



This is My Story: A Reflection from Pastor Kathy

Dear Friends in Christ,

A familiar hymn for many of you, Blessed Assurance, has these words in the refrain, "This is my story, this is my song." This hymn, I believe is a favorite for many because of these words. The story we have come to love to tell, (another favorite hymn) is the one about our faith. It is a personal faith, it is the way we experience Christ in our lives.

We are well into the biblical story as we have followed it through the Narrative Lectionary. As I write this letter, we are in the story of Jesus as we come to know through the gospel of John. As you hear the stories in worship, it is our hope that you find the openings in the story that connect with you. God's story is part of your story and your story is part of God's story. It is the narrative that not only gives us hope and purpose but also guides us into the way of Jesus, the way of peace.

My ongoing prayer for each of you is that you come to know the living God through Jesus Christ. It is not something that happens once, but as Martin Luther reminds us, we grow in faith through daily prayer, Bible study, Worship and in faith sharing. This is how we come to understand our own narrative in relation to our loving God.

Beginning on Wednesday, February 25th, you will gather as a community for dinner church at 6:00-7:00 p.m. In addition to eating a delicious meal served by our committees and other groups, we will have a short worship with prayer, song and the opportunity to hear faith stories from members of our congregation. We will discover how God speaks to one another in the midst of challenges and rewards, joys and sorrows, death and life. I look forward to joining you after my Sabbatical.

On a personal note, I give thanks for this opportunity to be on Sabbatical. I will be spending the first few weeks with my family in Minnesota while helping my sister as she recovers from a shoulder replacement surgery. In the weeks following, I plan to visit other pastors and churches to learn how our siblings in Christ are living faithfully into their mission as we face the turbulence of our current culture. Reading, praying, journaling, exercising and resting are also an important part of this time away.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13

In God's Story With You,
Pastor Kathy

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Lent & Easter at St. Matt

- February 18 Ash Wednesday (7pm)
- Feb 21 & 22 1st Weekend in Lent
- February 25 This is My Story Dinner Church (6pm)
- Feb 28 & Mar 1 2nd Weekend in Lent
- March 4 This is My Story Dinner Church (6pm)
- March 7 & 8 3rd Weekend in Lent
- March 11 This is My Story Dinner Church (6pm)
- March 14 & 15 4th Weekend in Lent
- March 18 This is My Story Dinner Church (6pm)
- March 21 & 22 5th Weekend in Lent
- March 25 This is My Story Dinner Church (6pm)
- March 28 & 29 Palm/ Passion Sunday Weekend
Lunch & Easter Egg Hunt (Sun, 11:45am)
- April 2 Maundy Thursday with
Communion Milestone (7pm)
- April 3 Good Friday (7pm)
- April 4 & 5 Easter Weekend - Sunday Breakfast



Christmas Pajama & Sweater Worship

Beyond being lots of fun, together we raised \$768.00 for God's Meal Barrel. Joy and generosity went hand in hand as we supported our neighbors in need. Thank you to all who participated in the festivities!



Lenten Dinner Church

This is My Story

Wednesdays in Lent | 6:00pm

This Lent, we gather around tables for Dinner Church as we listen to and reflect on the stories that shape our faith. The services will feature members of St. Matthew sharing moments from their lives and the many ways God has been present along the way.

We give thanks in advance for the courage and generosity of those who are willing to share their stories, and we invite you to come, listen, and find echoes of your own story within theirs.

Dinner Hosts:

- Feb 25 - Faith Formation
- March 4 - Finance & Evangelism
- March 11 - Social Ministry
- March 18 - Music Ministry
- March 25 - Council



Dear friends,

What a blessing it has been to have begun my ministry with you all - it truly has been a joy to get to know the community of St. Matthew. Many thanks to all who were involved with and attended the Welcome Reception on January 11 - I was touched by the beautiful reception and kind words shared by all. It was truly a sentiment of the community at St. Matthew.

Please check out all of the upcoming events and programs in this issue of The Messenger - we have some exciting things coming up!

