

St. Matthew Lutheran Church

1505 Dover Street, Worthington, MN

January 2021



On January 17th we will begin a NEW 6-week campaign, **The Miracle of Mercy**. Did you know that mercy is God's number one characteristic in the Bible? The world portrays God as a God of anger and judgment. But God shows himself first and foremost as a God of mercy. If mercy is God's number one characteristic that he reveals to us in the Bible – if that is the most important thing he wants us to know about him – then it must be the most important thing for us to learn about him. And it must also be the most important character trait that God wants to develop in us. *Jesus said, "Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy." Matthew 5:7*

The six sessions will include:

- 1) The Five Marks of Mercy
- 2) Mercy Forgives the Fallen
- 3) Mercy Helps the Hurting
- 4) Mercy is Patient with Difficult People
- 5) Mercy is Kind to Enemies
- 6) Mercy Cares for the Lost

Just like our Unshakable Hope campaign – **this will be a church-wide campaign**. Meaning our Sunday worship services will use this theme, Adult Bible Studies and our Sunday School classes. Participants will only need a study guide. The study guide will include 40 daily devotions for your personal quiet time with God. **The study guides have been ordered. If you have not already signed-up, please CONTACT US IMMEDIATELY if you would like to participate so we can ensure that we will have enough study guides.** Any questions, please contact the church office.



CHURCH RECORDS

Baptisms

- Aspen Ivy Slinger & Violet Rain Slinger, daughters of Erika Anderson were baptized on December 3.
- Kashton David Cross, son of David & Alexie Cross was baptized on December 25.

Deaths

- Steve Rubis passed away December 17. A private family service was held December 21. A Celebration of Life will be held at a later date.
- Heather Kleve passed away December 17. Funeral service was held December 23.
- Rose Kallemeyn passed away December 22. Funeral service was held December 28.

ALTAR GUILD NEWS

Serving in January will be: Velma Cortright & Donna Welnetz for the 8AM worship services. If you would like to be a part of the Altar Guild, please contact Velma Cortright, 376-5600 or Sandy Meyer, 376-6290.

PLEASE TAKE 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.
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ELECTRONIC GIVING AVAILABLE – This is a convenient, consistent way to help our church grow! It is convenient for you and provides much-needed donation consistency for our church. To set up electronic donations, simply complete the authorization form available at each entrance to the church and return it to the church office. You may also fill out the form online on our church website (stmatthewworthington.com), click on the "Give" tab at the top of the Home page. Our church app also gives you opportunity to make electronic donations. Download our app from your favorite App Store, search for St. Matthew Worthington MN. The app is a white cross with a red background.

2020 Giving Statements will be ready for pickup by January 20th – watch the weekly bulletins for updated information. Any statements not picked up by January 20th will be put in the mail to you.

The **2021 Offering Envelopes** are available in the Great Hall. **Please pick up your box, even if you give electronically**, the boxes provide "special giving opportunities" throughout the year. The door is open during the week if you would like to stop then to get your envelopes. **No-Contact Delivery is also an option, please contact the church office. We can also deliver a Portals of Prayer devotion book with your envelopes!**

MUSIC AND WORSHIP NEWS

"Songs of thankfulness and praise, Jesus, Lord, to Thee we raise" LSB 394 verses 1 - These words begin the Epiphany section of our hymnal. As we have offered our thanks and praise to our Lord and Savior during this Advent and Christmas season, and now during Epiphany, we also want to say "thank you" to the many people who have shared their talents during our worship services. COVID-19, of course, impacted the scope of music we have been able to incorporate into our services during 2020. Our choirs have not been able to rehearse and provide music, but we have been blessed with many soloists and small groups willing to share their talents. To all these individuals, our worship band members, and tech crew, we thank you.

Praying God's abundant blessings to all of you in 2021,
Lorenda Glade and Joy Schreiber, Directors of Music

DIRECTOR OF HUMAN CARE MINISTRY/PARISH NURSE
Roxann Leckband

Happy New Year! Another year is on its way. I am sure you have heard, and may have even thought about this yourself, “Yes, 2020 is over.” Well, we look forward to 2021 with hope. *“Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.” Hebrews 11:1*
We can have that hope in Jesus our Lord in the good times and the bad. I know there are many struggles as our world has been turned upside down, Please do not hesitate to give me a call if you need to talk or if you have concerns about someone else, 507-376-6168.

