

St. Matthew Lutheran Church
1505 Dover Street, Worthington, MN
February 2021 Newsletter

PLEASE NOTE: When the Winter Weather is questionable, there are several ways for you to find out if our services or classes/activities have been cancelled:

- ✓ A post on our Facebook page will be the first thing we do.
- ✓ A "push notification" will be done on our church App.
- ✓ Log on to the local radio station's website (radioworks.net) and check their weather announcements.
- ✓ Tune into the local radio stations: 730AM and FM stations 93.5, 104.3 and 95.1; however, their verbal announcements are not updated as quickly as their website.



PLACES of the PASSION

This is the theme for our mid-week Lent Worship Services - Wednesdays 6:30 PM. In this worship series, we follow in the footsteps of Jesus, contemplating what happened at each place our Savior stood along the path of his Passion for our sake. Each service explores the meaning, history and spiritual inspiration associated with the location highlighted. We will learn things we may not have known before as we grow to understand more deeply the hard road our Lord took that the way to heaven might be open to us.

Ash Wednesday, February 17 – The City of Jerusalem
February 24 – Bethany
March 3 – The Mount of Olives
March 10 – Gethsemane
March 17 – The Courtyard
March 24 – Pilate's Judgment Hall

We will conclude the series during Holy Week:

Palm Sunday, March 28th – Bethphage
Maundy Thursday, April 1st – The Upper Room
Good Friday, April 2nd – Golgotha
Easter Sunday, April 4th – The Garden Tomb

Free Devotion Books, that go along with this series, will be available beginning February 7th at each entrance to the church.

MUSIC AND WORSHIP NEWS

“They sing to the tambourine and the lyre and rejoice to the sound of the pipe.” Job 21:12

St. Matthew is blessed to have a wonderful pipe organ for leading worship. Our Reuter organ was installed in 1960 and upgraded in 1993. It has served us well for over 60 years. When the organ was tuned in November, our tuner recommended an upgrade to the organ console. On Christmas Eve, we started to encounter some mechanical problems with the organ, which are ongoing. While it is still playable at this time, an upgrade is imminent, and St. Matthew’s would be wise to pursue this matter before we have no organ to play. Our church council has approved researching options for replacing the organ console. Some memorial money has already been designated for organ console replacement. We welcome donations from anyone interested in preserving this wonderful instrument, so that it can lead us in singing praises to our Lord and Savior for many years to come.

Lorenda Glade and Joy Schreiber, Directors of Music

CURRENT COVID-19 GUIDELINES FOR CHURCHES as of January 20, 2021

Worship Services

- Face masks/coverings required.
- Follow the 6-foot social distancing guideline.
- Limit of 150 people in the Sanctuary for services.
- Those feeling ill or showing symptoms should not attend.
- Sanitize pews and touched surfaces after each worship service.

Group Meetings:

- Must meet in a large room and follow capacity guidelines (50% of room capacity).
- Face masks/coverings required.
- Follow the 6-foot social distancing guideline.
- Limit of 10 people for groups/meetings.
- No food may be brought in or served.
- Those feeling ill or showing symptoms should not attend meetings/groups.
- After the meeting, sanitize all services that were touched before you leave.

Unfortunately, churches are one of the main places being watched by those in authority. Therefore, we must adhere to these guidelines so our main focus, our worship services, are not put in jeopardy of being shut down. **Please watch our church’s Facebook page and website for updates to the Covid-19 regulations.**

CHURCH RECORDS

Baptisms

- Ariah Rose Kallemeyn, daughter of Rose Kallemeyn was baptized January 17, 2021.

New Members

- Cory & Anne Greenway
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ALTAR GUILD

Serving in February will be: Sandie Spittle and Bonnie Schroeder at the 8 a.m. services and for Ash Wednesday, February 17. If you would like to be a part of the Altar Guild, please contact Velma Cortright 376-5600 or Sandy Meyer 376-6290.

