



St. Matthew

LUTHERAN CHURCH *of* HANOVER

Where the Welcome is Wide and the Love is Real

Sunday, February 8, 2026
10:30 a.m.

Welcome! Whether you are a long-time member of St. Matthew, a first-time visitor, or somewhere in between, we are thankful you are here today. If you have questions or any needs, please let a name-tagged usher know. We hope that you experience God's love during worship today.



Our Purpose:

Welcoming all as we share God's love.

Our Goals:

Enliven faith through worship and learning

Cultivate shared leadership as disciples of Jesus

Engage children, youth, and families

Bridge the gaps with home-insecure neighbors

Build authentic relationships across differences

About today: We gather as a community to worship God by singing, praying, listening to scripture, hearing a message and celebrating the Sacrament of Holy Communion. The scripture readings are chosen through the Narrative Lectionary which follows the biblical story from beginning to the end. It was initiated by Lutheran professors in partnership with congregations who recognized the importance of understanding the Bible's message as the source of our faith in Jesus Christ.

Our regular weekend schedule includes Saturday worship at 5:00 p.m., Sunday indoor worship at 8:30 a.m. and at 10:30 a.m. (livestreamed). You can find our livestream on our website or on Youtube (links can be found on the last page of the bulletin).

**Fifth Sunday after Epiphany
February 8, 2026, 10:30 a.m.**

✠ GATHERING ✠

PRELUDE

Meditation

Stanley

WELCOME

Please stand as you are able.

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

Pastor: Trusting that God receives our words and the meditation of our hearts, let us confess our sin before God and one another.

A moment of silence for reflection.

Pastor: God of grace and mercy,

All: We who have seen the signs of Jesus' presence in the world still fall into doubt and despair. We put our trust in ourselves and in the powers of the world, in material goods and in finite and fallible people. In our fear we act out against our neighbors, and hurt those most in need of our help. Restore our faith, O God. Forgive us for our failings and make us one with our beloved siblings throughout creation.

Pastor: Your God hears and answers, beloved children, and with love and tenderness washes away all your sins. In the name of ✠ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Know that you are always loved and always held – even in your doubts and failings. Go forth with joy in this knowledge.

All: Amen.

Refrain

Heal - er of our ev - 'ry ill, light of each to - mor - row,



give us peace be - yond our fear, and hope be - yond our sor - row.



- 1 You who know our fears and sad - ness, grace us with your
- 2 In the pain and joy be - hold - ing how your grace is
- 3 Give us strength to love each oth - er, ev - 'ry sis - ter,
- 4 You who know each thought and feel - ing, teach us all your

Refrain

peace and glad - ness; Spir - it of all com - fort, fill our hearts.
 still un - fold - ing, give us all your vi - sion, God of love.
 ev - 'ry broth - er; Spir - it of all kind - ness, be our guide.
 way of heal - ing; Spir - it of com - pas - sion, fill each heart.

GREETING

Pastor: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All: And also with you.

Please be seated.

Children second grade and under are invited to meet our children's leader at the baptismal font at the front of the Nave. She will take the children for Children's Church at the "Pray-ground" in the Fellowship Hall. They will hear a Bible story from this week's lectionary in an age-appropriate format and spend some time

exploring their faith and creativity together. They will return during the passing of the peace.

HYMN OF PRAISE



Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.



Lord God, heav-en-ly King, al-might-y God and Fa-ther, we



wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo-ry.



Lord Je-sus Christ, on-ly Son of the Fa-ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,



you take a-way the sin of the world: have mer-cy on us;

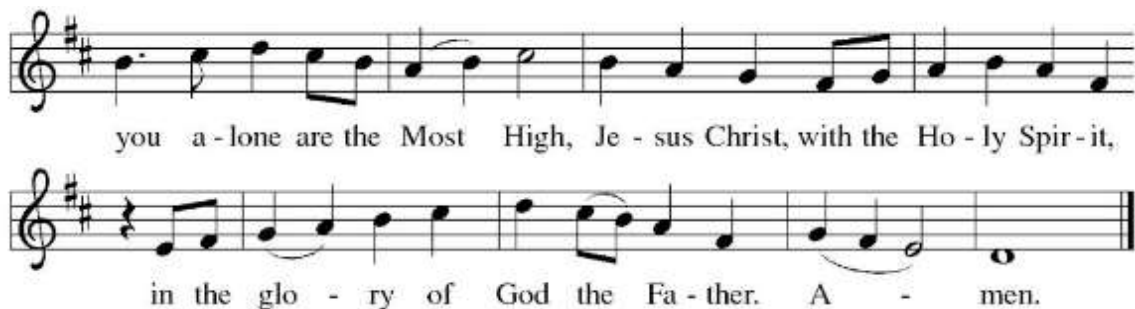


you are seat-ed at the right hand of the Fa-ther: re-ceive our prayer.



