

# THE VOICE of St. Matthew's

Volume 92, No. 12 - December 3, 2023

## Join Us for Advent and Christmas



**December 3**  
*Advent 2*

Worship at 8:30 and 11:00 am  
Sun. Sch. Big Group; Adult Educ. with Dan Bice, Women's Group

**December 10**  
*Advent 3*

**St. Matthew's Christmas Pageant With Cast, Angels and Choirs**  
Services at 8:30 and 11:00 am  
Adult Education -- Council shares results of congregational survey

**December 17**  
*Advent 4*

Services at 8:30 and 11:00 am  
Adult Education - Advent Reflection with Laura Staats

**December 24**  
*Christmas Eve*

**Festive Services at 2:00, 4:30 and 7:30 pm**  
Details on page 3

**December 25**  
*Christmas Day*

**Festive Christmas Day Worship at 10:00 am**; Holy Communion

**December 31**

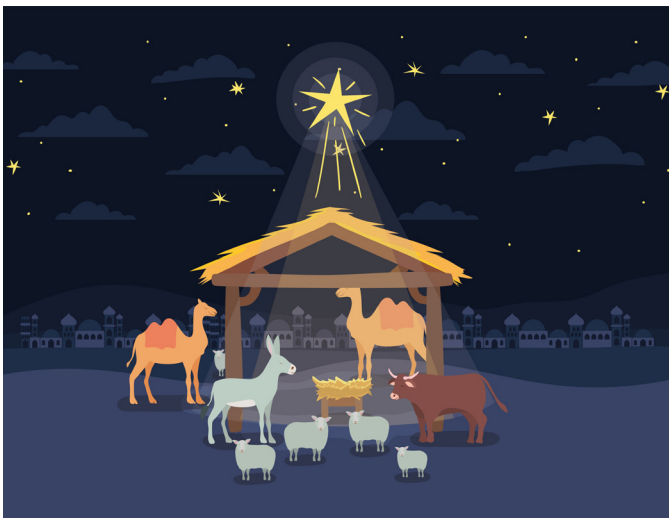
One Worship Service at 10:00 am

## Our Pastor's Voice

Nativity sets are one of my favorite Christmas traditions. In my husband's family, the characters had to be placed in geographically appropriate locations throughout the house. Mary and Joseph weren't allowed to be in the manger until Christmas Eve. Instead, for the whole of Advent, they "travelled" from a windowsill on the north side of the house (Nazareth) southward to the nativity set (Bethlehem). The Magi came from the east on a similar journey and made stops at bookshelves and coffee tables along the way. In the living room sat the manger complete with cows and sheep—just waiting for Jesus to arrive.

I love nativity sets because they spark the imagination. What must it have been like to give birth in a barn? Were there chickens, cows and goats? How many shepherds showed up that night? Hundreds of years ago, Saint Francis of Assisi (the patron saint of animals) had his imagination sparked by a trip to Bethlehem. After visiting the site of Jesus' birth, he wanted to bring that powerful experience to the people he served back home. So, in a cave near Greccio, Italy the first live nativity was held in the year 1223. And, of course, that first nativity included animals. Sometimes I forget that those animals weren't there as props—they weren't present in the stable that night to make the nativity set in my living room cute—those animals were hard-working sources of food and clothing for real people.

**Sometimes I forget that those animals weren't there as props... those animals were hard-working sources of food and clothing for real people.**



In the spirit of that first Christmas Eve, Saint Matthew's will be making a special collection for the ELCA's Good Gifts campaign. This ministry of the wider church listens to communities in need and supplies them with resources that will make an impact in their daily life. It is one example of the ways in which the church can make a big difference when we work together. A gift of \$10 buys a baby chick for a family farm. \$50

buys a goat that provides fresh milk. Honeybees, piglets, and cows are also available! In this season of counting blessings and pondering the gifts we've received, I invite you to support our brothers and sisters around the globe through this worthy ministry. Just imagine the nativity set we'll build together!