Peace and Blessings,

Ethan Draper

The Music Ministry enjoyed a glorious December, from the Blue Christmas service to the Christmas Eve services. It was wonderful on Christmas Eve to hear our Children's Choir, Junior Choir/Bells, Youth Choir/Bells, Adult Choir, St. Matthew Ringers, SoulFire, and soloists give glory to God.

Christmas Caroling was a wonderful evening of fellowship.

Seniors Hang Out participants enjoyed singing Christmas carols, Christmas Carol Bingo, and Christmas crafts.

The Mini Ministers enjoyed doing a puppet show at Luther Ridge at the end of January. On Sunday, March 1, our children's choirs will perform at Brookside.

Deb Smith

277 Christmas Cheer Bags were created, packed, and delivered - over 331 lives were touched!

Thank You for the team effort, St. Matthew!

To all the individuals and groups who worked to make it happen, know that hearts were cheered and souls have been blessed by your work. Together, You...

- Submitted Names
- Created Lovely Cards
- Produced Cheer Bags
- Packed Little Jesus into Thelma's Tiny Boxes
- Made Ornaments
- Contributed Items
- Baked Yummy Cookies
- Created routes & maps for deliveries
- Packed and delivered 277 Cheer Bags

May the blessings of the Christ Child be with you all!



Thank You

2026 CONCERT SERIES

**Steven Courtney and the Suitcase Musicians
Sunday, February 22 at 4:00pm**

Beloved children's artist, Steven Courtney and his Suitcase Musicians will present a fun for all ages concert in the Nave of St. Matthew.

**One World, One Beat: A Concert Celebrating
Peace, Love and Unity
Sunday, April 12 at 4:00pm**

This concert will feature local musicians and will celebrate the talent and love we share in our local community. Please bring a food item to donate to God's Meal Barrel. This concert is a partnership between YWCA Hanover and St. Matthew Lutheran Church.

**Hymn Sing And Ice Cream Social
Sunday, August 16 at 4:00pm**

Sing some of your favorite hymns accompanied by organ, piano and the Hymn Sing choir.

**Tyler Conanico-Dilley, Organ
Sunday, September 27 at 4:00pm**

One of the east coast's finest and dynamic concert organists and inspiring church musicians, Tyler A. Canonico-Dilley is the Minister of Music and Organist at Market Square Presbyterian Church in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, where he leads an expansive music program.

No tickets are required for our concert series. The concerts are free and open to the public.



Where Faith & Life Intersect - Sundays 9:30am

A discussion class based on current events and our faith, in the parlor. Contact Beth Koontz at BethK9245@gmail.com for more information.

Women of the ELCA - 1st Tuesday of the month, 2:00pm on the 2nd floor in the Upper Room.

Senior Hangout - 3rd Monday of the month, 10:00am in the Fellowship Hall

Cyber Women - 3rd Tuesday of the month, 6:00pm at Panera in North Hanover.

SoulFire Band - Every other Tuesday at 5:45p
Feb 3 & 17, Mar 3 & 17, Apr 7 & 21, May 5 & 19

Adult Bell Choir - Thursdays at 6p

Adult Choir - Thursdays at 7p

Note: There will be no rehearsals for SoulFire, Adult Bells, or Adult Choir the week following Easter (April 6-12)



Bible Study - Feb 3, Mar 3, Apr 7 at 2pm

St. Matt's WELCA group meets the first Tuesday of each month at 2pm for Bible study. All women are invited to attend a Bible Study led Pastor Alex or Pastor Faye. For more information, call the church office.

Find out more about the Women of the ELCA by going to this website: WWW.LSS-ELCA.ORG. Go to "Mission Partners" at the top of the home page and then down to Women of the ELCA LS SWO.

Cyber Women

3rd Tuesday of the Month

Dinner - 5:30pm Discussion - 6:00pm

February 17, March 17, April 21

Cyber Women is a monthly gathering for women to explore our walk as Christian women. Discussion topics are announced in advance through the announcement sheet.

