



The St. Matthew MESSENGER

CENTERED IN CHRIST
Celebrating Love • Serving All

Dec./January 2024

Vol. XIII Issue 6

From the Staff:

The Staff of St. Matthew Lutheran Church
wish you all a most joyful and peaceful holiday season.
May the light of Christ shine upon you always!

Missy
Pastor Kathy Wayne
Jim
Pastor Mark Lindsay
Stacy
Pastor Lyle
Joan
Deb
Jane

**Join us as we celebrate the birth
of our Savior and Lord, Jesus Christ!**

23 5:00 p.m. Saturday Worship Service (Nave)

24 **9:30 a.m. Worship Service** (Nave)

24 **Christmas Eve Services:**

4:30 p.m. Family Service

7:00 p.m. Candlelight & Carol Service

9:30 p.m. Candlelight & Carol Service

25 & 26 Church Office Closed

29 12:00 p.m. Church Office Closes

30 5:00 p.m. Worship Service (Fellowship Hall)

5:45 p.m. Sandwiches

6:30 p.m. Mini-Minister Puppet Show

31 **9:30 a.m. Worship Service** (Nave)

Jan. 1 Church Office Closed

(See full schedule on calendar insert page)



Messages for You

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Calendars

Join us for
Dinner/Church!

Wednesdays
December 6 & 13
in Fellowship Hall

Dinner begins at 5:30 p.m.
or when you arrive Church
begins at 5:50

and we will finish by 6:30
p.m.

Small crafts for children at
the tables!

MANY THANKS

To Doris [Deitzel]:

From the Community Aid Foundation

"We are pleased to announce that St. Matthew has been selected to receive a \$1,500 RoundUp Grant for 3Q of 2023! ...The funding from this grant is sourced from generous customers that say "YES" to Roundup at the registers!

Thank you for all that you do, and for being partners with CommunityAid."

With a Grateful Heart,

Erin McCloskey, Partnership Development Lead

CORN DRIVE THANK YOU

Thank You to everyone who contributed to the 2023 Corn Drive. It was a huge success. Our goal was 1000 cans of corn. We collected 925 cans of corn as well as \$490 in financial donations. So, that will make sure each family receives at least 1 can of corn in their Thanksgiving Meal. Thank You for helping to make Thanksgiving a reality for many families in our Hanover Community. Thanks also to those who submitted "corny" jokes! Stop by the display board in the Gathering Place to read those submitted!

CARING CUPBOARD UPDATE

Starting January 1, 2024 we will be pausing the Caring Cupboard Ministry for a while.

Unfortunately, there have been more frequent incidents of vandalism, as well as other issues. We are pondering the next steps & ways we can effectively reach more people in our community. Thank you to all of the volunteers who have filled the cupboard over the past few years - you have been a very faithful bunch!

**POSITION AVAILABLE!**

Part-time Custodian needed 20-25 hrs. per week daytime flexible hrs. \$15 per hour. Must be a motivated, self starter, reliable and detail oriented to cleaning. Cleaning experience is necessary. Please send resume, or applications can be obtained in the church office or email the office at info@stmattlutheran.org

NEWS FROM**Discovery Place Preschool !**

THANK YOU to all the fantastic bakers who donated to the preschool Election Day Bake Sale. We had an impressive amount of baked goods, and a

wide variety as well! While the voter turnout was extremely low this year, our baked sale proceeds were almost identical to last year. **NEXT** November's election is expected to have much higher voter turnout, so we anticipate another successful bake sale. Again, thank you, bakers!



Another way to help support your church preschool program is by displaying a **CAR DECAL** with the Discovery Place Preschool

logo. There are some available at the Hospitality Desk, with a suggested donation of \$5. Help us advertise our preschool with a decal on your vehicle.

