

ST. MATTHEW
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH NEWS

October 2022

THE ACTS...of God's People



**It's time for our
*new directory!***

*Technology has
changed the way
we can view
directories!*

An advertisement for a new church directory. It features a dark red banner at the top with the text "It's time for our new directory!". Below the banner, there is a white background with the text "Technology has changed the way we can view directories!". In the center, there are three devices: a smartphone on the left showing a directory entry for "Wesley and Sharon", a tablet in the middle showing a grid of photos, and a book on the right titled "NEW LIFE CHURCH" with a green cover and a small plant growing from a mound of soil. The bottom of the advertisement has a yellow banner with the text "Our Church Family Album will not be complete without you!".

Pictures will be taken November 22nd.

St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church
1725 S. 60th Street
Omaha, NE 68106-2149
(402) 556-7030
Email: office@smlutheran.com
Web Site: www.smlutheran.com

REFLECTIONS

~ by Pastor Glen ~

I have discovered why people have such a difficult time with computers, smartphones, and other technology. We forget that they are just machines and so we are particularly frustrated when they don't work the way we think that they should.

We are used to cars that break down. We are used to appliances that break down, roofs that leak, clothing that wears out. Those things are easy to understand, and in most cases easy to fix, or discard and replace. But there is something almost magical about technology that makes us extra frustrated when it doesn't do what we want.

But computers are also machines, and they always breakdown, eventually to the point where they can't be fixed anymore.

Bodies are machines too. We tend to forget that, because we have grown up in the midst of modern medicine. We have an innate belief that our bodies should always do what they should do, that even broken bodies can always be fixed with a pill or some therapy or, as a last resort, surgery. Of course they can't, a lesson that is never easily accepted. We either live in blind recklessness, assuming that nothing bad will ever happen to us, or in constant misery for all the ways our bodies let us down.

Human bodies are perfect proof that nothing in life is certain. Maybe that's why we hate them so much.

All Hallows Eve grew into the most important church festival of the year in the Middle Ages because people needed a shield against the uncertainty of death. Life was short and hard and diseases like the Black Plague provided a constant reminder of mortality. People were vulnerable to manipulation and heresy because of the fear born out of that uncertainty, and so they filled their spiritual life with rites and rituals to pretend that they knew what they could never know.

Modern beings that we are, we have turned Halloween into a children's festival, filled with comical ghosts and ghouls and pretend fears, lest we be forced to face what really scares us. We hope that

the treats will fill up the emptiness created by the uncertainty in which we live. But nothing will.

Because nothing should.

Our need for certainty, for security, for control, is the essential expression of our sin and brokenness. We say that we believe in God, but we cannot stand to leave space for his Spirit to move. We created fundamentalism and the literal interpretation of the Bible because we are afraid that the Word will tell us things we don't want to hear. We turned faith into a religious pay-for-play scheme because we dare not leave our salvation in the hands of anyone but ourselves. We have closed off our hearts to the neighbor whom we do not know because his experience requires us to understand things that are strange to us and we do not wish to be bothered to learn anything new.

We turn to the past instead of being open to the future because we prefer the devil we knew.

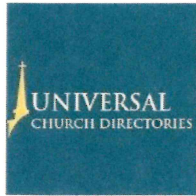
I'm not sure where we got the idea that life was supposed to work exactly the way we wanted it to. Someone has filled our head with false hopes of certainty that do not, cannot, will never exist in this world. We have been led down a path that can only end in sorrow.

But there is another voice calling us. There is a spirit stirring in our hearts, a promise whispered in our ear long ago at our baptism, a divine presence hidden within ordinary moments. The uncertainty we face every day is an opportunity for faith and hope, a call for endurance and diligence and devotion, and opportunity for freedom and service and grace.

Now is the time to turn our back on our childish fears and open our hearts to the God of uncertainty.



We will continue in the first two weeks of October, as part of the weekly Message, to ask you to brainstorm ideas for new features - actual programs and ministries to add at St. Matthew as we seek to faithfully do God's work here. Watch each week in the Monday morning email and the bulletin for more details about how you can share in that conversation.



IT'S TIME FOR A NEW CHURCH PICTORIAL DIRECTORY!

In the week before Thanksgiving, we will be inviting all members of the St. Matthew community to come and have individual or family photographs taken. Everyone who participates will receive a free copy of the church directory and a free 8 x 10 photograph. **You do not need to purchase anything to participate.**

Consider getting your entire family together for a new family picture!

In addition, we will be creating a new phone app with pictures and contact information for everyone in the community, as well as other important information about ministry opportunities. This will also be available at no charge.