Seniors Hangout

3rd Monday of the Month, 10:00am-12:30pm

February 16, March 16, April 20

Fellowship Hall

Seniors Hangout is a ministry to give our senior members a time of fellowship, fun, and learning. It includes games, art activities, coffee and cookies, and a speaker.

At our January Hangout, we enjoyed a talk on the relevance of Turkey and Greece to the Bible, given by Pastor Mark Vitalis Hoffman.



You are welcome in our GriefShare Group

- 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 group continues through April 20, on the 2nd floor in the upper room. GriefShare meets on Mondays from 3:00-4:30pm. You can join our GriefShare group at anytime. To register, call the church office, 717-637-7101. If you have questions, you may email Pastor Faye at nicksong@comcast.net or call her at 717-451-0851.



Our Blue Christmas service was held on Dec. 1 to make space to honor the griefs we carry through the season of Christmas. We thank all who made this meaningful service possible.



Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?! Friday, February 6

Interested in getting to know new people at St. Matthew? Do you love to host? Would you enjoy sharing fellowship with church members who are new to the church?

Dinner guests will be invited on Friday, February 6. Sign up to be a host or guest. This is a great opportunity that brings together members of St. Matthew's who may not know each other yet. Pick up a flyer at the Hospitality Desk for full details. Or sign up at the Hospitality Desk!



CALL FOR SINGERS: MEN'S CHORUS FOR EASTER SUNDAY

Have you sung with or are you interested in singing with the Men's Chorus? Now is the time! The Men's Chorus will return for Easter Sunday singing at both worship services. **We will have three rehearsals prior to Easter on Thursday at 8:00 p.m. (following Adult Choir) on March 12, 19, and 26 in the Adult Rehearsal Room.** If you are interested in singing, please contact Ethan Draper at edraper@stmattlutheran.org or (717) 637-7101 ext. 235.

HELP NEEDED - Rides to Appointments

Are you available to drive members to doctor appointments? Is God calling you to help in this way? Email Pastor Faye at nicksong@comcast.net or call the church office 717-637-7101.



Carols & Candlelight - Dec. 24, 9:30pm



SERVING OUR NEIGHBORS

In one small but meaningful way, members of St. Matthew—Barb R., Lee B., Jody R., and Kevin S.—lived out our call to serve our neighbors by helping with a yard cleanup, sharing God's love through practical care. Thank you for serving!



Holiday Community Meal





Faith Formation Classes - Sundays 9:30am
Age 3 - 5th grade, Lower Level

Splash Class - Select Sundays 9:45-10:15am
Birth - age 3, Fellowship Hall - Playground
(Feb. 1, Mar. 8, May 3)

Junior Choir & Bells - Tuesdays, 4:30-5:15pm
3rd-5th grade, Lower Level Rehearsal

Children's Choir - Thursdays, 4:15-5:00pm
Age 3 - 2nd grade, Lower Level

Note: There will be no rehearsals for Children's or Junior choir the week following Easter (April 6 - 12)

Splash Classes - Sundays, 9:45am
Feb. 1, Mar. 8, May 3

Our Splash class is our class geared toward the littlest among us and their families. Led by Ms. Lindsay and Mr. Adam, families with babies and toddlers are invited to join them as they dive into what it means to have a child "splashed" in the waters of baptism. This highly interactive class includes music, play, and connection -- offering space to grow in faith together through movement, song, and joy.



Family Christmas Eve Service - Dec. 24, 4:30pm



Steven Courtney Concert
Sun, Feb 22 at 4:00pm

We're thrilled to announce that beloved children's musician Steven Courtney is joining our 2025 Concert Series! With fun, engaging songs that spark imagination and joy, Steven's music is perfect for kids and families alike. Mark your calendars and get ready for a lively, laughter-filled afternoon you won't want to miss!



