



St. Matthew LUTHERAN CHURCH

Where the welcome is wide and the love is real.

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 nametagged 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 difference



About today: We gather as a community for worship around word, wine, and water. Put another way, in worship we meet Christ in scripture proclaimed in speech & song, in the sacraments of Holy Communion and Baptism celebrated or remembered, and in community gathered together.

Our regular weekend schedule includes Saturday worship at 5 p.m., Sunday outdoor worship at 8:30 a.m., and Sunday indoor worship at 10:30 a.m. (livestreamed).



Persistence in prayer is encouraged by Jesus and wins the attention of God when Abraham intercedes for Sodom. The life of the baptized—to be rooted and built up in Christ Jesus—is to be nurtured with prayer. God hears and answers prayer and so strengthens God's own. "When I called, you answered me; you increased my strength within me."

7th Sunday after Pentecost 10:30 a.m., July 27, 2025

PRELUDE Remember Love Madison Maloney & Mya Maloney

WELCOME

Please stand as you are able.

GREETING

Pastor: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the

Nix

communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All: And also with you.

(The congregation is invited to greet one another and share the peace respecting personal space and comfort levels.)

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

Pastor: Baptized into Christ, let us confess our sin before God and one

another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Merciful God,

All: you free us to love others,

but we neglect our neighbors and follow our own way.

You lead us by the Spirit of joy and peace,

but we turn away from the abundant life you offer.

You surround us with patience, kindness, and generosity,

but we grow weary in doing what is right.

In your mercy, forgive us.

Do not give up on us.

Heal us, break our bonds,

and show us the path of life. Amen.

Pastor: You belong to Christ Jesus, and you are God's children through faith.

The good news is that God does not give up on any one of us.

and through the power of the Holy Spirit,

Your sins are forgiven.

Clothed with Christ, you are a new creation.

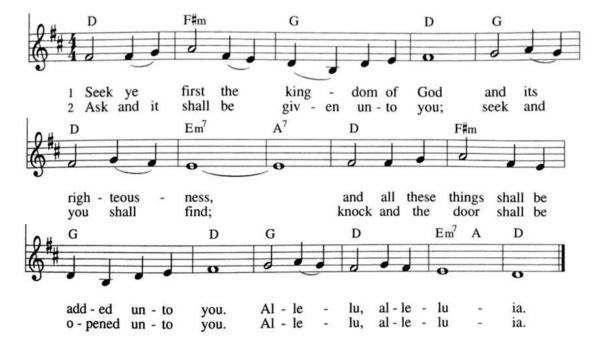
All: Amen.

Please be seated.

During the singing of the hymn, 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 Musical Offering.

HYMN Seek Ye First WOV#783
Lafferty

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PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Almighty and ever-living God, you are always more ready to hear than we are to pray, and you gladly give more than we either desire or deserve. Pour upon us your abundant mercy. Forgive us those things that weigh on our conscience, and give us those good things that come only through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

All: Amen.

中 THE WORD 中

PSALM 138

- ¹ I will give thanks to you, O LORD, with my whole heart; before the gods I will sing your praise.
- ² I will bow down toward your holy temple and praise your name, because of your steadfast love and faithfulness;

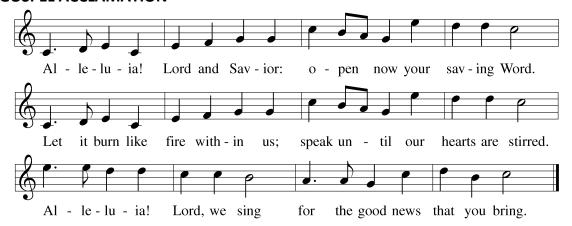
for you have glorified your name and your word above all things.

- ³ When I called, you answered me; you increased my strength within me.
- ⁴ All the rulers of the earth will praise you, O LORD, when they have heard the words of your mouth.
- ⁵ They will sing of the ways of the LORD, that great is the glory of the LORD.
- ⁶ The LORD is high, yet cares for the lowly, perceiving the haughty from afar.
- ⁷Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you keep me safe; you stretch forth your hand against the fury of my enemies; your right hand shall save me.
 - ⁸ You will make good your purpose for me;

O LORD, your steadfast love endures forever; do not abandon the works of your hands.

Please stand as you are able.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the 11th chapter.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

HOLY GOSPEL: Luke 11:1-13

In teaching his disciples this prayer, Jesus also reminds them to focus on God's coming reign, God's mercy, and the strengthening of the community. Jesus encourages his disciples to childlike trust and persistence in prayer.

Pastor: The Word of the Lord.

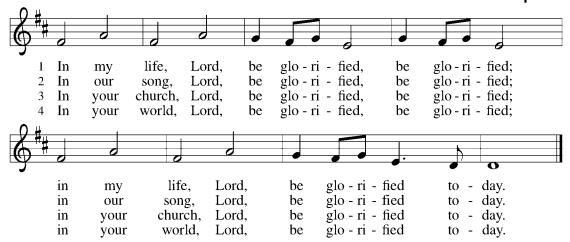
All: Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated.