Registration for the 2024-2025 preschool year will begin in late January. An Open House to meet the teachers will be announced online in the new year - keep watch on our Facebook and Instagram accounts. Please share our preschool information with families with young children.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The **Youth Ministry Team** is seeking adults interested in supporting our youth programming. The Team would meet monthly at a time convenient to its participants. An organizing meeting will be held in February 2024. Contact Tim Peck if you are interested or have questions, youth@stmattlutheran.org

**LIFE EVENTS**

September 19 - November 18, 2023

Baptism

October 15 – Aspen Rose Eline, daughter of Chad and Cristy (Sanders) Eline, with sponsors Tanner and Stephanie Widdowson

Confirmands

We celebrated our Confirmands as they affirmed their baptism through the Rite of Confirmation on Reformation Sunday, October 29.

Abigail Elizabeth Fett, Liam Charles Fralic, Alexis Marie Smith

Deaths

October 4 – June L. Kessler
October 8 – Donald F. Dickmann
October 30 – Joanne M. Gulden

AS A REMINDER TO THE CONGREGATION, all holiday envelope giving becomes part of our commitment to our world mission outreach. This is a practice that has been in force at St. Matthew for many years and was approved by Church Council. Holiday envelopes include Wednesday Lenten offerings, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve.



IN ORDER FOR YOUR END-OF-YEAR OFFERINGS to be posted in 2023, they must be **RECEIVED** in the church office by **Thursday, December 28 at 9 a.m.** Any offerings arriving in the office after that date and time will be posted in January of 2024.

THE 2024 OFFERING ENVELOPES will be available in the hallway outside of Fellowship Hall beginning December 23. Please pick up your envelopes and those of any relatives and friends who may not visit us regularly. Many thanks to Bryant and Ann Meckley and Randy Kline, for placing the labels on the envelopes.

CONGREGATION MEETING RESULTS

At the Congregation meeting on Sunday, November 12, the budget was approved for 2024. There are copies available in the church office if you would like one. We voted into Council the following members: Lee Baughman, Charley Lidard, Carolyn Markle, Ellen Shenk and Lexi Smith as the Youth Representative who will begin her term in May of 2024. We thank outgoing Council members Andrea Hersh, Randy Kline, Tom Shultz, Bob Strangfeld and Youth Representative Gracie Troup, who will end her term in May of 2024. We also thank all Congregation Council members for their service to St. Matthew.

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED to deliver the Christmas poinsettias to our homebound members. We will deliver them on Thursday, December 28, at 9:00 a.m. Please call Doris in the church office, 717-637-7101, ext. 225, or email her, ddeitzel@stmattlutheran.org if you are able to help.





COME, EMMANUEL: An Advent and Christmas Daily Devotion Book can be found on the Hospitality Desk and in the church office. For ebooks, go to www.augsburgfortress.org There are also On Eagle's Wings devotions available.

THE MITTEN/SOCK/HAT/SCARF TREE

is ready for decorations in 2 locations, the church office lobby and the Gathering Place. Let's cover the trees with colorful mittens, gloves, hats, scarves, ear muffs, socks and other winter wear. Coats may be placed under the tree, too. Please be sure all items are new or very gently worn. They may be for children or adults. Often people coming into the office during the week will choose something from our tree, so we hope to keep refilling it during the Advent season. Thank you for helping to keep our neighbors in need warm this winter!



Promises Fulfilled? Promises Unimagined. Promises Kept! Dinner Church is back for Advent!



There will be **two Wednesday evening Advent Dinner Church services, December 6 and 13 at 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.** The meal will be served at 5:30 and while people are finishing up with their dinner, the service will begin at 5:55. Our time together will include table discussions, singing, a short Bible study and new this year, age appropriate activities at the table for children.

Our focus is on the Advent themes of how God's promises are fulfilled, (un)imagined, and kept.

Wednesday, December 6: Promises Fulfilled?

Who exactly was John the Baptist? What was his role in preparing for Jesus? Was Jesus the fulfillment of a promise God made to Israel? Or do we wonder when John asked Jesus, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" (Luke 7.20) How do we handle situations when it is unclear whether promises will be fulfilled or not?