What's Up, Zak? Musical | Apr. 26, 10:30am
Info Sessions: Feb 8 @ 1pm OR Feb 13 @ 6pm

The familiar tale of Zacchaeus is relived as one rich but lonely tax collector casts ego aside and climbs a tree for just one glimpse of Jesus. Funny, lively songs introduce a town bustling to prepare for a visit from a V.I.P. - Very Important Prophet! The musical is open to all children in kindergarten through 5th grade. **There will be a meeting for interested actors on Sunday, February 8 at 1:00 p.m. or Friday, February 13 at 6:00 p.m.**



Tiny Tunes

Saturdays Feb 21 & 28 | 12:00-12:45pm

Tiny Tunes (ages 2-4) is an opportunity for our little ones to come together with their grown-ups and make music together! Children will enjoy singing and playing instruments. Each child must be accompanied by an adult. This program is free but registration will be required. Contact Deb Smith for more information. Sign up with the QR code.



Tiny-Tunes
Sign-Up

Music JAM (Jesus & Me)

Saturday February 28 | 9:00a-11:00a

Music JAM (K-4th grade) brings kids together to play music and praise Jesus. Kids will even make their own instruments! This program is free but registration will be required. Contact Deb Smith for more information. Sign up with the QR code.



Music JAM
Sign-Up

Pajama Story Time

Sunday, March 22 | 2nd Floor, Upper Room
5:00pm - Supper | 5:30pm - Story, Music,
& Crafts

Join Ms. Lindsay, Mr. Ethan, and Ms. Deb on Sunday, March 22 at 5:00 p.m. on the Second Floor for supper (chicken nuggets), stories, and songs! This program is free but registration is required.



Story Time
Sign-Up



2025 Christmas Pageant

Communion Milestone: Come to the Table

March 15, 11:45a-12:30p - Class

March 22, 11:45a-12:30p - Bread Baking

April 2, 7:00p - Maundy Thursday worship

Is your child ready to explore the gift of Communion? This milestone is for children 5th grade and younger who are not yet receiving communion, haven't had a class, or would like a refresher. Families are encouraged to participate together in this time of learning and growing in faith. Contact Pastor Alex or Missy Smith with questions or concerns. Sign-up using the QR code.
Sign-up by Sunday, March 1.



Milestone
Sign-Up

Palm Sunday | Sunday, March 29

Children's Procession: 10:30am, Nave

Children & Junior Choir Sing: 10:30, Nave

Lunch & Easter Egg Hunt: 11:45am, Fellowship Hall

During the 10:30 a.m. service, children are invited to take part in the joyful Palm Sunday procession, helping lead us into worship. The Children & Junior Choir will also share music during the service, adding their voices to this meaningful day. Following worship, everyone is invited to stay for lunch and an Easter egg hunt hosted by our youth—a fun way to continue the celebration together.

SAVE THE DATES - SUMMER CAMPS

Day Camp (June 8-12, 9am-3pm)

Vacation Bible School (June 22-25, 9am-12pm)

Music Camp (August 3-7, 9am-11am)





Confirmation - Sundays 9:30am
6th-8th grade, 3rd Floor Youth Suite

High School Faith Connections - Sundays 9:30am
9th-12th grade, 3rd Floor Youth Suite

Youth Group - 1st & 3rd Sundays, 6:00-8:00pm
6th-12th grade, 3rd Floor Youth Suite

Youth Choir & Bells - Sundays, 11:45am-12:30pm
6th-12th grade, Lower Level Rehearsal

Note: There will be no rehearsals for Youth Choir and Bells the week following Easter (April 6 - 12)

Youth Group
1st & 3rd Sundays, 6:00-8:00pm
No youth group on February 1

Are you ready to make a difference, build lasting friendships, and grow in our faith?

St. Matt's Youth Group is a vibrant community for young people committed to fun, fellowship, and making a positive impact in the world around us. Here, youth can show up just as they are, grow in their relationship with God, and build lasting friendships.

What we do:

Mission Trips - Travel together, serve alongside one another, and learn what it looks like to love our neighbor.

Community Service - Be a force for good right here in the Hanover area.

Faith and Fellowship - Deepen our faith in Jesus while building supportive relationships.

Fun & Connection - Laugh and enjoy time together with games, activities, and events

Ready to connect, serve, and grow? All are welcome!

