



St. Matthew
Evangelical Lutheran Church

THE ACTS...of God's People

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~March 2020~



*The fact that we die is the most important fact about us. --
Todd May, Death*

The trees are barren, the grass brown, the sky dim and dreary. Chill winds blow about and the detritus of winter is piled against the curb. Dry dead leaves flutter across the ground. The air is mild in comparison to recent winter days, but the sun is dim, feeble, ineffectual.

It is great irony that a church season named after the Latin word for Spring comes during the bleakest, gloomiest month of the year. But it is, after all, a season about death.

In Biblical times, sorrow and mourning were demonstrated by heaping ashes on the head. On Ash Wednesday we smear ashes on our forehead as a reminder of our roots and our mortality. We were formed from the dust of the earth, and there we will return at the end of our appointed days. Surely that is bad news.

Or is it good?

The gospel is fixated with death. When Jesus speaks of the future he portrays suffering and destruction, a tearing down of the temple stone by stone, of wars and earthquakes and famines. Of woman weeping and wailing, of persecution and betrayal and sacrilege. Of endings. Of death. The New Testament ends with images of vast violence and suffering.

And, of course, the fulfillment of Jesus' incarnation is death. Dying on the cross is his supreme work, his surrender both to the will of his (and our) Father and the necessary culmination of his mission. He came to die for us, we say, not realizing that this is our own end. For as Jesus goes, so too we must follow. We are called to take up our own cross and surrender to the truth that never-ending self-achievement is not why we are here. The will of the Father is our end, and the complete capitulation to death is its path.

Maybe that's why we invented Lent.

Lent is a season to reflect on the hold that death has over us, to confront the reality of death and our persistent fear of it. To look death in the eye and laugh. Yes, we will not keep this life forever. We practice religion

~ Continued On Next Page

Pastor continued



as a tool to help us escape death, but faith tells us that the gift of grace is truth. The truth that this life, this world, will end. The truth that we will end.

As it should be so. In sin we cling to this corrupt and dying world, to our broken and feeble selves. With fear and trembling we hide from death, we prolong the quantity of life with no regard to its quality. To what end? What of this corrupt and tragic life is worthy of eternity? Nothing! How surprising then, that God should choose to be a part of this life, this world, this us. How surprising that his Spirit should live in this place, and that salvation should come in this time, and not merely in the next.

Salvation is the promise that this is not all of us, that death is not the end of us. Salvation is not merely the promise of life after death, it is the hope of life before it. Salvation is what comes when we see death for what it is, and in turn, see life for what it can be.

This is the great gift of death, it has power to refocus our attention and give life meaning. To give this life meaning and urgency. Our effort to avoid death averts our gaze from the path before us and the important work at hand. We are, in fact, alive now. Knowing the end sharpens our vision of the present. When we stop wondering what will happen next, we are free to attend to what is happening now.

And that is how we laugh at death.

Death has power over us because we let it, because we obsess about it and – mostly! – because we are afraid of it. Why should we be afraid of the one most common experience of humanity? Everything we do embraces death, gives death power over us. We are surely and truly dead. But everything that denies death, every act and word that embraces love and hope in the face of our mortality spits in death's eye. Every good work and kind act defies the power of death over us and our world.

And wouldn't you rather live?

This Lent, let us think and pray and worship and act in ways that mock death and free us from its hold. This Lent, let us who are dying live.

Pastor Glen



Lent 2020: I will be afraid no more

What is the purpose of our worship gatherings, except to confess our fear of death and be filled with the Spirit of Life? This Lent, we will ponder our mortality with honesty and courage, and knowing the truth of both life and death, we will choose life.

February 26th - Ash Wednesday

We place ashes on our forehead as a reminder that we are mortal, but as we do so, we mock the power of death to control us and shape our destiny. Somewhere in between our creation from dust and our return to it, is a life that we can and must live.

