



The St. Matthew MESSENGER

September 2025

Vol. XV Issue 4

Introducing the Narrative Lectionary

What Is the Narrative Lectionary—and Why Are We Using It?

A lectionary is a schedule of scripture readings used in worship across the year. For many years, we've followed the Revised Common Lectionary—a three-year cycle that draws from different parts of the Bible and aligns with seasons like Advent, Lent, and Easter.

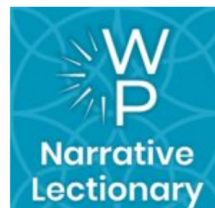
This September, we're beginning something new: the Narrative Lectionary. Rather than sampling from various books each week, the Narrative Lectionary follows a single, sweeping arc—highlighting key stories that reveal God's ongoing work of love and redemption in the world. This is a four-year cycle—one for each of the Gospels.

We're not reading the Bible cover to cover, but we are tracing major movements of God's story—from creation and covenant, to exile and return, to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. In 2025, our gospel readings will come from John, with its poetic, symbolic portraits of Jesus as the Word made flesh, the Good Shepherd, and the Light of the World.

This shift is part of our hope to enliven faith through worship and learning. By focusing on one unified story across worship, we hope to create more opportunities for faith to come alive—for people of all ages.

Come with curiosity. Come with questions. Come ready to hear the ancient stories with fresh ears. We trust that through them, the Spirit is still speaking today. We look forward to this journey with you!

Peace,
Pastors Kathy, Alex, and Faye



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Activating Goals for Active Ministry: A Strategic Plan Update



In the past couple of months, the congregation council members, staff, and other volunteers have been taking the next steps to put our goals into action. Here is a peek into the process:

We begin with our **MISSION**.

Welcoming all as we share God's love.

We review our **GOALS**.

- *A goal is a brief statement that provides focus and is not specific but aligned with the mission of the congregation.*

And for each goal we articulate **OBJECTIVES** to activate the goals for active ministry.

To **enliven faith through worship and learning**

- To send a weekly form of communication to help members better understand the church season and scriptures for the upcoming services.
- To develop and implement a music ministry plan that integrates a blend of Lutheran hymns and contemporary Christian songs into weekly worship services while maintaining the liturgical integrity and reverence of a traditional Lutheran setting.

To **cultivate shared leadership as disciples of Jesus**

- To create more opportunities to be more accessible to all by facilitating face to face communications to increase shared leadership.
- To explore the creation of a Youth Leadership Development Workshop.

To **engage children, youth, and families**

- To hold an event at Wirt Park for the purpose of outreach in the neighborhood.
- To invite families to gather for a night for various card and board games where all are welcome.

To **bridge the gaps with home-insecure neighbors**

- To implement Sandwiches on Saturday S.O.S. walking through the neighborhood to bring food and initiate conversation.
- To partner with Hanover Area Council of Churches to engage volunteers specific programs in need.

To **build authentic relationships across differences**

- To implement a single worship service and fellowship to meet and build relationships with new people.
- To develop new ways to extend hospitality by engaging new people in Sunday morning involvement.

The Next Steps Include You!

Do you feel a nudge to participate in any of these initiatives? This does not mean you join a committee. It does mean that you are involved in a way that matches your gifts and interests with the activities that fit with your life at this time. Let us know your interest with this link or by scanning the QR code: <https://stmatthewlutheranchurch.breezechms.com/form/initiatives-sign-up>



One of the underlying biblical themes that we embrace in this plan is that we activate our goals as we expand the ministries to engage an ever growing community.

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

1 Corinthians 12:4-8

**Organist Search Update:**

from Chris Zumbrum, Chair of the Selection Committee

Our Organist Search Committee has been prayerfully and diligently working through the process of finding the right person to lead the vibrant music ministry here at St. Matthew.

We are seeking someone who not only brings musical excellence in organ performance and choral direction, but who can nurture all parts of our music ministry and engage with both traditional and contemporary styles of worship. Just as importantly, we are looking for a candidate who is committed to becoming part of the Hanover community and building lasting relationships within our congregation.