Contact Tim Peck - Youth Ministry
youth@stmattlutheran.org
717-637-7101, ext 230



Fall Retreat 2025
Camp Nawakwa

Easter Egg Hunt & Lunch | Palm Sunday
March 29, 11:45am

Youth volunteers are needed! The youth will be hosting the Palm Sunday Lunch & Egg Hunt following the 10:30 service, and we need your help. Serve lunch, lead games and crafts, and help welcome kids and families for a fun, joy-filled day. It's an easy way to serve, hang out with friends, and help make Easter awesome for our community.





Mini-Minister Puppets



Gingerbread Contest Fundraiser for God's Meal Barrel



Christmas Eve - 7:00pm



WinterFest 2026

Save the Dates

Summer Camps

St. Matthew hosts 3 summer camps for kids throughout the summer. Middle school and high school youth are invited to help with our summer camps for younger kids. Camp leaders get to share their faith in real ways, grow leadership skills, and serve as role models—while still having plenty of fun along the way. More info to come. The dates are below:

- Day Camp (June 8-12, 9am-3pm)
- Vacation Bible School (June 22-25, 9am-12pm)
- Music Camp (August 3-7, 9am-11am)

Confirmation Retreat (6th-8th grade) - June 14-19 **All Saint's Confirmation camp, Camp Nawakwa**

It is a week that you get to experience camp and meet new friends, plus it will give you a fresh way to look at confirmation. This year's theme is Faith and Doubt. It is expected that Confirmation students attend this annual retreat at least once during their time in Confirmation - but we encourage participation each year.

Mission Trip (9th-12th grade) - July 5-11

We will be partnering again with LutheranHands for our annual mission trip. This year's trip is a bit closer to home - in Philadelphia, PA. It is a week of helping a community that needs help with their homes and surroundings. It is always a rewarding week for all that attend, so mark your schedules to go and serve in Philadelphia with us.





PERSONAL CARE KITS - AROUND THE WORLD AND HERE TOO

The Women of the ELCA and the Intergenerational Faith Connections will be collecting items to assemble Personal Care Kits for Lutheran World Relief. People who must flee their homes quickly due to disasters or safety often don't have time to pack essential items. Personal Care Kits help those in need maintain personal hygiene while living away from their homes. The Kits also contribute to a new start for those who can't return home. Now LWR is expanding to reach our neighbors in need in the United States, as well as world-wide as they have before. That means that kits will now comfort families here in the U.S. and abroad!

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). \$10 will cover the cost of the items and help with shipping costs. The Women of the ELCA and the Intergenerational Faith Connections are combining their efforts for this event. The packing of the kits will take place in May.

OUR CONGREGATION COUNCIL members and officers for 2026 were installed at the 10:30 service on January 18: Randy Kline as president; Darlene Klenk, vice president; Beth Szymanski, secretary; and Bob Curlen as treasurer. Welcome to our new Council members, Gordon Grady, Stephanie Klanssek, Darlene Klenk, Beth Szymanski. May God bless and guide all of our Council members.

A special thanks

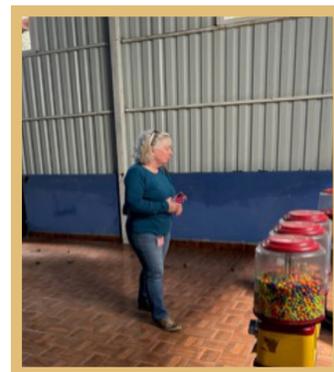
I would like to thank everyone who offered up prayers and sent cards to me as I was recovering from my knee replacement. The surgery and rehab have gone very well and I believe it's because of people praying for me. Thank you all so much. It's such a wonderful feeling to be a part of this St. Matthew family. - Judy Porowski

OUR ANNUAL CONGREGATION MEETING

will be held immediately following the late worship service on **February 15**. Please plan on attending this important meeting. Annual Reports will be available which is a great way to learn about all that is happening here at St. Matthew!

COOKIE SALE - THANK YOU!!

Thank You to All who contributed to the December Cookie Sale-bakers, volunteers, shoppers, customers- we were able to meet our goal of \$1000 to help with buying equipment for the new bakery at the training center in Guatemala!