For you a-lone are the Ho-ly One, you a-lone are the Lord,

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PRAYER OF THE DAY

Lector: God of restoration, Healing and wholeness come from you.
Bless the work of all who strive for the healing and wholeness
of individuals, communities, nations, human society, and the
natural world, that their work might be your work through
them, for the sake of all that you have made. In Jesus' name
we pray. Amen.

✠ THE WORD ✠

THE READING: Psalm 40:1-5 (*Please read responsively*)

- ¹ I waited patiently for the LORD;
he inclined to me and heard my cry.
- ² **He drew me up from the desolate pit,
out of the miry bog,
and set my feet upon a rock,
making my steps secure.**
- ³ He put a new song in my mouth,
a song of praise to our God.
Many will see and fear
and put their trust in the LORD.
- ⁴ **Happy are those who make
the LORD their trust,
who do not turn to the proud,
to those who go astray after false gods.**

⁵You have multiplied, O LORD my God,
your wondrous deeds and your thoughts toward us;
none can compare with you.
Were I to proclaim and tell of them,
they would be more than can be counted.

Lector: The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Please stand as you are able.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to John, the 4th & 5th chapters.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

HOLY GOSPEL: John 4:46-54; 5:1-18

⁴⁶Then he came again to Cana in Galilee, where he had changed the water into wine. Now there was a royal official whose son lay ill in Capernaum. ⁴⁷When he heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went and begged him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. ⁴⁸Then Jesus said to him, "Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe." ⁴⁹The official said to him, "Sir, come down before my little boy dies." ⁵⁰Jesus said to him, "Go; your son will live." The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and started on his way. ⁵¹As he was going down, his slaves met him and told him that his child was alive. ⁵²So he asked them the hour when he began to recover, and they said to him, "Yesterday at one in the afternoon the fever left him." ⁵³The

father realized that this was the hour when Jesus had said to him, “Your son will live.” So he himself believed, along with his whole household. ⁵⁴ Now this was the second sign that Jesus did after coming from Judea to Galilee.

5 ¹After this there was a festival of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

² Now in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate there is a pool, called in Hebrew Beth-zatha, which has five porticoes. ³ In these lay many ill, blind, lame, and paralyzed people. ⁵ One man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years. ⁶ When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had been there a long time, he said to him, “Do you want to be made well?” ⁷ The ill man answered him, “Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, and while I am making my way someone else steps down ahead of me.” ⁸ Jesus said to him, “Stand up, take your mat and walk.” ⁹ At once the man was made well, and he took up his mat and began to walk.

Now that day was a Sabbath. ¹⁰ So the Jews said to the man who had been cured, “It is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your mat.” ¹¹ But he answered them, “The man who made me well said to me, ‘Take up your mat and walk.’” ¹² They asked him, “Who is the man who said to you, ‘Take it up and walk’?” ¹³ Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had disappeared in the crowd that was there. ¹⁴ Later Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, “See, you have been made well! Do not sin any more, so that nothing worse happens to you.” ¹⁵ The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well. ¹⁶ Therefore the Jews started persecuting Jesus, because he was doing such things on the Sabbath. ¹⁷ But Jesus answered them, “My Father is still working, and I also am working.” ¹⁸ For this reason the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because he was not only breaking the Sabbath but was also calling God his own Father, thereby making himself equal to God.

Pastor: The Gospel of our Lord.

All: Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated.

SERMON

Pastor Alex Sheppard-Witt

Please stand as you are able.

HYMN

Rise, Shine, You People!

**ELW #665
Klug/Wood**



CREED

Leader: Let us confess our faith with the words of the Apostles' Creed.

**All: I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYERS

Leader: Each petition concludes, *“God of light,”* and the congregation responds, *“hear our prayers.”*

PEACE

Pastor: The peace of Christ be with you always.

All: And also with you.

Please be seated.

MUSICAL OFFERING

Yes, My Jesus Loves Me
Tasha Bobb, Soloist

McDonald

GENEROSITY MOMENT and Announcements

*We celebrate God’s generosity embodied in this community’s time, talents, and treasures shared with one another. **Thank you for your presence** in worship today. **Thank you for offering** the “first fruits” of your finances. Offering may be placed in the baskets near the entrances/ exits of the worship space or through online giving on our website. **Thank you for sharing** your spiritual gifts with our church, local, and global communities. See the QR code on the back of the bulletin. You may also text-to-give at 717-613-6204.*

Please stand as you are able.

OFFERTORY

Arise, Your Light Has Come!