March 1st

We battle against the Devil's temptations daily, and not always successfully. We know that Christ joins in our struggle to throw off the Devil's lies. In baptism we are empowered to be more than we seem to be. Feeble dying creatures that we are, the Spirit encourages us in our struggle.

March 8th

Our fear of death persuades us to seek security and comfort and to avoid risk. God calls us to journey to places unknown and to trust in a Spirit that we cannot control. Faith opens us up to the possibilities of life that comes from following where we are led and going where we are called.

March 15th

We construct walls to protect us from the truth. We invent stories and identities to hide behind, to deflect hard questions and keep us safe. Or at least we think so. Jesus exposes the truth of us and invites us to a life filled with mission and hope.

March 22nd

Our need for control blinds to the possibilities of grace. We say we desire a God of miracles, but do not stop to consider the awesome possibilities of what an all-powerful God might actually do. Jesus comes to open our eyes to see what truly is, not to validate our human preconceptions.

March 29th

Overwhelmed by this dying world, we sometimes find ourselves entombed in misery and despair. It is hard to see past our grief and pain. God breathes life into our dying bones and Jesus calls us forth from the tomb into the light of day.

Lent 2020 (cont.)



April 5th – Palm Sunday

Jesus bring in the future as he rides into Jerusalem. His presence is a threat to the established powers of the world and to the established powers of us. The path toward the triumph of the Kingdom of God leads to the cross, and we must follow.

April 9th – Maundy Thursday

As we join with Jesus in his last supper, he challenges us to a deep and intimate relationship. He washes our feet, he gives us his own body and blood to eat and drink. Our reticence must be swept away so that we can enter into a deeper relationship with our Savior.

April 10th – Good Friday

We follow Christ in our own version of the Walk of Sorrows to face our own death and give ourselves fully to God.

April 12th – Easter Sunday

Traditional Festival Worship with Holy Communion at 8:30 am, featuring the Festival Choir and JuBELLation Bell Choir
Boundless Joy Worship with Holy Communion at 10:30 am, featuring the St. Matthew Praise Team.

Easter Egg Hunt



ON Easter Sunday we will be searching for Easter Eggs between services. Come and join the fun!

Candy donations are also requested to fill the eggs.

WELCA Lenten Project



WELCA (Women of the ELCA) welcomes you to donate any unneeded eyeglasses, sunglasses, accessories or hearing aids during the Lenten season. Box located in the narthex.

Lenten season:
February 28-April 12, 2020

Food Pantry



Just when you think the world is going down, down, down, a simple act of kindness brings us back to seeing the work of Jesus out amongst us.. One of our members, Lucy Younie was the recipient of one of those acts of kindness.

While getting out of her car at the Hy-Vee grocery store, she was approached by a woman. Lucy was a little reluctant to talk to this stranger, but the woman persisted in getting Lucy's attention. She handed Lucy an envelope and told her to have a nice day. When Lucy got in to the store, she opened the envelope and found a \$100 gift card to Hy-Vee! Not sure if this was a legitimate card, Lucy went up to the customer service desk and inquired. Lucy was told that the woman she described had just purchased some gift cards all in the amount of \$100. They told her this is a common occurrence with this customer. They said she likes to distribute them randomly to people she meets in the parking lot. When Lucy got home she showed the gift card to her husband. They discussed what they should do with it and agreeing that they didn't need the money, her husband suggested that they use the gift card to purchase food for the pantry! Thanks to Lucy and this generous woman our pantry shelves are a little fuller! Lucy told me this story and asked what we needed. Jen Schell gave Lucy a list of items and off to the store Lucy went.

On behalf of the pantry committee, we would like to thank Lucy and her husband for sharing this wonderful act of kindness with St. Matthew. Our guests will be delighted!

Thinking ahead, Easter is coming and we will once again be hoping to provide a nice dinner and Easter baskets for our guests. Donations of Easter candy, grass, egg dying kits and Easter baskets are welcome anytime now through Easter. Be on the lookout for food items we may need to make up the dinner baskets.