In Our Church Family Recent life events in our community

Baptisms

- December 28 - Rosemary Anna Farace
- January 18 - Hudson Robert Luckenbaugh

Deaths

- November 21 - Fred Kauffman
- December 25 - Michael Crooks
- January 14 - Myrtle Satterfield
- January 18 - Wayne Beck

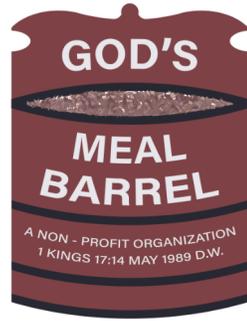


FOOD COLLECTIONS FOR GOD'S MEAL BARREL

This spring, the Social Ministry committee is collecting food for God's Meal Barrel - a food pantry ministry here in Hanover.

Their most needed items are:

- Pasta and Sauce
- Mac-n-Cheese
- Cereal
- Canned Fruits and Veggies
- Canned Tuna



Collection Dates:

- **February 15 & 22** - Delivery on March 7
- **April 19 & 26** - Delivery on May 2



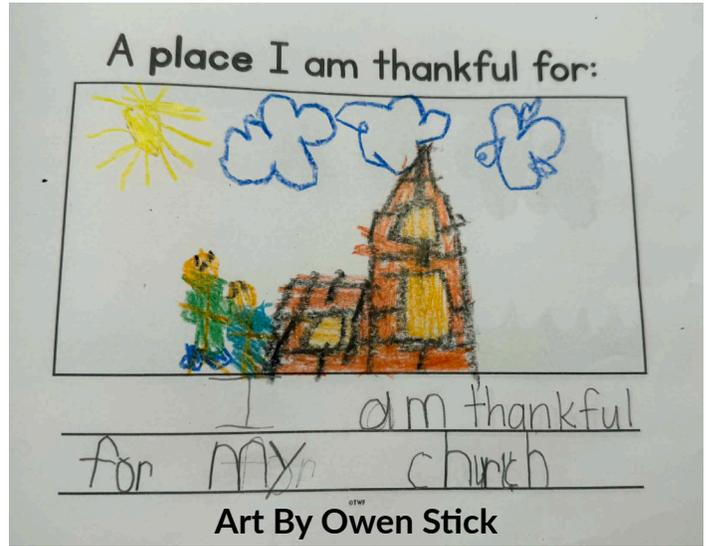
BLOOD DRIVE - MARCH 26

St. Matthew in conjunction with Central Pa Blood Bank will be holding a drive on March 26 from 12-6 PM. Please mark your calendars and plan to support this worthwhile cause. More information to follow.

SAVE THE DATE - Sunday, May 31, 2026 Spring Community Meal

Menu - Hot Dogs, Sloppy Joes, Mac-N-Cheese, Ice Cream.

More information to come! To volunteer or make a donation, reach out to Amy Beck (abeck1976@comcast.net) or the church office (info@stmatthlutheran.org).



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.



Save the Dates

February 6 - Guess Who's Coming for Dinner?

February 15 - Annual Congregation Meeting (11:45am)

February 18 - Ash Wednesday (7:00pm)

February 22 - Steven Courtney and the Suitcase Musicians Concert (4:00pm)

March 26 - Blood Drive (12:00-6:00pm)

March 29 - Palm Sunday with Lunch and Easter Egg Hunt

April 2 - Maundy Thursday with Communion Milestone (7:00pm)

April 3 - Good Friday (7:00pm)

April 4 & 5 - Easter Weekend (Sat, 5pm and Sun, 8:30am & 10:30am)

April 12 - One World, One Beat Concert (4:00pm)

April 26 - *What's Up Zak* musical (10:30am)

May 31 - Spring Community Meal

**We will be moving to a quarterly format for the Messenger.
The next Messenger will cover the Summer:
May, June, and July.**

**Articles for the Summer Messenger are due on:
April 15, 2026**

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St. Matthew
LUTHERAN CHURCH of HANOVER

Where the Welcome is Wide and the Love is Real