I do look forward to the church Bazaar. It is a lot of work, but it is a lot of fun, too. I have learned to decorate cookies like a professional under Linda Weber's tutoring. She kindly turns a blind eye when I occasionally veer off into an artistic experiment on a cookie. We have a great time setting up the week before and seeing what new crafts will appear or perhaps finding some precious vintage decoration or ornament that will be just perfect for someone. But the best is the time we spend together and the people we meet. I have heard wonderful stories at our bazaar and seen faces light up when just the right gift is discovered. I wouldn't miss it for anything.

If you can't be there, and you want to help — make cookies! Here is an easy recipe for you, no decorating necessary.

Basic Oatmeal Cookies

1 stick of butter, melted and set aside to cool a bit

While it cools stir together:

1/2 C. brown sugar

1/4 C. white sugar

1 C. flour

1 C. oatmeal

1/2 t. salt

1/2 t. cinnamon

1/2 t. baking soda

1/4 t. baking powder

Add this to the melted butter with

1 egg

1 t. vanilla

Now that it's all mixed, add in:

2 C. chocolate chips **or** raisins **or** nuts **or** toffee bits.

Be creative!

Drop by teaspoonfuls on a greased or parchment covered cookie sheet.

Bake at 350*for about 15 minutes.

Alice Pollock



THE RECTOR DROPS IN ON THE PAGEANT REHEARSAL



ST. AIDAN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

STAG & STAFF



Poets' Corner

A Christmas Prayer

God, we are as confounded
as Joseph and Mary
as busy as the innkeepers,
as lonely as the shepherds,
as frightened as Herod,
as wayfaring as The Magi.
Turn us again to the place where,
with quietness,
you wrap up your truth
and promise,
your love and salvation
in the Child born in a crude barn.
We ponder these things
as the noise and clamor of the world
are stilled for a time,
and there is a peace that settles
deep within us.
Bring us to Bethlehem,
to the place where Jesus
was homeless
but where we are truly at home.
Amen

The Rev. Canon Ralph Frye



deaconspeak: musings from the left shoul-

At the Kettle Moraine Regional Gathering, Bishop Matt shared his guitar skills, or lack thereof, to illustrate that, to do something well takes time and practice. Along with that, even the most accomplished at any skill (e.g., Pablo Casals – cellist) continues to practice to get better.

This is true of any skill or discipline – especially those in building our faith as followers of Jesus Christ. In the midst of the busy-ness of our lives, we begin a new year with Advent. I invite us to use this Advent as a wonderful opportunity to “practice” aspects of our faith, to strengthen and tone our lives as Christians.

Each Sunday of Advent has a focus: Hope... Peace... Joy... Love. When you leave church either in person or livestream each of those Sundays, you can take that day’s focus with you. Then share it: first with yourself. Use Hope as an example. To share it with yourself, you need to receive and accept that Hope in your heart. It’s very easy to acknowledge these virtues in your mind, but it takes a lot more effort and trust in God to accept that Hope in your heart... to dwell in it... to take comfort in it.

Once you share this (Hope, etc.) in your hearts, next share it with someone you know and is close to you. After all, sharing something from your heart makes you a bit vulnerable and uncomfortable – so start with a safer environment.

After that, Jesus calls each of us to share with someone we do not know, or don’t know well, or perhaps don’t really even like. That makes us even more vulnerable and uncomfortable – but when we receive and accept Hope & Peace & Joy & Love from Jesus in our hearts, we find that comfort sustains and enables us - even if we are rejected or ignored.

Every week – starting with the 1st Sunday of Advent - when we share Hope... Peace... Joy... Love... we are practicing and forming our faith in Christ, and we will continue to grow. As we do this, that liminal space between earth and heaven gets all the more minimal and negligible, one person at a time!

Share Your Blessed Advent!

Love in Christ - **terry**

In case you

missed it...

A good message —

Lk. 18:9-14

Jesus told his disciples to “fear not,” and he advocated the Jewish commandment, “Love your neighbor as yourself.” But we can’t just turn off fear or turn on love by mental will power. Why not? Here’s a waker-upper reality: the part of the brain we think with is the weakest part of the brain. It’s the pre-human, reptile to ape parts of the human brain that are strongest -- strongest at influencing our emotions, and so, strongest at influencing our behavior. Not only was the thinking part of the human brain last to evolve, it’s the last to develop in us, not complete until around age twenty- two. I bring that up because Jesus’ sayings call on the thinking part of our brains. “Love your enemies” or “do not judge others” make no sense without thought. Even with thought, our primitive impulses so often override Jesus’ sayings.