DIRECTOR OF HUMAN CARE MINISTRIES/PARISH NURSE NEWS

I hope and pray all is going as well as possible. We have certainly seen, and you may have been a part of some stressful situations in our world today. As our mental health impacts a huge portion of our day-to-day life we cannot ignore how it may be negatively impacted at some point in our life. **I have included several resources in this newsletter relating to our mental health and support services and organizations. Also, here is a website for parents who have children that are distance-learning during COVID-19, www.khanacademy.org/khan-for-educators/resources/parents-mentors-1. As you read this information bear in mind there is much more information on these websites.** Please feel free to contact me with concerns or questions you may have about mental health. A verse I want to leave you with is, *"If you hold to my teaching you are really my disciples then you will know the truth and the truth will set you free."* John 8:31-32. With all the turmoil we can be certain Christ is with us, we can take comfort in this each and every day. Praise be to our Lord and Savior. Please contact me with concerns or questions you may have. If you would like a visit I would be happy to do that. You can reach me at 507-376-6168.

From our Human Care Ministry: We have some ground beef to be given away to families who have food needs. St. Matthews was blessed by 2 families who donated the beef. Thank you for your donation. Please contact Roxie at 376-6168.

We have scheduled our Human Care Support Groups to begin meeting again; however, we must follow the Covid-19 guidelines of 10 or less people, large rooms to social distance, face masks required, and no food served. Please watch our Facebook and Website for the most current information, as we are still in a fluid situation with the Covid-19 guidelines.

Parent Bereavement Group will meet on February 21st at 4:00 p.m. We will plan to meet in the basement Fellowship Hall. Please see the Covid-19 guidelines printed above.

The Widow's Group will meet on February 2nd at 5:15 p.m. in the basement Fellowship Hall and then out to eat following our devotion. Please watch our Facebook and Website for the latest updates. Please see the Covid-19 guidelines printed above.

Confirmation classes will be on February 3, 10, 17 and 24 from 5:30-6:30 p.m. Remember **Sunday school** is happening every Sunday in February. All our teachers, helpers, myself, and Pastor look forward to seeing you.

May the Lord Bless & Keep All of You,
Roxie Leckband

LWML (Lutheran Women's Missionary League) NEWS

The next LWML Meeting will be held on Thursday, February 4th at 1:30 p.m. in the basement Fellowship Hall. Please watch the Sunday bulletins and our Facebook page for updates. ***Please follow the Covid-19 guidelines of face masks required, 10 people or less, social distancing and no food served.***

Notes from the January 12, 2021 Council Meeting:

Treasurer's Report: December expenses were \$34,855.29 with an income of \$48,055.04. This left the General Fund Balance as of December 31, 2020 at \$94,504.41. Other account balances as of December 31, 2020 were: Memorial Fund \$51,395.61; Scholarship Fund \$707,486.63; Youth Account \$13,333.10. With the expectation of a money donation from the Vogt estate, Tammy will be looking at investment options. The organ expense must be considered as a new console ranges from \$40,000-\$60,000. At this point the kitchen countertops are being covered by donations. The soundproofing of the new area of the basement will also be an expense that ranges from \$4,000-\$8,000. The dishwasher is being checked out as it has not been used for a long time, this may also be an expense.

Staff Reports: *Pastor* – The Christmas services went well, attendance was good. Average weekend attendance in church is 134 with about 100 views a week on our YouTube. The average mid-week Advent worship attendance was 66. Giving has remained solid which is an indicator that people are still engaged with the church community. *Roxie* – Human Care primarily helped 2 families this holiday season. St. Matthews provided a three-night hotel stay for a woman prior to her leaving for treatment. This gave her a safe place to stay, referral for domestic had previously been given. The facility reported she made it safely. We donated a variety of winter gear to Prairie Elementary. Support via phone and visits have been made to our members who have recently lost loved ones. Routine home visits with communion are being offered along with bringing out the tablets with worship services on them. Some of the local living facilities have different protocols and we are working with them to support our members. *Jenna* – Five college students attended the high school Sunday school on December 13 and answered questions about their college experiences, how they are bringing their faith with them into college, experiences with talking to people with other religions and beliefs, etc. High School youth are going through a new Wednesday night study called, "Faith in an Anxious World." The curriculum is about anxiety, stress, and how Christians can bring faith during these difficult times. The youth will be going through the book of James for Sunday School. Jenna has been sending out weekly devotions, scripture, and encouraging thoughts to the students and a weekly email with updates to parents. Adult mentors were matched with high school students in December. A lady in our community donated 24 handmade quilts to be used for a youth silent auction for upcoming mission trips. This silent auction will take place until January 24th, winners will be contacted on January 25. Thank you for your continued support of our youth! Jenna will be working from home January 25-February 4 and out of the office February 5 through the end of March. Valerie Wolford will be the main youth volunteer during this time. Please keep Jenna's family in your prayers as they travel to Thailand to bring their daughter home! *Music* – The Sunday School children did a wonderful job with their Christmas songs. Thank you to all who helped with recording the Sunday School children and those who helped with the Christmas services.