ELW #314
Duck/Walter

1 A - rise, your light has come! The Spir - it's call o - bey;
2 A - rise, your light has come! Fling wide the pris - on door;

show forth the glo - ry of your God which shines on you to - day.
pro - claim the cap - tive's lib - er - ty, good tid - ings to the poor.

THE OFFERTORY PRAYER

Leader: God of grace,

All: All of creation came forth from your hand, O God. Accept now these humble offerings out of the abundance you have made and shared with us. Use our gifts to further the work of healing and wholeness for all the world. Amen.

✠ THE MEAL ✠

GREAT THANKSGIVING

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

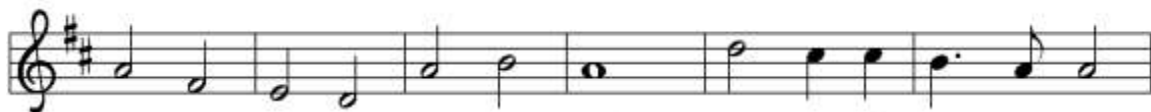
All: We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Pastor: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy...

...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,



heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.



Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes

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EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER WITH WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Pastor: Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Please be seated.

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

All are welcome to the Lord's Supper. The meal is served in three ways. Choose what is appropriate for you.

Individual packets are available for those wishing to remain in their pew.

If you are unable to come forward, but would like communion served by the pastor, please let one of the ushers know and the Sacrament will be brought to you at your seat.

Continuous manner – Come forward at the direction of the ushers, take the wafer from the pastor, "The body of Christ, given for you", and eat it. (Gluten-free wafers are available) Then move to the next station and take one of the cups of wine (red) or grape juice (white) "The blood of Christ, shed for you", and drink it.

Children who do not yet receive communion are invited to come forward to receive a blessing.

IN-PEW COMMUNION (WITH PACKETS)

Pastor: The body of Christ, given for you.

All: Amen. (*Eat wafer*)

Pastor: The blood of Christ, shed for you.

All: Amen. (*Drink wine/grape juice*)

LAMB OF GOD

Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on
us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the
sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

HYMN

There Is a Balm in Gilead

ELW #614

African American Spiritual

(Next Page)

Refrain



There is a balm in Gil-e-ad to make the wound-ed whole;



there is a balm in Gil-e-ad to heal the sin-sick soul.



- 1 Some - times I feel dis - cour-aged and think my work's in vain,
- 2 If you can - not preach like Pe - ter, if you can-not pray like Paul,
- 3 Don't ev - er be dis - cour-aged, for Je - sus is your friend;

Refrain



but then the Ho - ly Spir - it re - vives my soul a - gain.
you can tell the love of Je - sus and say, "He died for all."
and if you lack for knowl-edge, he'll ne'er re - fuse to lend.

Please stand as you are able.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Leader: We give you thanks, almighty God,
that you have refreshed us
through the healing power of this gift of life.
In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift,
in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another
for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

All: Amen.

✠ **SENDING** ✠

BLESSING

Pastor: The God of Love, Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit,

bless you now and forever.

All: Amen.

HYMN

Wade in the Water

ELW #459

African American Spiritual

Refrain
All



Wade in the wa - ter, wade in the wa - ter, chil - dren,



wade in the wa - ter, God's a-goin'-a trou-ble the wa - ter.

Leader *All*



1 See that host all dressed in white,
2 See that band all dressed in red, God's a-goin'-a trou-ble the
3 Look o - ver yon - der, what do I see?
4 If you don't be-lieve I've been re - deemed,



wa - ter; the lead - er looks like the Is - ra - 'lite,
looks like the band that . . Mo - ses led,
the Ho - ly Ghost a - com-ing on me,
just fol - low me down to . . . Jor - dan's stream,

All *Refrain*



God's a - goin' - a trou - ble the wa - ter.

DISMISSAL:

Leader: Go in peace. Christ is with you.

All: Thanks be to God.

* * * * *

Please note: Music for this service is covered under CCLI # 1000682 –
Also #A-708989 One License.net

Our warm thanks to all those assisting in our worship services this morning:

- Musicians Tasha Bobb, Soloist with Deb Smith, Accompanist;
.....Ethan Draper, Organist
- Altar Flower Delivery Doris Deitzel
- Altar Guild Beth Koontz, Janice Peck
- Assisting Minister.....Mike Jones
- Communion Assistants Beth Szymanski, Hallie Doll
- Communion Preparers..... Abby Fett, Martha Hempfing
- Courier Lee Baughman, Mike Jones
- Greeters Doris Deitzel, Martha Hempfing
- Lector Boy Scouts – Jacob Atwell, Nolan Hanson
- Live Stream Doug West
- UshersTeam 6: Sally Staub, Nadine Baughman, Kim Beard,
Carolyn Markle, Debby Seibert
- Welcome Place Linda Sanders

THE ALTAR FLOWERS have been given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of Mr. and Mrs. Harry W. Lillich, Mr. and Mrs. Harry E. Weaver, Mr. and Mrs. Clair R. Utz and Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Lillich by Mr. and Mrs. Larry Baublitz and family; and in loving memory of Minnie Mummert’s birthday by her children and grandchildren; and in loving memory of Mr. and Mrs. Howard Wetzel by Dorothy Schriver and family; and in loving memory of Ruth Fritz by Bill Harman.

