

Welcome to St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

December 31, 2023



Welcome to worship as we continue to revel in the Christmas season. The Word of God became flesh and lives among us. We, in turn, gather to worship him.

Holy Communion: All are welcome to come forward at the time of communion to receive God's gift of grace. Gluten free wafers as well as juice are available for those with specific dietary needs. Juice is available as an alternative to wine, in

the center of each communion tray. Speak to an usher if you need assistance coming forward.

A Library Book and one of the poinsettias have been provided by Leslie & Pat Gardner in honor of their daughter Bridget's birthday.

A large-print bulletin is available from an usher. If it's helpful to you or someone you are worshiping with, please take one.

Sunday School Resumes January 7th

Sunday School for Pre K – 8th graders will resume on Sunday, January 7th after a two week break for Christmas. First through fifth graders will meet in Fellowship Hall for a Big Group.

THANK YOU for Giving Family Farms through ELCA Good Gifts this Advent and Christmas. A cow, a couple of goats, a dozen chickens, two pigs, farming tools, seeds and agricultural training can create a world of opportunity for a family living in poverty. Each farm costs \$715; we **had** a goal of FIVE farms, but have blasted that goal and received enough donations for MORE THAN TEN farms! See the display in the Upper Commons for details.

Next Sunday! Interim Lead Pastor Karen Natterstad is retiring.

Join us on January 7th for a celebration of thanks for her time with us. Pastor Karen has been such a gift to our congregation, council, staff and overall ministry in her two and one half years with us. We wish her well in retirement, as she and her husband plan to travel more, as well as spend more time with family.

What's next for pastoral leadership? Our Call Committee continues to work behind the scenes and hold interviews to find a new lead pastor to lead us. 2024 will be a year for new beginnings, again.



Bulletin Insert for Sunday, December 31, 2023

Bible Study Christmas Break: No Bible Study on December 27 or January 3.

2024 Church Offering Envelopes are available for pickup on the lower level, near the church office, outside the glass walled conference room.

Year-End Giving at St. Matthew's: Place offerings in the Sunday morning offering on Sunday, December 31, to have your donation applied to the 2023 giving year. You can also give online through the Giving page on our website. *Thank you* for your giving this year, and please help us to finish the year strong!



Women's Ministry is seeking volunteers needed to prepare/bring food for a meal for Sojourner shelter residents on Wednesday, January 10th. Sojourner provides an array of support to nearly 8,000 clients each year aimed at helping families affected by domestic violence achieve safety, justice and well-being. Please contact Sue Swing; sueswing@sbcglobal.net if you can provide food for the meal, assist with preparation or help with serving. There is also a sign up sheet at the Welcome Center.

Sunday Morning Women's Group meets next Sunday, January 7th in the Youth Room at 9:45.

Caregiver Discussion & Support Group meets the first Tuesday of the month. January's meeting on Tuesday, January 2nd is from 6:30-8:00 p.m. Our discussion topic will be Stress & Compassion Fatigue. All are welcome!

Sunday Morning Adult Faith Formation in January; 9:45 - 10:45 am

All are Welcome! Come when you can! Our Adult Faith Formation hour supports the faith growth of our church and on line 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.

January 7

Retirement reception for Pastor Karen Natterstad -- No Adult Ed.

January 14

Who Was Stephen?

This adult education session will focus on St. Stephen: Humble servant, Passionate Preacher, Martyr in Christ. The life and death of Stephen directs us to the meaning of the greatest commandments, "Love the Lord your God with all your might" and "Love your neighbor as yourself." St. Stephen became the model for Stephen Ministry, founded in 1975, and part of the mission of St. Matthew's since 2018. If you wish to familiarize yourself a bit ahead of time, read Acts 6:3-8:2. You are welcome to attend and join the discussion whether or not you have read this passage ahead of time! Pastor Ann and Ginny Cleppe

You've been Asking... here it is: NEW SMALL GROUP OPPORTUNITY!

Midweek Evening Adult Bible Study

Wednesdays 6pm-7pm Starting January 17, 2024

Blessed are the ~~cheesemakers~~ peacemakers! For inquiring and spiritual minds, adults of all ages, all genders, couples and singles. Take a pause during the busy week and join us for an hour of fellowship, growth and good humor as we journey through the Bible. We kick things off with the ~~Book of Leviticus~~ Gospel of John! What are the synoptic gospels and why isn't John one of them? Who is the Disciple Jesus Loved? What's up with foot washing? This is an ELCA study; all viewpoints are welcome. Bring ideas and join us for the conversation!

Men's and Women's Ministry January Dates:

Women's Ministry Group meets Sunday January 7 at 9:45 am – Join us and start your new year off right.

Women's Ministry prepares a meal for Sojourner Peace House on Wednesday January 10th. Help is needed; look for the sign-up sheet at the Welcome Center. See the announcement earlier in today's bulletin for details.

