

St. John's, Medina

What are some significant moments in the history of your church that have shaped its identity today?

St. John's began as a mission church and is the oldest congregation in the county of Orleans. We are located within sight of the Erie Canal. The church is known for its unusual placement as the Church in the Middle of the Street in Ripley's Believe It or Not.

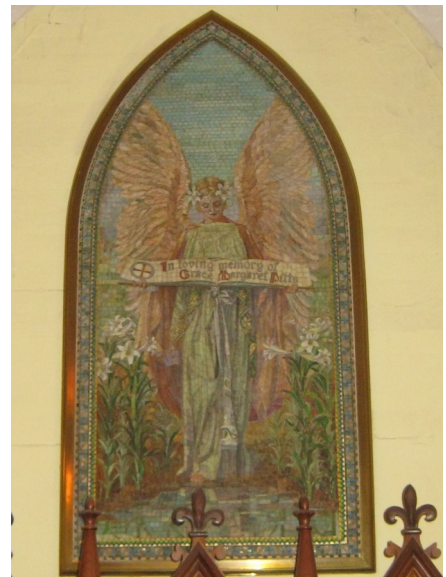


What makes your church unique in the region and the diocese?

Our congregation was formed in 1827 and the church erected in 1832. Designed of Medina Sandstone, the building features a number of stained glass windows of differing styles and dedications. There are two mosaics by Jacob Holzer, who had worked for Tiffany before creating the two in St. John's of Tiffany materials. The church and the windows have been featured in various publications, including a recent poster of Medina doorways, Luminaries in the Firmament, a book by then County Historian Bill Lattin of stained glass windows in Orleans County, and History of Sandstone in Orleans County, NY by author Jim Friday. Published in 2021, the book gives a number of examples of local buildings, including our own, described as having "charm and historical significance."

What are the most vibrant ministries or strengths of your parish today?

St. John's houses a Linen Closet that has provided refurbished linens to the Genesee-Orleans Ministry of Concern and other organizations for over a decade. The local food pantry and thrift store had their beginnings at St. John's. The Medina Area Association of Churches now provides leadership at the thrift store and St. John's is one of many local churches that provide food, gifts and toys, and hands to pack Christmas boxes that are delivered to needy families in the area each December. The local BOCES GED program is located at our church and provides another opportunity to distribute useful household and clothing items to the student population.



Describe a moment in your community's life when you felt the presence of the Holy Spirit moving among you.

What made that moment possible?

Last Christmas we invited a guest organist to lead the congregation and guests in the Service of Nine Lessons and Carols. This beautiful service created a feeling of peace and fellowship that has stayed with us all through 2025 and we intend to repeat the service again this year.

How does your church engage with the local neighborhood, the civic life of your community, or diocesan and/or Episcopal Church-wide initiatives?

As mentioned above, our church participates in the MAAC organization, distributes needed goods in the area, and is seen as one of the many highlights of downtown Medina. In addition, we participate regularly in meetings with the Genesee Regional Initiative and diocesan events. St. John's will be included on the Sandstone Society Tour this October as one of the featured buildings. We have participated in the Landmark Society's Sacred Sites, a statewide tour, for over ten years.

What are the hopes and dreams of your congregation for its next chapter?

We hope the appreciation of St. John's as a beautiful church and a welcoming parish will continue and expand; allowing us, the congregation, to continue our mission of good in the community. We have recently gained a new priest and deacon as part of the Genesee Regional Initiative and are poised to grow with our clergy.