To date, we've received nine applications, conducted first-round interviews with four candidates, and have narrowed our focus to two individuals who will move on to second-round interviews. We expect to complete these over the next few months. These in-depth visits will include a shared meal (lunch or dinner), additional conversation with the Search Committee, hymn playing on our organ, and a choral rehearsal, during which the candidate will lead committee members in a piece of their choosing. This will allow us to get a more complete sense of each finalist's musical style, rehearsal leadership, and ability to engage with our church community.

We've been thoughtful and deliberate in each step of this process, and are encouraged by the strong candidates we've met. Please know that while this work is being done behind the scenes, your prayers, support, and patience are vital—and appreciated.

If you have questions about the process, feel free to reach out to me directly or to any member of the search committee. We look forward to sharing more news with you soon.

With appreciation and blessings,

Chris Zumbrum

**An Important Announcement from Church Council:**

We are very excited to announce that St. Matthew has begun a new, broader partnership with Community Progress Council (CPC) of York County. Beginning July 1, CPC will be renting four rooms; rooms 301 and 302 for two Head Start classes; and rooms 203 and 204 for counseling services for the SNAP program, WIC, and other family counseling. CPC will also be renting 20 parking spaces in the upper parking lot which are marked with signs and will be used by the CPC staff and their clients.

This past year, Community Progress Council of York County rented room 302 for a Head Start classroom. They rented space from New Hope Ministries for their two offices, but realized they needed space for a second classroom in Hanover and to expand their services to meet the needs of this area, all in a more centralized location. They approached St. Matthew, and after a walkthrough of the second and third floor, and much discussion, there was mutual agreement that St. Matthew could meet their needs for more space.

CPC's website states, "*CPC's team of coaches, counselors, educators, nutritionists and support staff are poised to address both short- and long-term needs, while helping program participants set goals and begin to make progress in their lives one step at a time.*" They work with families in the area and this aligns well with our purpose of welcoming all as we share God's love and our goal of bridging the gaps with home-insecure neighbors. We are grateful to be partnering with CPC in this endeavor. If you have any questions, please contact the church office at 717-637-7101 or via email at info@stmattlutheran.org and we can direct you to a Council member or pastor who can best answer your questions.

Life Events in the



LIFE EVENTS

May 16—August 1, 2025

Baptisms

- June 1 – Nolan James Morrison, son of Steven and Miranda Morrison

Deaths

- June 1 – Bertram (Bert) F. Elsner
- June 27 – Joseph H. Buffington
- June 29 – Phyllis M. Moul
- July 11 – Carolyn M. McCullough

**WELCA Bible Study****The first Tuesday of each month.**

The Women of the ELCA hold monthly Bible study on the first Tuesdays of each month from 2:00-3:30 p.m. in the Upper Room (enter elevator lobby and go to the second floor). Our next meetings will be

September 2 and October 7.

The Bible study follows the lessons found in the, "Gather, for Faith and Action," magazine. Lesson copies will be available.

For additional information, call the church office at 717-637-7101. All women are invited to attend and bring a friend, too!

All Saints Weekend

On the weekend of November 1 and 2, we will be remembering the saints who have died this past year. Candles will be lit and prayers will be offered for members of our St. Matthew community. We are inviting St. Matthew members to add the names of immediate family members who have died since November 1, 2024. Names may be given to the office by e-mail at info@stmattlutheran.org, by phone, 717-637-7101 or on the tear-off sheet in the bulletin. Deadline for submitting names is October 17. We will have white roses placed on the altar representing each of the saints who died this past year and following the worship service, a family member may come forward to receive a rose as a remembrance of this day.

**CAMP HEBRON - FALL RETREAT 2025**

Sponsored By: The Lower Susquehanna Synodical Women's Organization

**Friday, Saturday & Sunday,
October 24, 25, and 26**

The retreat theme is: "*In the Potter's Hand.*" Jeremiah 18:1-2. Our leader this year is Lu Ann Wise, a retired health and physical education teacher from the Hempfield School District and Manheim Central School District.