THE BULLETINS have been given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Ruth Fritz by Bill Harman.

PRAYER LIST: In our intercessory prayers we pray for individuals who have offered permission to have their names included. These names will be listed up to a month unless otherwise requested. After that time, prayers will continue for each person through our prayer chain. Newly added names will appear in bold. If you would like to be included in the prayers of the prayer chain **but not listed** in the bulletin, you may contact Beth Koontz at bethk9245@gmail.com or by calling the church office at 717-637-7101.

Eleanor Bell	Randy Luckenbaugh	Gladys Starnes
Joanne Harner	Daniel Thompson	Richard Hutchinson
Tom Zimmerman	Jim Muller	Dan Markle
Brad Maloney	Dave Abendschein	Nancy Leister
Robert Mosely	Larry Miller	Lucas Cherry
Buddy & Shirley Bream		

Personal Care Kits Project The Women of the ELCA and Intergenerational Faith Connections are collecting items to assemble Personal Care Kits for Lutheran World Relief. People who must flee their homes quickly due to disasters or safety often do not have time to pack essential items. Personal Care Kits can help those in need to maintain personal hygiene, while living away from their homes. The Kits also contribute to a new start for those who can return home.

Each Personal Care Kit includes:

- *One new bath-size towel(approx.52”X27”), dark color recommended
- *Two bath-size bars(4-5oz) of soap (must equal 8-9 oz.) in its original wrapping
- *One adult-size toothbrush in its original packaging
- *One sturdy, wide-toothed comb
- *One metal nail-clipper

You may drop off items in the designated boxes located in the elevator lobby or the church office. Monetary donations may be made to be used to purchase bulk items (checks should be made payable to *St. Matthew Lutheran Church with Care Kits* in the memo line). Packing will take place in May.

SIGN-UP FORM

Please fill out the pertinent part(s) for you, tear off this page and put in the offering basket or email the church office at *info@stmattlutheran.org*, listing what you are signing up for and the information requested.

_____ I'd like to receive _____ e-mail updates and/or _____ newsletter in the mail. (Provide name, e-mail, and/or mailing address)

_____ I am a member of St. Matthew and below is updated contact information.

_____	_____
Name	Home Phone Number
_____	_____
E-mail	Cell Phone Number

Mailing Address	

ANNUAL REPORTS for 2025 are available at the rear of Fellowship Hall and the Nave.

WITH THE CHANGING LIVES SHELTER cold weather shelter now open, there is a need for the following items: soups with pull tops, full-size shampoo/conditioner, ear plugs, snack items (applesauce, pudding, chips, others that are individually packaged), towels and wash cloths. Any donations may be placed in the bins in the Gathering Place or at the elevator entrance. Thank you for your contributions.

EASTER GARDEN



Members and friends who wish to honor or memorialize a loved one by donating to the Easter Garden are asked to complete and return the form below with \$10 per listing to the church office by Monday, March 16.

After the 10:30 service on Easter Sunday, those who have paid for honorariums or memorials for the garden can take a flower for themselves or to give to someone. If you are unable to be here after the 10:30 service, you can stop in Tuesday through Thursday of Easter week, between 9:00 and 1:00 p.m. to pick up a flower.

After the cost of the plants is met, the balance of the memorials/honorariums will be sent to the Hanover Area Council of Churches/Ruth's Harvest.

I would like to sponsor an Easter flower in the church:

In honor of _____ In memory of _____

Name(s) being honored or memorialized (Please print clearly):

Given by: _____

Envelope Number _____ Amount Given \$ _____

Please include \$10 per listing. Make checks payable to St. Matthew Lutheran Church with "Easter Garden" in the memo line. Deadline is Monday, March 16.

St. Matthew Lutheran Church
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General Mailbox: 221
info@stmattlutheran.org

Rev. Kathryn Vitalis Hoffman, Lead Pastor, ext 231
pastorkathy@stmattlutheran.org

Rev. Alex Sheppard-Witt, Associate Pastor, ext 229
pastoralex@stmattlutheran.org

Rev. Faye C. Snyder, Visitation Pastor, ext 225
nicksong@comcast.net

Ethan Draper, Music Ministry, ext 235
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Tim Peck, Youth Ministry, ext 230
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