Attention Parents and Guardians:

- Sunday School classes resume on January 10th. We will use The Miracle of Mercy material for our pre-school through 8th grades.
- Confirmation classes resume on January 6th from 5:30-6:30. There will be Confirmation on January 6th, 13th, 20th, and 27th from 5:30-6:30 p.m.
- REMINDER: In case of inclement weather please check our Facebook page, website, and local radio stations.
- Please check the acolyte schedule in order that your child is available on his or her scheduled date and time.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions there will be NO Widows Group or Parent Bereavement Group in January.

ALTAR FLOWERS

Thank you for providing bouquets for our Altar area. **If you would like to provide a bouquet(s) to beautify our altar area, you may contact HyVee individually to order your bouquet and arrange for delivery or pick-up.** *If being delivered by Hy-Vee, they MUST deliver by 12 noon on Fridays to ensure the church will be unlocked for delivery.* You may also provide flowers from your own garden.

At this time, we have the **Flower Calendar on the north/elevator entrance bulletin board** to regulate the number of bouquets provided weekly. Therefore, please continue to sign-up. If you would like your Altar flowers listed in the bulletin that information MUST be into the church office 2 weeks before the date you are providing the flowers. If you have any questions, please contact the church office. Thank you for continuing to provide bouquets for our Altar area.

THANK YOU NOTES

*To my dear church family at St. Matthews,
I wish to thank all the members and church groups at St. Matthews that sent me Christmas greetings.
What a nice surprise! It was very much appreciated.*

Bill Henderson

The family of Lani Grantz wishes to express our thanks to St. Matthew Lutheran Church's congregation for the endless prayers and constant support over the years of our family's journey through seeing our loved one suffer. We especially thank The Health Care Ministry for their support and communication and want to thank Pastor Mark for his insight, spiritual guidance, and demonstration of Faith. God's blessing to all our church family!

The Family of Lani Grantz

LWML NEWS

Happy New Year! Where did 2020 go? Here is praying for a safe 2021.

LWML does not meet in January. However, we have been saving for new countertops in our kitchen! The passthrough countertop will be replaced! The work will be done around January 11th. Next, we plan to complete the rest of the kitchen counters. This will be done hopefully in February or March. We have the funding! Thanks be to God for a couple of generous donations!

Our mite box is still ready and waiting for any extra coins you may wish to donate. Extra Mite boxes are available for you to take home if you wish. Thank you to all who choose to help with this ministry.

NOTES FROM THE DECEMBER 8, 2020 COUNCIL MEETING:

Treasurer Report: November expenses were \$33,795.90 and income was \$41,951.94. The General Fund balance as of 11/20/2020 was \$81,229.66. Other balances as of 11/30/2020 were: Memorial Fund \$49,473.51; Scholarship Fund \$690,797.55; Youth Account \$15,610.48. The PPE Loan of \$66,175 was completely forgiven. The CARES Grant awarded the church \$2,500.

Staff Reports: *Pastor Mark:* Average weekend attendance for November = 125. Thanksgiving Eve attendance = 78. YouTube “Views”: Nov. 1 = 91 for 8am and 49 for 10:30am; Nov. 8 = 97 for 8am and 58 for 10:30am; Nov. 15 = 67 for 8am and 71 for 10:30am; Nov. 22 = 68 for 8am and 50 for 10:30am; Nov. 25 = 73 for the 6:30pm service; Nov. 29 = 61 for 8am and 44 for 10:30am. St. Matthew’s was awarded the “Best of Worship 2020” by the Daily Globe. *Roxie:* Have done a few communion visits using extra precautions. Assisting families with independent living changes. Sunday school numbers have declined since the beginning of the fall. *Jenna:* Youth group put together 29 Operation Christmas Child boxes filled with items purchased with a Thrivent Action Grant and donations. Working on matching adult mentors with our youth. Students sold Butter braids as a fundraiser. Youth will be making Christmas cards for residents in nursing homes etc. The new church website is up and running – go check it out! We are looking to do some outside youth events. Jenna is six months done with her Concordia internship. There were numerous, beautiful, and wonderfully handmade quilts donated to our youth group to be used for a fundraising event. We will be doing a silent auction in January. *Lorenda & Joy:* Philip Lorch played trombone for several hymns on Thanksgiving Eve. Thanks to him for sharing his talents. The Sunday School children will pre-record several songs on Saturday, December 19 and played during the 8am and 10:30am worship services on December 20. Masks have been ordered for the students. Joy and Lorenda will start exploring organ console options after the first of the year.

