

# Ideas to Share 2022



## Winter Mingle

St. Mary Church, Winneconne  
Submitted by Andy Krueger

The Winter Mingle began around 6 years ago. It is a Parish Council project and came about to bring parish members together. A way to help people get to know more people in the parish. It is open to anyone in the parish who would like to attend. We do offer childcare. Parish Council organizes everything from the childcare, food, and decorations. Kaudy Hall would be transformed into a winter wonderland for the event. There is no cost. We just ask for RSVP so we know how many to plan for.

The Mingle was scheduled for a Saturday afternoon following our Saturday 4:00 Mass then over to Kaudy Hall until 7pm. Kids were in a separate location with both teen and adult supervisors. They were served pizza, fruit, drinks. There were lots of games and crafts for them. They had as much fun as the adults!

To help guests get to know each other an icebreaker was always planned. It was an organized way for the council to force guests to mingle outside their comfort group of friends. One year it was similar to speed dating. Card tables were set up and couples (this is the year I believe the Mingle was targeted to just married couples) would rotate through the tables discussing the questions that were found on table tents in the center of each table. When the bell sounded it was time to meet two new parishioners. This was fun. The time limit and questions that were provided helped a lot. Another year we played a bingo game to get to know folks. You had to wander around finding fun facts about people. This was fun because you were finding some new fun things out about each other.

Food included a lot of finger food items, heavy appetizer-type foods as well as substantial desserts. Wine and beer were provided. The event grew over the years, from probably 30ish the first year to almost 100 the last time, which was January 2019. Sadly, it has been placed on hold now because of Covid.

Our parish council really took pride in this event and worked together to put on a fabulous event. It has, over the years been a highlight of our parishioners. It really is a great community builder!