Food items needed for this month are: bottled juice, Kleenex, boxed potatoes, pasta, pancake mix.

As always, we thank you for your generous support of the pantry. Your contributions matter. Our guests appreciate you as do we.

~Sue Ties

Lent Mid-Week Dinner



In her first report to the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in 2013, Bishop Elizabeth Eaton said, “We are church for the sake of the world. We weren’t redeemed to just think good thoughts of Jesus Christ. We’re supposed to be out there, helping to bring about the abundant life.”

The existence of the church of Jesus Christ is not an accident of history, it is the instrument of God’s purposes – for his children whom he has called and for the entirety of creation. Our work is not simply a lifestyle choice. It is necessary for the well-being of all of our neighbors. We are the key to the Kingdom of God. The world depends on us. Will we answer the call?

We will gather each **Wednesday at 5:30 pm** from March 4th through April 1st for a light dinner of soup and bread. During dinner, share a conversation about the renewal of the mission of faith and church. At **6:00 pm** we will share time of Word and devotion as we ponder the spiritual possibilities of life. Choir practices will follow beginning at 6:30 pm.

You can help with the dinners! We need people to help set-up and clean-up, as well as volunteers to bring cookies or bars. The sign-up sheet is in the narthex.

Children & Youth Ministry



~Confirmation!~

Confirmation Retreat– Saturday, March 14th @ St. Matthew

~Sunday School~

Sunday mornings from 9:40 - 10:20 a.m.

~Children and their families are invited!~

On Easter Sunday we will be searching for Easter Eggs between services. Come and join the fun!

Like and Share our St Matthew Facebook page! You will find updates and news throughout the month!

Calendar of Events @ St. Matthew

MARCH

~SUNDAY, MARCH 1~ WORSHIP WITH HOLY COMMUNION

8:30 AM AND 10:30 AM

9:30 am Coffee & Fellowship

9:40 am Sunday School



MONDAY, MARCH 2

Monday Morning Men

9:00 am - 2:00 pm Tanzanian Treasures

TUESDAY, MARCH 3

9:00 am - 2:00 pm Sewing For Babies

6:00 pm Worship Ministry Team Mtg

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4

5:30 pm Meal Served

6:00 pm Worship Services

6:30 pm Festival Choir

7:30 pm Praise Team &

JuBELLation Ringers

THURSDAY, MARCH 5

1:30 pm Adult Study

FRIDAY, MARCH 6

SATURDAY, MARCH 7

~SUNDAY, MARCH 8~ WORSHIP WITH HOLY COMMUNION

8:30 AM AND 10:30 AM

9:30 am Coffee & Fellowship

9:40 am Sunday School

11:30 am Chili & Soup Cook-off



MONDAY, MARCH 9

Monday Morning Men

9:00 am - 2:00 pm Tanzanian Treasures

TUESDAY, MARCH 10

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11

5:30 pm Meal Served

6:00 pm Worship Services

6:30 pm Festival Choir

7:30 pm Praise Team &

JuBELLation Ringers

THURSDAY, MARCH 12

1:30 pm Adult Study

FRIDAY, MARCH 13

SATURDAY, MARCH 14

8:30 am Jochebed Circle

10:00 am Confirmation Retreat

~SUNDAY, MARCH 15~ WORSHIP WITH HOLY COMMUNION

8:30 AM AND 10:30 AM

9:30 am Coffee & Fellowship

9:40 am Sunday School



MONDAY, MARCH 16

ACTS Newsletter Articles

Due in the Office Today

Monday Morning Men

9:00 am - 2:00 pm Tanzanian Treasures

7:00 pm Council Meeting

🌿Calendar of Events @ St. Matthew🌿



TUESDAY, MARCH 17

9:00 am - 2:00 pm Sewing For Babies

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18

5:30 pm Meal Served
6:00 pm Worship Services
6:30 pm Festival Choir
7:30 pm Praise Team &
JuBELLation Ringers