SERMON

Pastor Alex Sheppard-Witt

Please stand as you are able.



CONFESSION OF FAITH

Apostles' 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

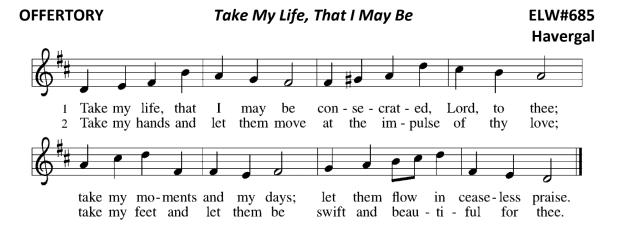
Leader: Each petition concludes, "God of grace," and the congregation responds, "hear our prayer."

Please be seated.

GENEROSITY MOMENT WITH 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. Offerings may be placed in the baskets near the entrances/exits of the worship space or through online giving on our website, or through our text-to-give program at 717-613-6204. **Thank you for sharing** your spiritual gifts with our church, local, and global communities.

Please stand as you are able.



THE OFFERTORY PRAYER

Leader: Creator God,

All: in your wisdom, you bring forth all that is good and the harvest is plentiful.

Stregthen us at your table with these gifts of the earth and our labor, that we may work for the good of all; through Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

十 THE MEAL 十

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.

EUCHARISTIC 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.

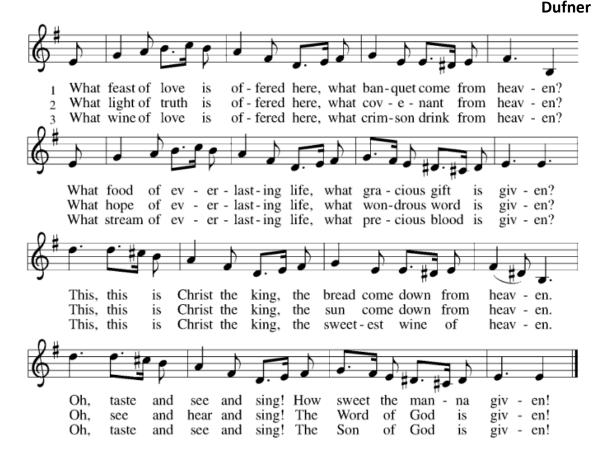
All: Amen. (Drink wine)

LAMB OF GOD





you suf-fered death our lives to save: have mer-cy now, we pray.
you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer-cy now, we pray.
e - ter-nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.



Please stand as you are able.

BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION

Pastor: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you

and keep you in his grace.

All: Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Leader: God, our loving parent,

you gathered us to your table

and we drank deeply of your grace.

Send us out by your Spirit, to love our neighbors as ourselves and to proclaim your love in Jesus' name.

All: Amen.

+ SENDING **+**

BLESSING

Pastor: The love of God abound in you; the grace of Jesus fill your hearts;

and the life of the Spirit

 → Bless you and give you peace.

All: Amen.

HYMN What a Friend We Have in Jesus

ELW#742 Scriven/Converse

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3 Are we weak and heav-y - lad - en, cum - bered with a load of care?



What a priv - i - lege to car - ry ev - 'ry - thing to God in prayer! We should nev - er be dis - cour - aged—take it to the Lord in prayer. Pre - cious Sav-ior, still our ref - uge—take it to the Lord in prayer.



Oh, what peace we of - ten for - feit; oh, what need-less pain we bear—Can we find a friend so faith - ful who will all our sor-rows share? Do your friends de-spise, for-sake you? Take it to the Lord in prayer.



all be-cause we do not car - ry ev-'ry-thing to God in prayer! Je - sus knows our ev-'ry weak - ness—take it to the Lord in prayer. In his arms he'll take and shield you; you will find a so-lace there.

DISMISSAL:

Leader: Go in peace. Live by the Spirit.

All: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Organ Postlude
Dan Deitzel, Organist

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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:

MusiciansM	adison Maloney; Mya Maloney; Dan Deitzel, Organist
Altar Flower Delivery	Tina Schaffner
Altar Guild	Diane Hoffman-Neail, Nancy Oppedal
Assisting Minister	Darlene Klenk
Children's Church Leader	Gracie Troup and Mya Maloney
Communion Assistants	
Communion Preparers	Nancy Oppedal, Barb Rupp, Abby Fett
Couriers	Darlene Klenk
Greeters	Peggy Westerhold, Lynda Sheffer
Lector	Barbara Strangfeld
Live Stream	Doug West
	. Team 4: Steve Rutters, Tom Cramer, Dennis Koontz, Chris Raubenstine, Kelli Reed, Penny Rutters

THE ALTAR FLOWERS have been given to the Glory of God.

THE BULLETINS have been given to the Glory of God.

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.