Pastor Ann Williams

### The Voice of St. Matthew's

The newsletter of St. Matthew's Ev. Lutheran Church  
St. Matthew's Mission Statement

*Called to fulfill the Great Commission, St. Matthew's Welcomes all to faith in Jesus Christ, Nurtures our faith journey, Equips us to serve others, and Sends us into the world to make a difference in Jesus' name.*

Karen Natterstad, Interim Lead Pastor  
Ann Williams, Associate Pastor

1615 N. Wauwatosa Avenue, Wauwatosa, WI 53213  
414-774-0441; E-mail: office@stmattslutheran.org

Visit our website: [www.StMattsLutheran.org](http://www.StMattsLutheran.org)

Sunday worship at 8:30 and 11:00 a.m.

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# Upcoming Events

## The Nativity

**St. Matthew's Christmas Pageant to be Presented on December 10th**

Come to see and hear the story of Christ's birth as it was experienced by shepherds and kings, angel messengers, and Mary and Joseph. Scenes dramatizing the story will be presented throughout the worship services accompanied by music from the Senior Choir, New Generation Choir, New Creation Choir, and Praise Kids.

**The Nativity will be presented at the 8:30 and 11:00 worship services on December 10th.** We hope you can be there to celebrate the true meaning of Christmas - the gift of love that God shared with the world through the birth of Emmanuel, God with us.



**We Need Your Help to Decorate St. Matthew's for Advent & Christmas Saturday Morning, December 2, beginning at 9:00 am**

There are many kinds of tasks, something for everyone to do. Help create the beautiful ambience of St. Matthew's at Advent and Christmas. Helpers of all ages welcome. Coffee and light refreshments will be available.



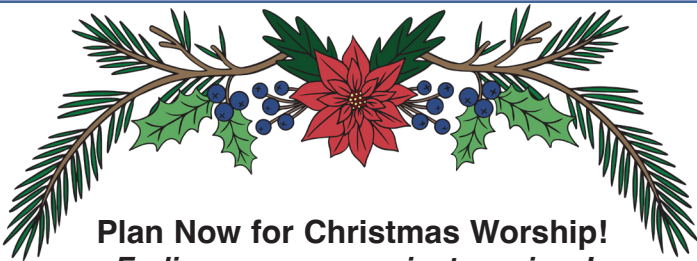
**Giving Tree: Thanks for your generosity!**

Take a tag and support our recipient organizations: Cross Lutheran Church, Reformation Lutheran Church, Allies for Teens in Foster Care, and Eras Senior Network.



Lisa Chiesa checks out the tags.

Please note that there is an **online** opportunity for participation, at this link: <https://signup.com/go/UGQhboD> Please note that the gift deadline has been extended to Sunday, December 10th.



**Plan Now for Christmas Worship!  
Earlier, more convenient services!**

### Christmas Eve

**2:00pm** Children's and Family Service  
The Birth of Jesus told in story  
Familiar Christmas carols  
Safe candlelighting

**4:30pm** Traditional Christmas Eve service with youth choirs' participation  
Candlelighting with 'Silent Night'  
Sermon and Holy Communion

**7:30pm** Traditional Christmas Eve service with adult choir participation  
Candlelighting with 'Silent Night'  
Sermon and Holy Communion

### Christmas Day

**10:00am** Traditional Christmas Day service with Holy Communion, sermon, and familiar carols

And the Glory of the Lord  
**Lutheran A Cappella Choir**  
**Concerts December 1st & 3rd**  
The Lutheran A Cappella Choir of Milwaukee presents "And the Glory of the Lord" featuring Christmas anthems and movements from Handel's Messiah.

**Friday, December 1st at 7:30 pm**  
Mount Carmel Lutheran Church  
8424 W. Center St. Milwaukee

**Sunday, December 3rd at 3:00 pm**  
St. Luke's Lutheran Church  
6705 Northway, Greendale



Tickets are \$15 and students are free with an ID. Tickets are available at the door where cash, check, and Venmo accepted.