Elders: We are looking for someone, or a group of people, to spearhead the Christmas decorating for future years. Shepherding letters will be sent out in the spring.

Trustees: Lowered the front 2 lights on west side of sanctuary. Moved the cross to its new location behind the pulpit, as the congregation voted on. Did general maintenance of lights in Great Hall and other items.

Ministry Planning Board: Weekly bulletins are being added to our church website each week. The year-round gift card drive will be used as an outreach to church and community. We are working with the youth board to see about grocery cards being purchased from the youth.

The next Administrative Council Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 9 at 5:30 p.m. with the Ministry Planning Group joining the meeting at 6:00 p.m.



Reminder –please pick up your 2021 Offering Envelopes. They are on the table in the Great Hall. Even if you do “automatic giving”, please pick up your box of envelopes. **The box includes “Special Giving Opportunities” throughout the year! Thank You!** Call Bev in the church office if you would like to pick up your box during the week or if you would like someone to DELIVER your box to you.

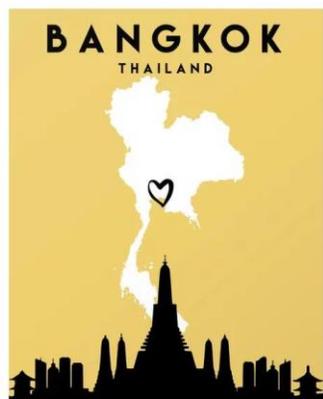
MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

Altar Flowers – if you would like to provide flowers for the altar on a specific Sunday please sign up on the flower calendar that is posted on the north/elevator entrance bulletin board. **Please sign up at least two weeks in advance.** You are responsible for ordering your bouquet(s) or bringing in your bouquets. If Hy-Vee delivers them, they must be delivered by noon on Friday. If you would like your altar flowers listed in the Sunday bulletin, please contact Bev in the church office 2 weeks before the date. Thank you for helping to beautify our altar area.

February 2021 Acolyte Schedule

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| February 7 | (8 AM) *to be announced* | (10:30) Ryker Thier |
| February 14 | (8 AM) Camren Luther | (10:30) Alexa Kilker |
| Ash Wednesday, February 17 (6:30pm) – Maelie Holt | | |
| February 21 | (8 AM) Emily Lowe | (10:30) TJ Ostrem |
| February 28 | (8 AM) Isaiah Schroeder | (10:30) Alexander Reum |
| March 7 | (8 AM) Logan DeVries | (10:30) Morgan Ross |

** Please be sure to mark your calendars. If you cannot fulfill your scheduled date, please find a replacement, and call the church office with the change. **Also, please arrive 15 minutes before service begins.** Thank You.*



BENTS FAMILY ADOPTION UPDATE

Thank you for all the continued prayers, support, and encouragement for our family during our adoption process. We were originally expecting to bring our daughter home at the end of this last summer, but COVID significantly delayed and slowed things down as Thailand’s borders were closed for many months. Now we FINALLY have exciting news to share with our family congregation...we will be flying out the beginning of February to Thailand to bring our daughter home. Because of quarantine requirements, our family will be gone an entire month, so we appreciate the prayers for safe travels, negative COVID tests, all the logistics to be figured out, and safety while there. Please

also pray for our daughter and her foster family in the transition and adjustment as she joins our family. We cannot wait for her to meet our loving church congregation!