Women's Retreat planned March 8-10 at Cedar Valley Retreat Center. Hold the dates and watch for details.

Men's Ministry Beer Barons of St. Matthew's – Kickoff meeting on Thursday, January 18th at The Good City Brewpub at The Mayfair Collection from 8:00-10:00pm. The Beer Barons of St. Matthew's is a group of men who generally make good decisions, looking to break "liquid bread" with other men who are also blessed and broken. Drinking beer is not required, but feel free to join us! The goal here is to simply be men of the church meeting other men where they're at. Thursday, January 18th, we'll be at the Good City Brewpub at the Mayfair Collection on Burleigh St. from 8-10pm.

Men's Breakfast – Saturday, January 20 at 7:30 am with "The Bridge Builders Story" with Kurt Owens. Come hear this fascinating story, enjoy some good food and fellowship, and learn how you might wish to get involved with this ministry!

Monday Morning Men's Study meets each Monday morning from 6:30-7:30am. Join us.

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. Friends are welcome. Please sign up in advance through the church office or by replying to an email that you receive. Want to join the email list? Let us know at office@stmattslutheran.org

Saints Older Adults Ministry:

First Program of 2024 will take place on Wednesday, January 17, 11:30am

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. Sign up at the Welcome Center or call the church office and choose your lunch option.

Details on Ms. Hansen's presentation:

America's most famous architect, Frank Lloyd Wright, was born in 1867 in the rolling hills of Richland Center, Wisconsin, to a family of Unitarians. Even with world-class commissions like New York City's Guggenheim Museum, his organic architecture remains rooted in Wisconsin's landscape, from affordable-housing prototypes in Milwaukee to his summer home and architecture school in rural Spring Green. Bay View-based journalist Kristine Hansen authored a comprehensive guide for Globe Pequot Press about Wright's designs (and those of his protégés) that are open to the public—as well as insider historical information about sites now demolished, and those available for “drive-bys” only. Learn more about Wright's Milwaukee-area projects, including stories from site managers as well as those who are lucky enough to live in his homes, all of which are part of Hansen's book, which published in June of 2023.

Communion Class for 2nd Graders on January 21st --Learn about Holy Communion

Children of any age are welcome to receive communion at St. Matthew's - some receive it when they are toddlers, while others wait until they are older. Regardless of when children begin to take communion, each year we have a class and service for 2nd graders and their parents to talk about the significance of this sacrament. This year's class will happen on Sunday, January 21st from 9:45-10:45. (The class is also open to kids who might have missed it in previous years). We will celebrate the sacrament of communion with the 2nd graders at services throughout the spring.

Middle School Game Day, January 28th from Noon – 2:00

If you are a middle school student who misses playing Capture the Flag, this event is for you! Come to the Youth Room for pizza and stay to play Capture the Flag and other fun games. The event is open to all kids in 6th – 8th grade. Please bring \$5 for pizza.

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! Or come to all of them. You're sure to enjoy the discussion. See the website, under 'Adult Ministry' for the complete list.

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.

Upcoming Healing Services

Those desiring special healing prayers for themselves and/or other are invited to come forward, along with their support persons or family members.

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

Check out the Healing Prayer Pew card in the rack in front of you for more information on St. Matthew's Healing prayer ministry and how you can participate.

Women's Retreat at Cedar Valley Retreat Center is March 8-10. An informational flyer is at the Welcome Center, or, contact Sue Swing;sueswing@sbcglobal.net for more info.

Thank you to our Assistants for worship services today!

(It's possible some of these people have switched dates since the bulletin was printed on Thursday morning. "Open" means this spot was not filled when bulletin was printed.)

Lay Reader: Jan Johnson

Ushers: Steve Mielke, Mary Ann Gordon.

Lay Assistant: Marion Heinz

Communion Preparer: Ruth Mielke.

Worship Technology: Ed Bross.

YTD Financial Results as of:	12/25/23
General Fund Receipts	\$943,357
General Fund Budget (total monthly)	\$964,024
Over/(Under) Budget	(\$20,667)
 Benevolence Disbursements	 \$188,626
 Building Fund Balance	 \$173,475

Pastoral Staff: Karen Natterstad, Interim Lead;

Ann Williams, Associate Pastor

Volunteer Ministries/Small Groups/Adult Education: Sue Swing

Youth Ministries & Children's Education: Gretchen Haugse, Lynne Thomas

Children's Minister: Donna Gardner Manke.

Music Minister: John Paradowski.

Interim Senior Choir Director: Alexa Doebele.

Music Staff: Jeff Reeves, Amy Dankwardt, Heide Hughes

Technology Coordinator: Brian Smith.

Custodial Staff: Marsha Olson, Dave Fagerberg, Bob Gardner.

Church Administrator: Al Van Lith.

Office Staff: Bridget Smith, Sonja Mohr.



Link thru your smart
phone camera to give
to St. Matthew's