## Adult Faith Formation for December

### Sunday Mornings 9:45-10:45

All are Welcome! Come when you can! Our Adult Faith Formation hour supports the faith growth of our church and online community. This is a weekly opportunity to engage your mind in faith related topics, meet others with similar interests and connect with your church community. We gather on Sunday mornings from 9:45-10:45 A.M.



### \*\*December 3

Meeting Paul Anew Part 2 with Dan Bice

### \*\*December 10

Church Council shares results of Congregational Survey



St. Matthew's Congregational Survey - Oct. 2023

We are grateful for the many people who took time to fill out the congregational survey in October. We've received some great thoughtful responses, and the council has tabulated them, organized the data, and will share what we've learned about "the pulse" of St. Matthew's. Led by members of the St. Matthew's Church Council.



### \*\*December 17

Advent Reflection with St. Matt's member  
Laura Staats

### \*\*Christmas break, Dec. 24 and 31

Adult Faith Formation time resumes on January 7, 2024.

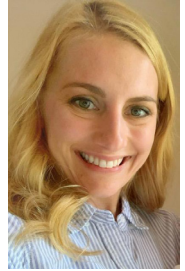


## Women's Ministry

### Women's Group: "Our Identity in God"

#### December 3, 9:45 am

Sunday morning women's group meets the first Sunday of the month from 9:45-10:45. Join us on Sunday, December 3rd as our topic will be "Exploring our Identity in God". Contact Katie Nickel; katiernickel@gmail.com



### Save the Date!

Women's Retreat at Cedar Valley Retreat Center  
March 8-10, 2024

## Scenes from Sunday Morning



Ready to serve communion: Tim Goetsch, Clare Kasdorf, Pastor Karen, Marian Benz, Nancy Bowen, Pastor Ann.



Paul Dirksmeyer lights the candles before worship.



Annette Olson, lay assistant

Dave & Madelyn Locher and Dave McCullough work in the sound and video balcony during a worship service.

Thanks to all the worship assistants who make each worship service possible!



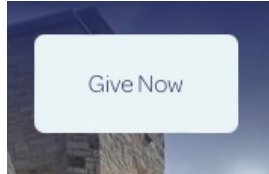
# Stewardship - Thanks for your Commitments!

## 2023 Year End Giving

As we get to the end of the year, in order to have your contributions appear on your 2023 Contribution Statement, we need to remind everyone that all contributions need to be either in the office or post marked by December 31, 2023. We have made available different ways to help you fulfill your 2023 pledges.

### St Matthew's Website:

If you go to [www.stmattslutheran.org](http://www.stmattslutheran.org) and click on the Give button in the upper right hand corner, you can contribute via your credit card.



### US Post Office:



If you want to mail in your check, the postmark on the envelope must be December 31, 2023 or earlier.

### Drop off a check in the church office:

Drop off your check in the church office by 4 PM on Friday, December 29, 2023 or earlier. Or you can put your year end contribution check in the Sunday, December 31 offering plate.

Following any one of these options will allow your 2023 contribution to St. Matthew's to appear on your 2023 Contribution Statement.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Al Van Lith in the office at (414) 774-0441 or email him at [al@stmattslutheran.org](mailto:al@stmattslutheran.org).

*Thank you for your generous giving this year!*



## 2024 Envelopes are here!

Our 2024 Envelopes are here and are on a table in the library commons. If you are using envelopes, look for your box on the table.

As a reminder, if you submit your contributions via Simply Giving or other online giving, you will not have a set of envelopes.

If you do not see your envelopes on the table and you want to have some, put your name on the sheet on the table. You may also send the office an email or give them a call. Envelopes are available to anyone who wants them.

Also, if you see a box for your family and you do not need them, let us know and we will remove your name from the envelope list.

As always, please call the office or send Al and email at [al@stmattslutheran.org](mailto:al@stmattslutheran.org) if you have any questions.