There will be faith renewal in worship, laughter and tears, getting reacquainted with old friends and making new friends, refreshing walks in the outdoors or sitting quietly in meditation. Offering motel-type accommodations including linens, private bath and 5 delicious meals (no cooking for a whole weekend ladies). There will be carpooling from the church lot for those interested. There is also an opportunity for Saturday only registration. See registration form for more info. Forms can be picked up in the church office or on the Hospitality Desk.

Registrations must be postmarked by Monday, September 8. For more information, call the church office at 717-637-7101.

The Music Ministry has had a busy summer with camps, special music at services, a hymn sing, adult music ministry mixer, and senior hang outs!



We are ready for a new choir year! Start up dates are:

- **Tuesday, September 9, 5:45 p.m.:** SoulFire
- **Thursday, September 11, 6:00 p.m.:** Adult Bells
- **Thursday, September 11, 7:00 p.m.:** Adult Choir
- **Thursday, September 18, 4:15-5:00 p.m.:** Children's Choir (ages 3-2nd grade)
- **Sunday, September 21, 11:45 a.m.-12:45 p.m.:** Youth Choir and Bells (6-12th grade)
- **Tuesday, September 23, 4:30-5:15 p.m.:** Junior Choir (3-5th grade)

Other important dates are:

- **Sunday, September 14, 9:40 a.m.:** Music Camp children's musical performance of *The Case of the Reluctant Innkeeper*
- **Monday, September 15, 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.:** Seniors Hang Out



Puppets
at VBS



Music
Camp



SoulFire



Special
Musical
Offerings



Seniors
Hang Out



MUSIC
MINISTRY



VBS 2025

CAMP CHAOS



With 75 kids and 28 volunteers, we had a very chaotic week. Together, we found our strength and solid foundation in our faith. Learning that caring and compassion for others is a truly great way to share our faith in this chaotic world. Finding calm and peace is extremely difficult, but we know that we are not alone. Through all of this, we know that Jesus is our path to Peace. Our organized chaos lead to lots of Bible stories, arts and crafts, music time with Ms. Deb and of course even in the heat, gym time with Mr. Aaron! The kids very much enjoyed watching Quinn, Jesse and Ranger Parks navigate the week of camping among the crazy squirrels! We enjoy sharing this time of learning with your kiddos, we hope that they loved it as much as we did. This week certainly cannot be done without our volunteers who are so willing and able to jump right in and go with the flow! Thank you all for a successful week of VBS! Stay tuned for next year: June 22-25, 2026!

Faith Connections

Join us for Faith Connections on Sundays from 9:30 -10:20 a.m. in the lower level. Our 2025-26 year will start on September 21, 2025 and go through to May 3, 2026. We will start each Sunday with a Bible story and activities that tie in with each story. We will have music time with Ms. Deb again this year!

Rally Day

Families with kids ages 3 (potty trained) through 5th grade, come and join us on Sunday, September 21 in the lower level at 9:30 a.m. We will have snacks, games, music and fun to kick off our 2025-26 Faith Connections year.



FAMILY NIGHT FOR CONFIRMATION:

Join us on **September 14** in the Youth Suite from 6:00-8:00 p.m. to meet everyone and hear about what to expect for the year. All 6-8th graders and families are encouraged to come and have some pizza and fun!

**ALIVE FOR MIDDLE SCHOOLERS:**

ALIVE is our annual synod middle-school (6-8th grade) retreat scheduled for **September 26-28** at Camp Nawakwa. Congregations from across our synod gather with their adult advisors and youth for this weekend. It'll include large gatherings with singing, games, and theme centered videos and stories, interspersed with small groups to converse about the theme and it's impact in their lives of faith.

The weekend will also include games, campfires, free time, and community building that allows youth to deepen their existing friendships and cultivate new ones.

Registration is \$50. The deadline to register is September 3. Contact Tim Peck at youth@stmattlutheran.org or the church office at 717-637-7101 ext. 230 with questions.

TRUNK OR TREAT AND COMMUNITY MEAL:

On **October 27** from 5:30-7:00 p.m. we will be having our fall Trunk or Treat combined with our Community Meal. If you would like to display a trunk, help with the event, or donate, keep your eyes peeled for more information coming soon.

**THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING THE YOUTH MISSION TRIP TO KENTUCKY:**

Thank you again to everyone for supporting our youth and adults that got to have this wonderful experience. It helped them to build empathy and compassion, teaching them to care about the well-being of others, and learning that God gives them opportunities to make a difference in someone's life.

**DATES TO REMEMBER:**

- **September 2**—Youth Ministry Team Meeting, 7:00 p.m., Third Floor/Room 304 (Anyone who wants to join, see you there!)
- **September 7**—Youth Group, 6:00-8:00 p.m., Third Floor/Room 304
- **September 21**—Youth Group, 6:00-8:00 p.m., Third Floor/Room 304 (This is also Rally Day and the Bible Milestone)
- **September 26-28**—ALIVE 6-8th Grade Retreat
- **October 5**—Youth Group, 6:00-8:00 p.m., Third Floor/Room 304
- **October 7**—Youth Ministry Team Meeting, 7:00 p.m., Third Floor/Room 304
- **October 19**—Youth Group, 6:00-8:00 p.m., Third Floor/Room 304
- **October 27**—Trunk or Treat and Community Meal, 5:30-7:00 p.m.

DISCOVERY PLACE PRESCHOOL

Our six Summer Discovery 2025 camps were filled with learning, crafts, dancing and so much fun! We can't wait until next summer to do it again!

Our Church preschool program is preparing for another FANTASTIC year of learning. All of our classes are FULL!! We are collecting both specific items and gift cards. If you are able, please consider donating to Discovery Place by bringing requested items to the church office.

Specific items we are collecting: Plain white napkins, tissues, paper towels & disinfecting wipes.

Gift cards are welcome at any time of year. They allow us to address needs as they occur. You can put the Gift Card in an envelope with "Discovery Place" listed on the front and place it in the offering baskets or send to the church office.

Stores we often use for supplies include:

- Walmart and Amazon (for craft supplies)
- Giant and Sam's Club (for classroom snacks and paper goods)

If you wish to make a financial donation, please make checks payable to "Discovery Place." Our church preschool program has been BLESSED by your generous donations in the past - THANK YOU for your consideration and support!

Stay tuned for other ways you can help support our preschool program, such as Election Day Bake Sale on November 4!



sign up

Confirmation

Sunday Faith Formation for Grades 6-8
3rd Floor Youth Suite
Begins September 21 at 9:30 am

Confirmation is not just a class. It is a journey of faith, where we ask honest questions and explore what it means to follow Jesus. **Sign up with the QR code above.** This year we're diving into **worship**. We'll explore questions like:

- Why do we pray the Lord's Prayer every week?
- What does the creed really say—and do I believe it?
- Why do we worship the way we do?
- Can worship help me feel closer to God?
- What does it mean to bring my whole self into worship?

Join us for Family Night (September 14) from 6-8pm!

This is an opportunity to get to know one another, eat pizza, and learn what to expect this year! For all confirmation students and their families! **RSVP through the QR code above or by contacting Pastor Alex.**



Contact Pastor Alex
pastoralex@stmattlutheran.org
717-637-7101, ext. 229
with any questions or concerns!



New App Coming Soon

With our new database, we have a new way of keeping in touch with you – our very own app! You'll have the latest updates right at your fingertips and you'll be able to subscribe to get notifications about the things you care about (i.e. youth ministry, music, etc.).

As it gets closer to completion, we need some folks who are willing to test the app to ensure it is functioning well. Contact Pastor Alex at pastoralex@stmattlutheran.org or 717-637-7101, ext. 229 to help!

Target date for release for the congregation is Oct. 15.

Serve In Worship!

Each week, our worship services are shaped by the gifts of many. From reading scripture to offering a warm welcome at the door, each role matters.

We're refreshing how we schedule volunteers, starting with four key roles: **Greeter, Assisting Minister, Lector, and Communion Assistant.**

You'll see other worship roles listed on the sign-up form. You can still sign up for them, and we will contact you about those as we begin scheduling them.

Worship comes alive when we share it together. If you'd like to serve this fall, sign up by **October 1** to be part of the **November and December** schedule for those first four roles. The rest will follow soon—we'll keep you in the loop!