Wednesday, December 13: Promises Unimagined. Promises Kept!

John the Baptist's parents were quite old. Were they even imagining that they might still have a son? Were Jesus' parents ever imagining that Mary would get pregnant in some unbelievable way? Where have you experienced the promises of God in your own life in ways you never imagined?

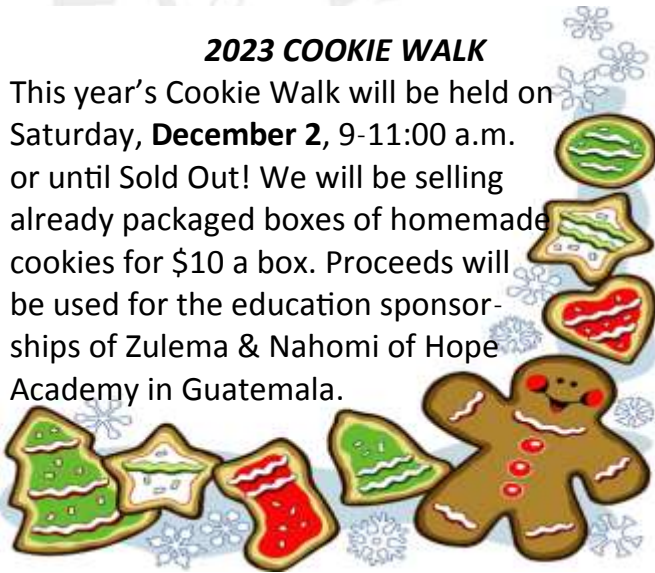
Advent is a time of preparation, and it is a time when we see God's love and grace unfolding in marvelous promises made and promises kept! Dinner Church is time well spent for Advent. Sign-up on page 8 of this Messenger, in the Gathering Place, or call the church office or email, info@stmattlutheran.org.

As a follow up to the discussions around the tables on Wednesdays, Pastor Mark will be leading a class on Sunday, December 10 at 9:30 a.m. in the Upper Room.

THE GENEROSITY TEAM IS PLANNING once again to show the many ways that Nativity scenes are portrayed. Beginning on December 1, we hope to begin showing our church members' temporarily loaned Nativity scenes in the Fellowship Hall hallway in our secured, glass display shelves. Last year we had 30 different versions of this Christmas-time event. Please contact Robert Strangfeld at rstrangfeld133@gmail.com or by cell phone, 570-468-9679, if you would like to see your Nativity set on display. Please let me know as soon as possible, so we can accommodate as many sets as possible. Thank you from the *St. Matthew Generosity Team*.

2023 COOKIE WALK

This year's Cookie Walk will be held on Saturday, **December 2**, 9-11:00 a.m. or until Sold Out! We will be selling already packaged boxes of homemade cookies for \$10 a box. Proceeds will be used for the education sponsorships of Zulema & Nahomi of Hope Academy in Guatemala.



INTERGENERATIONAL FAITH CONNECTIONS

Advent Event

December 3, 9:30-10:20 a.m.

Join us for some time together while learning about the upcoming Advent season. We will be making ornaments that can be used to decorate our tree in Fellowship Hall and your tree at home. You can choose to make one or a few! Ornaments are fun and easy for all ages!

DECORATING THE CHURCH



Come join us as we decorate our church for Christmas on Sunday, **December 3**, from 3-5:00 p.m. At 4:45 p.m. (or when the decorating is finished!) we will enjoy pizza for dinner. Everyone will begin in Fellowship Hall with instructions. Sign up by using the last page of this Messenger so we know how many will be helping and how much pizza to order. This is a very fun day – come join us!