**Stewardship Consecration Sunday is past,  
but it's not too late!  
Everyone's Stewardship Response is needed**

## I Love Our Church

**Fill it all out ONLINE:**

<https://tinyurl.com/Act-Min>

<https://tinyurl.com/StewUpdate2024>

<https://tinyurl.com/Pledge2024>

OR

Fill out the forms you received in the mail  
and return to church



*Every time I think of you,  
I give thanks to my God.  
Philippians 1:3*

**Have you seen the "Why We  
Love St. Matthew's" video?  
If you haven't, you'll want  
to see your fellow St. Matt's  
members share what they  
love about our congregation.**



# SAINTS

*Saints is St. Matthew's Older Adults Ministry which meets monthly for fellowship, devotion, entertainment and a box lunch. Sign up in advance is appreciated, by Noon of the Monday before the gathering. All older adults are welcome, as well as friends from outside our congregation.*

**Wednesday, Dec. 13, 11:30 am**  
*(one week earlier than usual)*  
**Elm Grove Women's Club Choir**  
**Directed by Patricia Engelhardt**



The choir sings beautiful arrangements of traditional carols and some fun new carols. We will gather upstairs for opening devotion and lunch, and then enjoy the concert after lunch. Choose from turkey or ham City Market box lunch when you sign up; suggested donation is \$11.

**First Program of 2024 will take place on Wednesday, January 17**

**Guest Speaker Kristine Hansen, an author and speaker on famed architect Frank Lloyd Wright.**

Mark your calendars now for this fascinating presenter who is an author, architecture journalist, and travel writer.



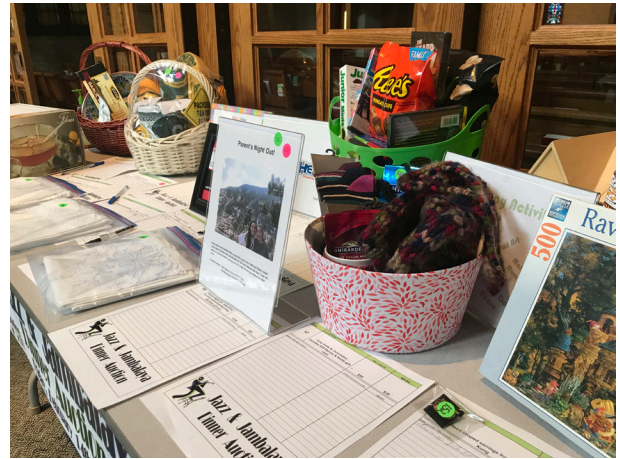
## **Dinner Auction Coming up on February 9th! Mark Your Calendars Now for this Mission Trip Fundraiser / Congregational Event**

Mark your calendars now for this annual event that supports the Youth Mission Trip. The evening includes dinner, a silent auction, and entertainment. This year's trip will be to New Orleans, which will be reflected in the evening's food and activities. Items for bidding will be on display beginning January 21st and will include items from babysitting services to gift baskets to vacation rentals.

The dinner event begins with final bidding on auction items from 5:30 – 6:30, with dinner at 6:30.

### **Auction Items are Welcome**

We are always looking for interesting items to offer at our dinner auction fundraiser. Do you work for a business that would consider donating a product or a gift certificate? Do you have a skill or service you could contribute? Vacation rentals are also a welcome item. All donations in very good condition are appreciated! It is especially appreciated if they are donated by January 14th so that they can be on display before the dinner auction. Please talk to Gretchen Hauge if you can help.



**The Saints October Gathering surprised the attendees with a comedy program. The smiles on the faces here show how much fun everyone had. It's so good to laugh! Thanks to the See Team for the fun time.**



**Nancy Bowen (center) was a brave volunteer.**

## Caring Ministries

### Living After Loss: Grief Education and Support

Mondays from 1:00-3:00 at St. Matthew's  
Sharing thoughts and feelings to help with the healing process after a loss.

Contact Candy Romano 414-687-2196

### Caregiver Group

First Tuesday Evening of the month - 6:30-8:00 p.m.  
Sharing and support for those who are caring for a loved one at home or supporting them in a care facility.