Elders: There is a beginning discussion with the Worthington Circuit for a floating pastor. This person would work with three area churches in the capacity of hospital visits, funerals, and services. There is a meeting in January with interested churches to discuss this position. Shepherding groups continue to be discussed.

Trustees: Nativity was set up outside. Dumpster fence repaired. Snow blower serviced. The lights will be fixed in the front and back at the same time the cross is moved.

Board of Education: There will be no Sunday School on December 27 and January 3. The new Sunday School lessons will follow The Miracle of Mercy campaign to coincide with the Adult Bible class. Vacation Bible School is scheduled for June 13-18 providing everything is possible due to Covid-19.

Ministry Planning Board: The Tablet Ministry will be operating in full after Christmas. A plan to deliver envelopes and Portals of Prayer to people who are not coming to church is being explored. A Caring Tree is going to be put up and left up through the winter. Love INC will be contacted to determine needs along with input from Pastor and Roxie. This would be a good way to support families. The information will be posted on Facebook and the church app. Roxie will be the contact person. To make the service more interactive, a person to run the chat feature during a service is being researched.

Notes from the December 8 Council Meeting continued:

New Business: The finance committee was asked to count and deposit the money weekly vs. biweekly. The LWML would like assistance with funding for new countertops, sink and faucet in the kitchen. As the kitchen is not being used at this time, this renovation would be appropriate. The Council will be looking for numbers and will designate money up to \$3,000 to help pay for this. The number depends on donations and a fund which the LWML has access. The next Council Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 12 at 5:30 p.m.



Worship Service Helpers for January 2021

ACOLYTES

Jan. 3	(8 AM) Isaac Lowe	(10:30) Tethlouch Gach
Jan. 10	(8 AM) Mersaydes Marten	(10:30) Natya Khamphanh
Jan. 17	(8 AM) Tavin Miller	(10:30) Anna Gordon
Jan. 24	(8 AM) Jordis Weber	(10:30) *to be announced*
Jan. 31	(8 AM) Faith Leinen	(10:30) Madison Sieve
Feb. 7	(8 AM) Kyle Vongsy	(10:30) Ryker Thier

** Please arrive 15 minutes before service starts. Also, 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.** 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 shar 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: *Romans 15:13* "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

Calendar of Events:

Jan. 3	NO SUNDAY SCHOOL
Jan. 6	Confirmation 5:30 PM; Youth Group 5:30-7:00 PM
Jan. 10	Worship & Sunday School 9:15 AM
Jan. 13	Confirmation 5:30 PM; Youth Group 5:30-7:00 PM
Jan. 13	Youth Board meeting via ZOOM 7:00 PM
Jan. 17	Worship & Sunday School 9:15 AM
Jan. 17	HS Senior Night via ZOOM 7-8 PM
Jan. 20	Confirmation 5:30 PM; Youth Group 5:30-7:00 PM
Jan. 24	Worship & Sunday School 9:15 AM
Jan. 25	Parent & Youth Idaho mission trip ZOOM MEETING 7:00 PM
Jan. 27	Confirmation 5:30 PM; Youth Group 5:30-7:00 PM
Jan. 31	Worship & Sunday School 9:15 AM

8th-12th grade Parent Idaho Mission Trip Meeting: There will be a short, yet informative meeting on **Monday, January 25th 7:00 PM via ZOOM.** Jenna will send out the meeting link and information one week in advance. This meeting is for parents and any youth going on this summer's mission trip to Idaho July 17-24 and will include updated information and changes being implemented to ensure the safety of all teams going. Please let Jenna know if you CAN'T attend!

Pre-Confirmation Hang-Time: Starting in January, there will **NO longer be pre-confirmation hang-time at 4:30 PM** on Wednesdays. **NO Jr. High Prayer & Play night in January.**

Quilt Fundraiser: Quilts were donated to be used for a silent auction for our H.S. youth group. These quilts will be displayed in the Great Hall starting Sunday, January 3rd. The silent auction will end on Sunday, January 24th. Winners will be contacted and can pick up the week of the 24th.

Fellowship Events: We are still looking to offer some fun fellowship events for our Jr. High and High School students during this pandemic. Events may be planned last minute depending on weather and what facilities are open. We are possibly looking to do some outdoor events like sledding, ice skating, and broomball. Jenna will keep parents and students up to date as an event is scheduled.

H.S. Senior Night: High School senior night will be held on **January 17th from 7-8 PM via ZOOM.** The next two senior nights, on February 28 and March 28, will be in person at different locations.

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 for immediate assistance and questions.