BLUE CHRISTMAS



A Worship service for those who are stressed, hurting, grieving or lonely in this Holiday Season will be held on Monday, **December 4** at 6:30 p.m. in the Nave. Through candle-lighting, lovely readings, reflections, and sweet music, the message of Christ's hope and comfort will enfold us. Emmanuel...God is with us. You are not alone. All are welcome.

CHRISTMAS CAROLING

Let's carol to some of our shut-ins Sunday, **December 17**! We will meet in Fellowship Hall at 1:45 and share some cookies before beginning caroling from **2-4:00 p.m.** Bring a plate of cookies to share! Song sheets will be provided. This special time of song and fellowship is so meaningful to our members. Bring the entire family! Our shut-ins seem to especially enjoy when our children join in. We will carpool and use the church van. Sign up on the last page of this Messenger in order for us to know how many homes we can visit.



HOLIDAY COMMUNITY MEAL

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10

3:00-6:00 p.m.

WE NEED YOU! We will be having a free holiday meal for the Hanover Community at St. Matthew, and we are going to need lots of help. The menu will be Turkey, Ham, Filling, Corn, Potatoes, Rolls, Desserts. We will need help setting up, preparing food, serving the meal, cleaning up, making centerpieces, photographers and much more. If you are willing to help, please contact Amy Beck at Abeck1976@comcast.net or call the church office. We are hoping this is the beginning of a yearly tradition!



Yes, sign me up for:

<input type="checkbox"/> Baking a Turkey	<input type="checkbox"/> Photographer	<input type="checkbox"/> Set Up
<input type="checkbox"/> Baking a Ham	<input type="checkbox"/> Making Centerpieces	<input type="checkbox"/> Serve Meal
<input type="checkbox"/> Preparing Other Food (Corn, Potatoes, Gravy, Rolls)	<input type="checkbox"/> Clean Up	
<input type="checkbox"/> Making a Dessert	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	

CRAFT AND STORYTIME

Sunday, December 10

5:00 p.m.



At 5:00 p.m., **during the Community Meal**, Miss Lindsay and Miss Deb will be doing a story time and craft for the children, with a special visitor making an appearance! We ask that you register for this time in order for us to have enough supplies for everyone. You can sign up on our website or the last page of this Messenger and let us know how many children will participate!

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

This is a celebratory time where the children of St. Matthew can assist in sharing the Good News of Jesus' birth. The Children's Christmas Pageant is a great opportunity for children from 3-18 years of age to tell of the joy of Christmas. The pageant is titled "*The First Christmas*."

Rehearsals will occur December 3rd, during Children's Church at the 10:30 service. Dress rehearsal will be December 10 during Faith Connections from 9:30-10:20. The pageant will be performed on December 17 at 9:30 a.m.

If you want to have your child(ren) be a part of this cherished tradition at St. Matthew or would like to volunteer your time as an adult to help put this pageant on, please let Melissa Smith, Children and Family Ministry Coordinator, know either in person or via email, msmith@stmatthlutheran.org.

SPLASH CLASS

Parents of infants and toddlers 3 months to 3 years old are invited to attend Splash Class- a "baby and me" style group class. Together, parents/caregivers and children will explore what's next after you've been "splashed" in the waters of Baptism. Adam and Lindsay Amspacher, will lead this 30 minute class at St. Matthew from 9:45-10:15 on the following Sundays, 12/10, 1/7, 2/4 and 3/3.



Help and encouragement after the death of a loved one.

At our 13-session GriefShare group you'll find understanding, guidance, relief, and a safe place to navigate the challenges of grief. Come join us! Mondays 6:30 - 8p.m. January 29 through April 22, in the Upper Room.

Call or email the Church Office to register. You may email Pastor Faye at nicksong@comcast.net or call her, 717-451-0851.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone number _____

Christmas Gift Bags

Who in your life has had a difficult year and needs to be cheered up?

Relative? Friend? Fellow Church Member? Co-worker?

You can help cheer them up by supplying information below. We will deliver Gift Bags (fruit, candy, cookies, Christmas ornament, and more) to folks in grief, lost their job, sick, injured, lonely, sad or upset for ANY reason.