Contact Sue Swing 414-774-0441

### Stephen Ministry

Offering confidential one to one listening, encouragement and support for anyone going through a life situation that is challenging for them. We know the number of people dealing with hurts and difficult life issues continues to grow within our congregation. Many are struggling alone, but they don't have to. Please reach out for more information on how you can be helped or help a loved one with a Stephen Minister.

Contact Pastor Ann or Sue Swing

### Home Communion

If you are someone you know is currently homebound and would like to receive communion please let us know. We have a wonderful team of church members visiting and sharing communion with those in need.

Contact Pastor Ann

### Healing Prayer

Receive spiritual support in the form of hands on prayer from the Healing prayer team, at church or can be scheduled to come to your home.

Contact Pastor Ann



## Social Ministry

### Serving Opportunity!

### Community Warehouse-Partners in Hope

Next Meal & Fellowship Date

is Wednesday, December 20th from 5:30-8:00

Community Warehouse is a faith-based organization passionately dedicated to helping willing men and women, and their families impacted by incarceration overcome social, economic, and criminal justice system barriers. Join us for the community meal and fellowship time. Contact Conor Williams; conorw1@me.com.



*Dinner Fellowship Opportunity*

### Mt. Meru Coffee

### Makes Great Christmas Gifts!

Mt. Meru offers a complete selection of coffees in a variety of blends and sizes. We have a Christmas Traditions Blend for \$18.00 in drip or bean. There are also holiday sampler packs in 4 and 6 pack sizes plus 4 varieties of flavored coffees. These and many others will be featured in the coming weeks. Stop by the coffee cart on Sunday morning to place an order for items not in stock or contact me at: dholmes22@att.net. Orders are sent in Monday mornings each week and available for pickup by Wednesday.

*Mt. Meru Coffee: Justice Never Tasted so Good!*



Please consider purchasing Mt. Meru Coffee as a gift for the coffee drinker in your life. It's a win-win: your recipient gets delicious coffee, and coffee farmers in Tanzania are paid fair wages for their work. Questions? Ask Dave Holmes, or contact Al in the church office.

## Welcome to our new members



**ALLAN & CHRISTINE TORKELSON** of Elm Grove. Allan is a retired physician, and Christine is a retired RN. They are both interested in gardening and exercise.

**Received into membership on Sunday, November 12, 2023**



**RYAN & BECKY KEDROWSKI** of Wauwatosa. Ryan works at Molson Coors in Milwaukee and Becky works at Northwestern Mutual. They are the parents of **Addisyn**, 9 years old and **Avery**, 7 years old.

**SARA AND JOHN DUTHIE** of Wauwatosa. Sara is a nurse at Froedtert as well as a student. John works at Rockwell Automation. *(Photo not available)*

## St. Matthew's Confirmation Class of 2023



**Front, l to r: Chase Slager, Hannah Malloy, Will Freeborn.**  
**Middle Row: Grant Nickel, Anthony Rizzo, Jack Clark, Jordan Bitar, Ella Iding, Shane Fisher, Gretchen Hauge.**  
**Back: Luke Grove, Levi Kirchner, Connor Meier, Chase Assenheimer, Carson Herrell, Pastor Karen Natterstad.**



# Stephen Ministry

## What Does It Take to Become a Stephen Minister... And What Do You Receive in Return?

Has Stephen Ministry crossed your mind a few times? You might have picked up a brochure or talked with someone at church about it. Maybe you're ready to take a closer look at the idea of becoming a Stephen Minister. It might help to give thought to what others say about serving as a Stephen Minister.

"Whether you're young or old, Stephen Ministry will greatly enhance your life skills. My one regret is having not become a Stephen Minister years ago."

"I have always been a good listener and someone you could depend on. As a Stephen Minister, I'm able to use these gifts to do God's work. It's a wonderful feeling to make a difference in someone's life and to have them say, 'Thank you for being there for me.'"

"Stephen Ministry has provided me with a way to lead, teach, and serve God with integrity. And I grow in the process. I also enjoy the tremendous amount of comfort and support I get interacting with my fellow Stephen Ministers."