THURSDAY, MARCH 19

9:00 am - 2:00 pm Sewing For Babies
1:30 pm Adult Study

FRIDAY, MARCH 20

SATURDAY, MARCH 21

10:00 am Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry

~SUNDAY, MARCH 22~

**WORSHIP WITH HOLY
COMMUNION
8:30 AM AND 10:30 AM**

9:30 am Coffee & Fellowship
9:40 am Sunday School



MONDAY, MARCH 23

Monday Morning Men
9:00 am - 2:00 pm Tanzanian Treasures

TUESDAY, MARCH 24

7:00 pm Phoebe Circle

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25

5:30 pm Meal Served
6:00 pm Worship Services
6:30 pm Festival Choir
7:30 pm Praise Team &
JuBELLation Ringers

THURSDAY, MARCH 26

1:30 pm Adult Study

FRIDAY, MARCH 27

9:00 am Funtastic Fibers

SATURDAY, MARCH 28

9:30 am Deborah Circle
10:00 am Jazz Rehearsal

~SUNDAY, MARCH 29~

**WORSHIP WITH HOLY
COMMUNION
8:30 AM AND 10:30 AM**

9:30 am Coffee & Fellowship
9:40 am Sunday School



MONDAY, MARCH 30

Monday Morning Men
9:00 am - 2:00 pm Tanzanian Treasures

TUESDAY, MARCH 31



Easter Sunday

SUNDAY, APRIL 12TH



8:30 am Traditional Worship Service
featuring Festival Choir and
JuBELLation Bell Choir
with Holy Communion

10:30 am Joyful Noise Worship
Featuring the Praise Team
With Holy Communion

Brunch Served in the Fellowship Hall from 9:00 - 10:00 a.m.
Easter Egg Hunt for small children at 9:45 am (gather in the Narthex)

Lutheran Women of Omaha



Lutheran Women of Omaha will meet at Luther Memorial
Lutheran Church (6099 Western Ave) on Tuesday, March
10th at 12 Noon.

The program will be Magdalene Thistlelight
with the free will offering to Magdalene Thistlelight.

Send reservations to Mardelle Gocek (402)292-1328
by 5 pm on Sunday, March 8th.