In Christ,
Andrew and Jenna Bents

YPOG NEWS

Middle & High School Youth

Verse of the Month: *“All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble. Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.” 1 Peter 5:5-7*

Calendar of Events:

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|---------|---|
| Feb. 3 | Confirmation 5:30 PM; Youth Group 5:30-7:00 PM |
| Feb. 7 | Worship & Sunday School 9:15 AM |
| Feb 10 | Confirmation 5:30 PM; Youth Group 5:30-7:00 PM |
| Feb. 14 | Worship & Sunday School 9:15 AM |
| Feb. 17 | Confirmation 5:30 PM; Youth Group 5:30-6:30 PM; Ash Wednesday Worship at 6:30 p.m. |
| Feb. 21 | Worship & Sunday School 9:15 AM |
| Feb. 24 | Confirmation 5:30 PM; Youth Group 5:30-6:30 PM; Lent worship 6:30 PM |
| Feb. 28 | Worship & Sunday School 9:15 AM |
| Feb. 28 | H.S. senior night at Pastor Mark & Joy Schreiber’s house 5:30-7:30 PM |

Pre-Confirmation Hang-Time: There is **NO pre-confirmation hang-time at 4:30 PM** on Wednesdays anymore. Also, NO Jr. High Prayer & Play night in February.

Sunday School: High School students are going through the book of James on Sunday mornings 9:15-10:15 AM in the youth room. Please encourage your kids to come be a part of this study!

H.S. Youth Group: We meet Wednesday nights 5:30-7:00 PM in the church basement Fellowship Hall. Masks are required. We are going through an 8-week discussion on “Faith in an Anxious World” by Kara Powell. This discussion is geared toward teenage anxiety and how to bring our faith with us in this anxious world we live in today. Youth group will be from 5:30-6:30PM on February 17 & 24 due to Ash Wednesday & Lent worship services.

Crossroads Retreat: As of right now, we are still planning to have this overnight retreat for 8th-12th grade students **Friday, April 30th-Saturday, May 1st** at Shetek Camp. We will leave Friday 5:00 PM and be back by 4:00 PM on Saturday. This retreat is to welcome 8th grade students into the youth group and to send off our seniors as they embark on their next chapter in life. Mark these dates on your calendar!

Out of the office: Jenna will be out of the office the months of February and March. She will have limited access to email and text messaging during that time. Please contact Roxie Leckband or Bev Spittle for immediate assistance and questions.

NOTES FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE:

Bulletins on Website: For those of you that watch our worship services on our YouTube channel, our Sunday Worship Bulletins are available on our church website. They can be found under the "News and Info" tab - then click on "Bulletins & Weekly Scripture." The bulletins are usually posted by Friday afternoons.

Special Voters Meeting has been called for February 7th at 11:30 a.m. in the church Sanctuary. This meeting is being called to act on a couple congregational items: 1) St. Matthew's participation in a Floating Circuit Pastor; 2) Voting on delaying the District Convention. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend this meeting.

Unshakable Hope books still available. Do you know someone who could use some encouragement in their life? Why not gift them the Unshakable Hope book by Max Lucado? Stop into the church office during the week to make your purchase. They are only \$10 each! Study guides are also available for \$8 each.

Church Website – www.stmatthewworthington.com

Our Church App – go to your favorite App Store and search for "St. Matthews Worthington MN" it will be a white Missouri-Synod Cross on a red background, click "Install", and say "Yes" to allow for push notifications.

Our Facebook Page – search for "St. Matthew Lutheran Church Worthington MN" You will see a picture of the front of our church. Click "Like" and turn on notifications for this page.

RightNow Media – If you are not yet using this wonderful resource, contact Bev in the church office to receive an email invitation from the church. The church pays a monthly subscription for this wonderful site and use it regularly for Bible studies and etc.