"I was looking to become more involved in helping others when I heard about Stephen Ministry. It was just what I was after. The training was extremely helpful. I learned how to listen better and how to give comfort to others—something I wasn't sure I could do. Being a Stephen Minister has deepened my faith and allowed me to grow spiritually."

"I trained as a Stephen Minister years ago and have found ways to apply that training every day since then. I cannot begin to describe the impact it has had on my life."

We are training new Stephen Ministers this winter! If you're interested in learning more please contact Sue Swing or stop at the Stephen Ministry desk in the Library Commons.



*Christ caring for people through people*

# STEPHEN MINISTRY

**We are training new  
Stephen Ministers this  
winter. Could it be You?**



**Sarah Collins leads a big group of four- and five-year-olds in sharing what they're thankful for.**



**Danica McCullough and Madelyn Locher act out one of the Ten Commandments.**



**Third graders use clay to create stone tablets with the Ten Commandments.**



**Katie Daul explains an activity about "hard" and "soft" to the first graders.**

# Children's and Youth Ministries

## Children's Ministry Gatherings in December and January

1st -5th graders Join us for Combined KFC & DOC  
**Friday December 15th from 6-8pm.**

We will gather to have pizza, play flashlight tag, games, have sundaes and end with a devotion.

Please sign up in the church office.

Friends are welcome. Cost is \$5

Please bring a flashlight!!

### January KFC & DOC dates

**Kids for Christ ( 1st-3rd grades) Jan. 14 from 12-2pm**

**Disciples of Christ (4th & 5th grades) Jan. 21 from 12-2pm**

We will gather for an afternoon of fellowship and fun.

Join us for pizza and a game of Capture the Flag.



## Sunday School Schedule in December

When does Sunday School meet:

**December 3, 10 and 17**

**No Sunday School on December 24 and 31**

Resume Sunday School in 2024 on Sunday January 7

There will be a big group in fellowship hall on Jan. 7 for 1st - 5th graders.

## Pray for Our Baptism Anniversaries

We list below some of those baptized in December at St. Matthew's in the last few years. May their lives be blessed through your prayers.

Lana Joan Ordonez	November 6, 2022
Zoe Kathleen Radcliffe	November 13, 2022
Charlotte June Baumann	November 27, 2022
Vanessa Royal Szafir	December 19, 2021
Arabella Grace Sisouvanh	December 6, 2020
Aubrey Marie Bartz	December 20, 2020
Silas Graham Ward	December 24, 2020
Patrick Henry Noll	December 22, 2019

*Attention Parents! (and parents-to-be)*

## Next Baptism class is January 2024

These classes are offered about four times per year and taught by one of the pastors. The purpose of the class will be to:

- learn about the theology behind this sacrament
- be prepared for the commitment made during the baptism itself
- know how to make baptism part of your family life at home
- ask questions about god parents, scheduling the date and other details
- meet other parents who are raising children in the church

If you want to have your child baptized or if you are expecting a child, mark your calendar!

**January 14th 2024 • April 14th 2024**

## 2024 Youth Mission Trip Heads to New Orleans!

The destination of next summer's youth mission trip is New Orleans, where we will spend a week partnering with various non-profit groups that are dedicated to rebuilding the Lower Ninth Ward by constructing affordable housing. We will be serving in New Orleans the week of June 16th.

This experience is open to high school youth (those who are currently in grades 9-12). If you have questions or would like more information on next summer's week of service, please talk with Gretchen Hauge.



## First Monthly Meeting for Youth Mission Trip is December 3rd!

The first monthly meeting for the 2024 Youth Mission Trip will be Sunday, December 3rd at noon in Fellowship Hall. All youth planning on going on the trip should plan to attend.



(Above) The Pray Ground in the sanctuary has been a popular place for preschoolers to learn about worship, as well as to allow parents with young children to be part of worship. (Below) Preschoolers in Mrs. Steinbock's class took a walk to the food collection area to make donations of food pantry items, learning generosity at a tender age.



## Bulletin Board

### Thanks for the decorating work

Our thanks to **Pat & Jim Engelhardt** and **Mary Thomae** for their work in providing the Thanksgiving décor this year. It is always beautiful and appreciated.