Food Pantry

**~Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry~
Items Needed**



Bottled Fruit Juice

Pancake Mix

Boxed Potatoes

Boxed Pasta

Kleenex

Worship Servants & Donations

~March 2020~



	8:30 SERVICE	10:30 SERVICE
3/1	LECTOR— DENNIS MAGNUSON COMMUNION ASSISTANT— DENNIS MAGNUSON, CURT LOSEE VIDEO TECH - LORIE THOMAS ACOLYTE - ORION KUCIREK USHERS - PAULINE BURKE, CHARLES COLE, MICHAEL LISKO	PRaise TEAM COMMUNION ASSISTANT - BRENT THOMSEN VIDEO TECH - ANDREW ROUILLARD ACOLYTE - CLOE YEOMAN USHERS - John Hollenbeck, Rochelle Foy
3/8	LECTOR - LORIE THOMAS COMMUNION ASSISTANT—LORIE THOMAS, CHARLOTTE JENSEN VIDEO TECH - MADELINE & CODY SCHULDt ACOLYTE - SHANE WAITS USHERS - DENNIS AND MARGIE MAGNUSON	PRaise TEAM COMMUNION ASSISTANT - SUSAN HOLLENBECK VIDEO TECH - AUDREY SCHELL ACOLYTE - ASHLEY SCHELL USHERS - Andrew Rouillard, Nate Houfek
3/15	LECTOR - LINDA HILL COMMUNION ASSISTANT - DEANNA HANSEN, CURT LOSEE VIDEO TECH - DEANNA HANSEN ACOLYTE - ORION KUCIREK USHERS - CURT ENGLUND, PAULINE BURKE, ROGER ZEEB	PRaise TEAM COMMUNION ASSISTANT - NATE HOUEK VIDEO TECH - MELISSA CARTER ACOLYTE— ISABELLA YEOMAN USHERS - Richard Hollenbeck, Rochelle Foy
3/22	LECTOR - SCOTT ALBRIGHT COMMUNION ASSISTANT - CURT ENGLUND, CHRIS CHUBB VIDEO TECH - KENT TIES ACOLYTE - SHANE WAITS USHERS - RANDY CRAMER, VALORIE ZENTNER-CRAMER, CURT LOSEE	PRaise TEAM COMMUNION ASSISTANT - ANDREW ROUILLARD VIDEO TECH - AUDREY SCHELL ACOLYTE - ASHLEY SCHELL USHERS - David Sherwin, Teri Yeoman
3/29	LECTOR - KATHY COLE COMMUNION ASSISTANT –KATHY COLE, MICHAEL WAITS VIDEO TECH - MADELINE & CODY SCHULDt ACOLYTE - ORION KUCIREK USHERS - PAULINE BURKE, CHARLES COLE, MICHAEL LISKO	PRaise TEAM COMMUNION ASSISTANT - JESSICA WELTZ VIDEO TECH - ANDREW ROUILLARD ACOLYTE - CLOE YEOMAN USHERS - Nate Houfek, John Hollenbeck

SANCTUARY CANDLES: Charlotte Jensen

ALTAR GUILD: Lucy Younie, Phyllis Preuss, Pat Mandel

DATE	COFFEE HOUR HOSTS	ALTAR FLOWER DONATIONS	ALTAR FLOWERS DELIVERY
3/1	Jeannine & Tammy	Emilie Stokes	
3/8	Kent & Sue Ties	Magnusons	Bobbi Smith (3/13)
3/15	Mayfield & Houfek		Fritz Rokahr (3/20)
3/22	John, Susan, Jessica, Josh		Rogene Foy (3/27)
3/29	Phoebes		

Church Staff



Pastor ~ Glen Thomas
Administrative Assistant ~ Carrie Conley
Communications Coordinator~ Jacob York
Bookkeeper ~ Veda Keebler
Custodian ~ Jack Wiese
Music Director ~ Ric Swanson
Organist ~ Kim Hansen
JuBELLation Ringers Director ~ Ginger Britt

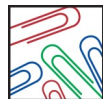
Church Council



Glen Thomas ~ *Pastor*
Brett Fuller—President
Bill Stott—Vice President
Randy Cramer— Secretary
Tammy Nelson—Treasurer

Teri Yeoman - Financial Secretary
Luke Compton— Faith Formation
Dave Sherwin— Community Care
John Hollenbeck— Property
Veda Keebler - Worship and Music

Church Office Information



OFFICE HOURS ~ Monday and Wednesday 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., Tuesday and Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon, and Friday 9:30 am - 10:30 am. Occasionally staff will not be in the office during these times; therefore, please call before coming to make sure we are available to assist you as needed. If no one is available, leave a message and we will call you back as soon as possible.

CALENDAR ~ All events, activities or meetings planned to be held at St. Matthew need to be placed on the church calendar. To schedule an event, activity or meeting call the church office and speak with Carrie.

WEEKLY BULLETIN ~ All information for announcements need to be in the church office by **Wednesday at noon.**

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER ~ All information for the monthly newsletter “The Acts” is due in the church office on the **second or third Monday of each month.** Specific date listed on the monthly newsletter calendar page.

PAPER RECYCLING ~ We collect all office related paper items, catalogs, and books for recycling. Cardboard products are not included in this recycling program. The recycling waste containers are located in the secretary’s office.