Pearl Wintrode Bob Martin	Linda Quicksell Roland Kunde	Dan Markle Nancy Leister
Diane Coppola	Barb Rebling	

RECOMMENDED SCRIPTURE READINGS for the week beginning July 27:

Sunday: Luke 11:1-13 Thursday: Romans 11:33-36 Monday: Colossians 2:16-3:1 Friday: Ephesians 4:17-24 Tuesday: Romans 9:30-10:4 Saturday: Mark 10:17-22

Wednesday: Matthew 5:43-48

Our pastors would love to visit you if you are in the hospital/rehab facility. If you or a family member would like that, please contact the church office at 717-637-7101 or email *info@stmattlutheran.org*.

MEET THE ORGANIST, DAN DEITZEL: Dan began his career as a social worker in skilled nursing after graduating with his Master's degree in Counseling from Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, South Carolina, in 1998. He has been in the long-term care field since then. He obtained his Nursing Home Administrator's license in 2001. He also holds a Bachelor's degree in Public Relations from Susquehanna University.

Most recently, Dan began his duties as Vice President of Operations in January of 2025 at Luthercare. Prior to this appointment, he served the last nine years as Executive Director and Senior Director of Healthcare Services for Luthercare. Previously, he spent 15+ years in the for-profit sector of long term care services. His experience has provided him with significant financial and regulatory expertise.

Dan and his family live in Mount Gretna, Pennsylvania and are active in the Mount Gretna United Methodist Church. They have one daughter, Elaina, and two dogs, Cooper and Dixie. In his spare time, Dan enjoys reading and spending time at their cabin in West Virginia.

The following members of St. Matthew were awarded scholarships this year:

Mya Maloney, Mason Smith, Tyler Fett, Libby Houston, Regin Smith, and Hunter Crabbs were all awarded the Straley/Nace Scholarship. Gracie Troup was awarded the Stauffer Scholarship. Cole Smith was awarded the Peck Scholarship. Mike Jones was awarded the Ehlers Scholarship and Deb Smith was awarded the Rohrbaugh Scholarship.

The Scholarship Committee congratulates all of this year's recipients and wishes them continued success in their schooling and in their careers of choice.



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. See Announcements Page for more details.

name, e-mail, and/or mailing addr	-mail updates and/or newsletter in the mail. (Providess) new and below is updated contact information.	-	
Name	Home Phone Number		
E-mail	Cell Phone Number		
Mailing Address			

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

Deb Smith, Interim Minister of Music, ext 236 dsmith@stmattlutheran.org

Tim Peck, Youth Ministry, ext 230 youth@stmattlutheran.org

Melissa Smith, Children & Family Ministry, ext 232 msmith@stmattlutheran.org

Hannah Chiacchierini, Communications Administrator, ext 222 hannahc@stmattlutheran.org

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FIRST READING: Genesis 18:20-32

The LORD said, "How great is the outery against Sodom and Gomorrah and how very grave their sin! ²¹I must go down and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry that has come to me; and if not, I will know."

²²So the men turned from there, and went toward Sodom, while Abraham remained standing before the LORD. 25 Then Abraham came near and said, "Will you indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked? ²⁴Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city; will you then sweep away the place and not forgive it for the fifty righteous who are in it? 25 Far be it from you to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous fare as the wicked! Far be that from you! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?" 26And the LORD said, "If I find at Sodom fifty righteous in the city, I will forgive the whole place for their sake." 27Abraham answered, "Let me take it upon myself to speak to the Lord, I who am but dust and ashes. ²⁸Suppose five of the fifty righteous are lacking? Will you destroy the whole city for lack of five?" And he said, "I will not destroy it if I find forty-five there." 29 Again he spoke to him, "Suppose forty are found there." He answered, "For the sake of forty I will not do it." 50 Then he said, "Oh do not let the Lord be angry if I speak. Suppose thirty are found there." He answered, "I will not do it, if I find thirty there." 51 He said, "Let me take it upon myself to speak to the Lord. Suppose twenty are found there." He answered, "For the sake of twenty I will not destroy it." 52 Then he said, "Oh do not let the Lord be angry if I speak just once more. Suppose ten are found there." He answered, "For the sake of ten I will not destroy it."

Psalm 138

SECOND READING: Colossians 2:6-15 [16-19] [not printed]

GOSPEL: Luke 11:1-13

[Jesus] was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples." 2He said to them, "When you pray,

Father, hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come.

⁵Give us each day our daily bread.

⁴And forgive us our sins,

for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us.

And do not bring us to the time of trial." ⁵And he said to them, "Suppose one of you

has a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; ⁶ for a friend of mine has arrived, and I have nothing to set before him.' And he answers from within, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been locked, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.' 8I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, at least because of his persistence he will get up and give him whatever he needs.

⁹⁴So I say to you, Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. 10 For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. ¹¹Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for a fish, will give a snake instead of a fish? ¹²Or if the child asks for an egg, will give a scorpion? ¹⁵If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

Next Sunday's Readings: Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12-14; 2:18-23; Psaim 49:1-12; Colossians 3:1-11; Luke 12:13-21.

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