### Upcoming Healing Prayer Opportunities:

**Sunday, December 10** after the 8:30 worship service  
**Sunday, January 21, 2024**, during the 11:00 service  
**Ash Wednesday, February 14**, after the morning & evening services  
**Maundy Thursday, March 28**, after the morning and evening services  
**Sunday, April 21, 2024**, in worship at 8:30 and 11:00 am  
 All those desiring private healing prayers for themselves or others are welcome to attend.

### First Fridays Book Group Discussion

We meet on the first Friday of each month for a discussion, beginning at 7:00 pm in the Upper Room at church. You can come just for the books you choose to read with us! You can find the whole list at church (look for the blue paper at the Welcome Center or across from the church office), or on our website.

- December 1** *American Dirt: A Novel*, by Jeanine Cummins, 386 pages
- January 5** *The Housekeeper and the Professor*, by Yoko Ogawa, 180 pgs.
- February 2** *Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI*, by David Grann, 338 pages.
- March 1** *Rules of Civility* by Amor Towles, 335 pages
- April 5** *Janesville: An American Story*, by Amy Goldstein, 351 pages.

### Notice of Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of St. Matthew's Congregation will be held on **Sunday, January 28, 2024 at 9:45 am**. The Annual report will be available one week prior to the meeting so that you have time to see it before the meeting. Please plan to attend and be updated on all that is happening with our congregation, as well as to vote on the budget for 2024.

### St. Matthew's Christmas Season Singers

*Come be a part of St. Matthew's Holiday Music tradition*

Join the singers of the Senior Choir, short term, for Christmas Eve worship! St. Matthew's Christmas Eve Service - December 24, 2023 at 7:30pm. Rehearsals are December 7, 14, 21 at 7:15. Questions? Contact: John Paradowski – JRPmuzik@yahoo.com or Alexa Doebele – treblemakr@gmail.com

## Our Church Family

**Kate Wilson** died on November 4. She joined St. Matthew's in 2007, and was an active participant in bible study and SAINTS. She served faithfully behind the scenes as a Communion Preparer and always arrived with a smile and willingness to help out. She will be very fondly remembered for her genuine curiosity, sense of humor and love for her dogs! In recent years she needed more assistance with getting to appointments and community errands. Thank you to all who provided assistance, especially Carl & Petey Lund and Don & Jill Schaeffer.



### Bad weather Sunday morning? WATCH OUR LIVE STREAM!

Winter can be a time of quickly changing weather conditions and Sunday mornings could be dicey for making it to church. Did you miss a church service that you didn't want to miss? Are you out of town for the weekend? Check out St. Matthew's Live Stream of Worship Services on Sunday mornings. Go to our website ([www.stmattslutheran.org](http://www.stmattslutheran.org)) and scroll down to the "Worship with Us" box; click on the "livestream" button and join us!

**St. Matthew's YouTube page** has many videos from previous worship services and adult education presentations. You can even watch last Sunday's worship services! Look for the St. Matt's Tosa YouTube page (<https://www.youtube.com/StMattsTosa>) and see what you missed!





# St. Matthew's

Ev. Lutheran Church ✝ ELCA

Wauwatosa, Wisconsin

[www.stmattslutheran.org](http://www.stmattslutheran.org)

## PERIODICALS RATE

Mail Carrier: Please deliver by December 2, 2023.

**The Voice of St. Matthew's**

*We are called to welcome, nurture, equip and send*

Next issue of the VOICE is dated January 7, 2024.



## GOD'S WORD IS OUR GREAT HERITAGE FOREVER



### REFORMATION SUNDAY - OCTOBER 29TH



The Senior Choir, under the direction of Alexa Doebele, sang at both services.



Dr. David Zersen led an adult faith formation presentation on Martin Luther, after whom the Lutheran church was named.



A brass ensemble and timpani accompanied the Reformation hymns. Members sharing their talents are Steve Winters, Jack Dankwardt, and Robert Hughes.