Women of the ELCA



~Bible Study Groups~ Deborah Circle

9:30 am Saturday March 28th

Study Leader: Judy Miller

Hostess: Charlotte Jensen

Jochebed Circle

8:30 am Saturday March 14th

Study Leader: Jenny Fuller

Hostess: Michelle Keebler

Phoebe Circle

7:00 pm Tuesday March 24th

Study Leader: Kathy Cole

Hostess: Kathy Cole

Service Project ~ Popcorn

~Daily Devotional “Daily Grace”~

Women of the ELCA website: www.womenoftheelca.org

You can go to the free site (above) to access short daily devotions as you wish, or subscribe for daily emails.

Women of the ELCA



Come enjoy a day with friends, fellowship, and good food. Spring Gatherings give you the opportunity to refuel, refresh, and relax!

Saturday, April 18th from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm at Lord of Love Lutheran Church (10405 Fort Street).

Tangible offering for Youth Emergency Services (YES): Shampoo (full-size), Conditioner (full-size), Body Wash (full-size), Lotion (full-size), Deodorant (male and female), and snack items for sack lunches.

Registration deadline is April 11, 2020.

Children & Youth Ministry



~Confirmation!~

Confirmation Retreat— 10:00 am on March 14th at St. Matthew

~Sunday School~

Sunday mornings from 9:40 - 10:20 a.m.

Holy Week & Easter



Palm Sunday ~ April 5th

Worship Services at 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. with Procession of Palms and Holy Communion

Maundy Thursday ~ April 9th

Worship Service at 7:00 p.m. with Holy Communion

Good Friday ~ April 10th

7:00 p.m. Tenebrae Service with Metro Lutheran partners

Easter Sunday ~ April 12th

Worship Services at 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. with Holy Communion

Easter Lilies



ADD beauty to our Easter Worship Services by donating Easter Lily Plants which you may take home with you following the 10:30 a.m. service on Easter Sunday. Complete the information below, include your payment and place in the offering plate or turn into the church office by Sunday, April 5th.

I would like to order _____ Easter Lily Plant/s at \$10.00 each.

_____ In memory of **or** _____ In honor of

Given by: _____

Financial Report

~January 2020~



General Fund Activity

Beginning Balance	Receipts	Payments	Transfers In (Out)	Ending Balance
15,555.23	14,571.92	21,339.10		8,788.05

Benevolence Offerings

Receipts	Dispersed
1,620.00	1,912.50

Hunger Offerings

Receipts	Dispersed
205.26	226.59

Coffee Mugs

ONLY \$6 each, dishwasher safe. Pick yours up from Pastor today.



Electronic Giving

~Enjoy the convenience of electronic giving!~



OUR church offers electronic giving, which allows you to make donations on a scheduled, automatic basis. It's very convenient for you and provides much-needed donation consistency for our church. You will no longer need to write out checks and prepare envelopes every week. Even when travel, illness or other circumstances prevent you from attending services, your electronic contributions will continue to be received on an uninterrupted basis.

To set up electronic donations, simply complete the authorization form available at church and return it to the church office. Donations can be debited automatically from either a checking or savings account.

For those members who use electronic giving to make their offerings to the church, the blue cards in the pews may be put in the offering plate allowing you to participate in the liturgy of giving.



"Empowered by God as committed disciples, we boldly care for and serve our congregation, our community and our world."

St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church
1725 S 60th Street
Omaha, NE 68106-2149

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



~CONTACT INFORMATION~

Office Phone (402) 556-7030
Email: office@smllutheran.com
Web Site: www.smllutheran.com

~WORSHIP SCHEDULE~

Sunday @ 8:30 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.
Holy Communion Every Week

~SUNDAY COFFEE AND FELLOWSHIP~

9:30 a.m. in Fellowship Hall

~SUNDAY SCHOOL~

9:40 a.m. - 10:20 a.m.

A journey for everyone from 2—102!

This newsletter is now available on our church website and is emailed to our members and friends. To help decrease the cost of printing and postage, please notify the church office of your current email address. Thank you!