Back in January, we introduced our new database titled Breeze for our online giving. The transition was a smooth one and giving is easier than ever with text-to-give, online one-time gifts and online reoccurring giving. If you have not checked out these styles of giving, visit our website at www.stmattlutheran.org and click on the Online Giving tab. We will also continue receiving checks and cash. That will not change!

Breeze is also a great communication tool, making texting and emails much easier for the staff to utilize. Watch for more information as we move forward this fall. We will begin using Breeze for volunteer sign-ups and participation in events. You can currently check out the calendar on the website. It is up-to-date as we input information, visible in real time. If you click on an event, there is a description of the event and certain sign-up forms will be available in that space also, or a link will be available. We are excited about these new communication tools!

God's Work, Our Hands

Save the date! **September 7** during Faith Formations (9:30 a.m.) we will be making care packages and delivering them to those that help to keep us safe. We will need donations, help assembling, and help delivering. More info to come... watch the weekly announcements! If you have a group in mind that you would like to have included or have any questions, contact Amy Beck at abeck1976@comcast.net.



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 this year's recipients and wishes them continued success in their schooling and in their careers of choice.



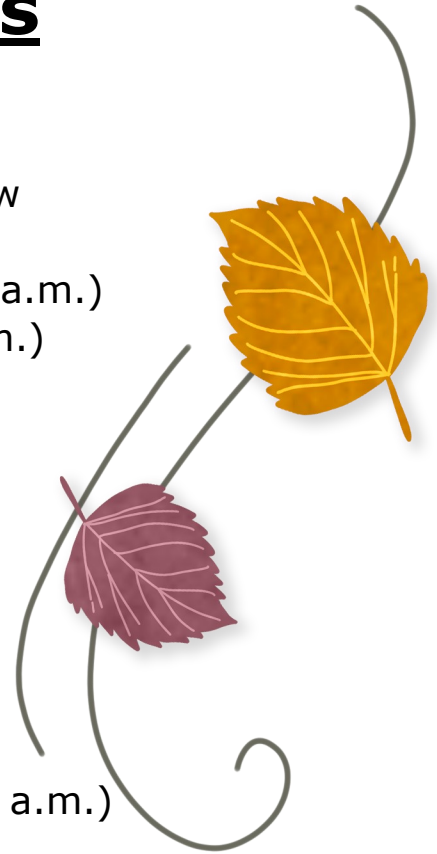
- Be with other people who are grieving. You don't need to be alone in your grief!
- This is a safe place where you can be yourself.
- You can say exactly how you feel to others who understand your pain.
- Your participation in this group will change you.

Our 13-session GriefShare support group begins **Monday, August 25, 2025, 6:30-8 p.m.** (NO meeting on Labor Day) at St. Matthew in the Upper Room, located on the 2nd floor. The room can be reached by elevator or stairs from the glass doors on Franklin Street.

To register, contact Pastor Faye at nicksong@comcast.net or at 717-637-7101 ext. 225.

Save the Dates

- **September 2**—WELCA Bible Study returns (2:00 p.m. in the Upper Room)
- **October 25**—Bishop's Installation at St. Matthew
- **November 2**—All Saints Sunday
- **November 9**—Veteran's Breakfast (9:30-10:20 a.m.)
- **November 9**—Congregation Meeting (11:30 a.m.)
- **November 16**—Intergenerational Ornaments
- **November 17**—Seniors Hang Out
- **November 22**—Surviving the Holidays (9:30 a.m.-Noon in the Upper Room)
- **November 23**—Christmas pageant rehearsal (9:30-10:20 a.m.)
- **November 30**—1st Sunday of Advent
- **December 1**—Blue Christmas (6:30 p.m.)
- **December 7**—Community Meal
- **December 14**—Christmas Pageant (9:30-10:20 a.m.)
- **December 17**—Christmas Caroling and Pizza
- **December 21**—Coffee and Cookies (9:30-10:20 a.m.)
- **December 24**—Christmas Eve Services:
 - ◇ 4:30 p.m.—Family Service
 - ◇ 7:00 p.m.—Traditional Service
 - ◇ 9:30 p.m.—Carols and Candlelight Service



The next issue of the Messenger will cover October and November. Articles are due by September 14.

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