It’s really challenging that what Jesus taught is the only realistic way to peace, peace among nations, peace at home, peace in our hearts and minds. That’s because what he taught is truth. Today’s gospel reading is about humility, and humility is truth. How about that P.R. Puff-job, the self- righteous Pharisee tried to sell to God? It could have been literally true. As he said, he wasn’t a thief, rogue, adulterer, or a money shark like the tax collector off by himself. It could be that he did fast twice a week and give a tenth of his income. Those things do matter. But how about arrogant pride, how about “love your neighbor as yourself?”

Obviously, the Pharisee was telling the truth selectively, or maybe he just didn’t do much self-examination. Humility, though, demands complete honesty. Humility’s simply “the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth” about ourselves to ourselves. Was the self- righteous Pharisee talking to God or to himself? Probably both. God’s place is all over the place, even in us. So the Pharisee wasn’t telling himself the whole truth about himself. That has consequences. The AA Big Book, called “Alcoholics Anonymous” says that even the most messed up people can recover, that is, if they have “the capacity to be honest.” The Church is “Sinners Anonymous.”

The tax shark’s message to God and himself was short and blunt: “God, be merciful to me, a sinner!” Maybe he could have listed his virtues. Maybe he was a good family man. But he seemed so overwhelmed with remorse that he had to clear the air first. Unlike the Pharisee, who was all showbiz, this tax collector seemed to have a conscience. He took the first step to clear his conscience. He faced the truth.

That’s humility, not a symptom of major depression with its non-stop self- condemnation, not a narcissistic exercise in self- congratulation, but the truth. Honest humility’s not easy. Self- examination takes thought, but the thinking brain’s the under-dog facing the more powerful impulsive brain. Besides, life’s not easy for anyone. Choices aren’t usually clear-cut. But two things stand out: God is merciful, and we’re not called on to do more than our best.

Still, there is a happy ending. God’s grace lets us do our best. Grace refers to God’s blessings or gifts to us. As our Eucharistic Prayer says, God “blessed us with memory, reason, and skill.” We can use those blessings not to attack our instincts. We can use those blessings to befriend our instincts, something like the way human beings transitioned wolves into dogs. So fear can be tempered into prudence, maybe more. Hate can be coaxed into tolerance, maybe more. Anger can be persuaded to declare a truce, maybe more. Then finally, love can breathe free. It all starts with humility. The truth will make us free.

Fr. Tom Ackerman

Supply Priest at St. Aidan’s

ST. AIDAN’S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

STAG & STAFF



Since 1999, **Festival of Trees** has raised nearly \$1 million to support the pets and people of Washington County. With your attendance at the 26th annual event, we hope to cross that impressive milestone.

Community participation is what makes Festival of Trees so special. Trees and other decor items are decorated with boundless creativity and raffled off to dazzled guests. We invite you to wander through our festive world and be swept away by the color, light and beauty of our community.

Saturday, December 6 | 10am-7pm

Sunday, December 7 | 10am-4pm

WCHS - 3650 State Road 60, Slinger, WI 53086

Tickets: \$6-8, available for purchase the day of the event

When you're here:

Shop holiday gifts, decor and ugly sweaters

Listen to live holiday music

Grab a sweet from the bakery

Visit with our animals

Vote for your favorite displays

Meet Santa

& more!





St. Aidan's
Christmas Bazaar & Cookie Sale
Saturday -- December 13, 2025
9am -- 2 pm

Cookies! Cookies! Cookies!

Hand decorated Cookies
Assorted Christmas Cookies
Decorate Your Own Christmas Cookie Kits

Gifts & Crafts!

Hand-made Treasures ♦ Knitting ♦ Jam ♦ Bakery ♦ and MORE!

Remarkable Raffle!

Baskets ♦ Gift Cards

Lunch To Go!

Soup ♦ Chili ♦ Bread ♦ Brats ♦ Burgers

St. Aidan's Episcopal Church

670 E. Monroe Avenue

Hartford, WI 53027