Please help locate them.

Not limited to St. Matthew members, but MUST be located within 15 miles of Hanover.

Questions? Submitting a recipient? Helping to pack or deliver?

Contact Pastor Faye through the office, or at nicksong@comcast.net.

Or drop filled-out form into offering basket by **Deadline December 11.**

Recipient Name _____

Recipient Address _____

Recipient Phone number _____

Your name _____

Your phone number _____



Help pack on December 22? _____

Help Deliver on December 22? _____



CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS - Members and friends who wish to honor or memorialize a loved one by placing a poinsettia in the chancel this Christmas are asked to **complete and return the form below with \$13** per listing to the church office. After the cost of the poinsettias is met, the memorials/honorariums will support ELCA Good Gifts . **The deadline is Monday, December 4.** Please print clearly when filling in names. Please make checks payable to **"St. Matthew Lutheran Church"** with **"Poinsettias"** in the memo line.

2023 Christmas Poinsettias

I/We wish to (please check one)

____ Honor ____ Memorialize

Name(s): _____
(Person to be memorialized or honored)

Given by: _____

Your offering envelope number _____

SIGN-UP FORM

[Please fill out the section(s) that pertain to you (and your family and friends), and let the church office know by email, info@stmattlutheran.org or calling 717-637-7101]

Hanging of the Greens – December 3 3:00-5:00 p.m.

Name: _____

Helping to decorate _____

Staying for pizza _____

Community Meal – December 10 3:00-6:00 p.m.

Name: _____

Attending Meal _____

Attending Craft & Story Time 5:00 p.m. _____

Advent Dinner/Church

Name: _____

Attending December 6: _____

Attending December 13: _____

Caroling - December 17 1:45-4:00 p.m.

Name: _____

Attending _____

Youth NEWS



⇒ **November 29** from 6:30-8:30 **Youth Cookie Bake-off** for the cookie walk. Please bring ingredients or pre-made batter with you! Please let Tim know if you will be attending.

⇒ **December 6** from 5:30-6:30 youth who will be attending the Advent Dinner Church. We will be preparing and serving the spaghetti dinner and selling St. Matthew Christmas ornaments and candles.

⇒ **December 10** from 9:30-10:20 a.m. rehearsal for Christmas Pageant- any youth wanting to participate, see Missy Smith or Beth Koontz

⇒ **SECOND SUNDAY CONVERSATION** High School Youth will gather the 2nd Sunday monthly for faith-focused conversation. Next month we will meet Sunday, **December 10 at 9:30-10:20 a.m.** in the Youth Suite.

⇒ **December 17** from 2-4 p.m. Christmas Caroling to our homebound. Let Tim know you are coming. At 5:30 we will be going to a Drive-thru Nativity Scene called Journey to Joy!

⇒ **January 5-7** we are heading to Winterfest 2024 in Lancaster.



PIANIST JOSEPH MARTIN will be joined by Joel Raney and David Angerman, Sue Martin, along with Steve Roddy at the piano and organ, and a 75-voice choir of choral directors in concert on Friday, January 12, at 7:00 p.m. This is always a great evening here at St. Matthew Church! The Friday evening concert is free and open to the public, and **no tickets are required.**



This concert is part of a two-day event featuring the music of Shawnee Press/Hal Leonard Publishing. The pianists/vocalists will offer selections and the choir will sing several songs written by the featured guests. The music will be accompanied by organ and piano. The guest musicians entertain the audience with comical comments on music and music makers but also share inspiring stories of the power of music. The Saturday, January 13 workshop for choral directors is attended by hundreds of musicians from the East Coast. The doors will open at 6:30 p.m. for this open-seating concert. A free-will offering will be collected.

St. Matthew Lutheran Church

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717-637-7101

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www.stmattlutheran.org

www.facebook.com/groups/stmattlutheran



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