Perhaps the best part of this experience is that we will be able to **share coupons** with our friends and neighbors and invite them for a free sitting for a family photograph as well. This will be a wonderful opportunity for us to share a gift and connect with the community.

All photographs will be available by Christmas! Directories will be done by the annual church meeting.

Please watch for further information about scheduling your appointment and sharing coupons in the church newsletter, bulletin, and weekly emails.

ST. MATTHEWS FINANCIAL REPORT

AUGUST 2022

Beginning Balance: \$ 21,246.98
 Receipts: \$ 11,464.45
 Payments: \$ 13,026.26
 Transfers: \$ 0
 Ending Balance: \$ 19,685.17

Benevolence Offerings

Receipts: \$1,311.81
 Dispersed: \$1,260.00

Hunger Offerings

Receipts: \$ 40.00
 Dispersed: \$ 40.00

Sewing for Babies - Omaha



*You are cordially invited to
A High Tea
A benefit for Sewing for Babies
held on
Saturday, October 8th
12 noon at
St. Matthew Lutheran Church
1725 South 60th Street
Omaha, Nebraska 68106*

*Reservations: 402-670-5672 Dixie
Door open at 11:30
Parking available at Belle Ryan School*

LUTHERAN WOMEN OF OMAHA

**Tuesday, October 11, 2022
12:00 noon**

**Place: Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church
6201 N. 60th Street**

Cost: \$7.00

**Program: "Angel Shares"
Ed Shada**

FREE WILL OFFERING: Angel Shares

*Reservations to Mardelle Gocek, 402-292-1328
By Sunday, October 9, 2022*

ST. MATTHEW
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

October 2022

October 2022							November 2022						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
30	31						29	30					

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Sep 25	26	27	28	29	30	Oct 1
9:30am Sunday Worship 10:30am Coffee & Fellowship 10:45am Festival Choir	3 9:00am Tanzania Treasures (Classroom 4 & 5)	4 9:00am Sewing for Babies (Art Room)	5 6:00pm JuBELLation Bell Choir Practice (Bell Choir Room)	6 1:30pm Coffee & Devotion with Pastor Glen	7 8:00am *SET UP* Sewing for Babies High Tea (Fellowship Hall (Nursery Classroom for boutique))	8 9:00am Jochebed Circle (Lounge/Nursery) 11:30am Sewing for Babies High Tea (Fellowship)
9 9:30am Sunday Worship 10:30am Coffee & Fellowship 10:45am Festival Choir	10 Columbus Day (United States) 9:00am Tanzania Treasures 6:00pm Worship Ministry	11 9:00am Sewing for Babies (Art Room)	12 6:00pm JuBELLation Bell Choir Practice (Bell Choir Room)	13 6:00pm JuBELLation Bell Choir Practice (Bell Choir Room)	14 8:00am *SET UP* Sewing for Babies High Tea (Fellowship Hall (Nursery Classroom for boutique))	15 10:00am Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry (Fellowship Hall, Lower Level classrooms)
16 9:30am Sunday Worship 10:30am Coffee & Fellowship 10:45am Festival Choir	17 9:00am Tanzania Treasures (Classroom 4 & 5) 7:00pm Church Council Meeting	18 9:00am Sewing for Babies (Art Room)	19 10:00am *SET-UP* Funtastic Fibers Retreat 6:00pm JuBELLation Bell Choir Practice (Bell Choir Room)	20 10:00am Funtastic Fibers Retreat (Pre-school Neighborhood)	21 10:00am Funtastic Fibers Retreat (Pre-School Nursery Downstairs)	22 9:30am Deborah Circle 10:00am Funtastic Fibers Retreat (Pre-school Nursery Downstairs)
23 9:30am Sunday Worship 10:30am Coffee & Fellowship 10:45am Festival Choir	24 9:00am Tanzania Treasures (Classroom 4 & 5)	25 1:00pm Phoebe Circle	26 6:00pm JuBELLation Bell Choir Practice (Bell Choir Room)	27 6:00pm JuBELLation Bell Choir Practice (Bell Choir Room)	28 8:00am *4th ANNUAL HIKE FOR HUNGER*	29 8:00am *4th ANNUAL HIKE FOR HUNGER*
30 9:30am Sunday Worship 10:30am Coffee & Fellowship 10:45am Festival Choir	31 Halloween (United States) 9:00am Tanzania Treasures (Classroom 4 & 5)	Nov 1	2 6:00pm JuBELLation Bell Choir Practice (Bell Choir Room)	3 6:00pm JuBELLation Bell Choir Practice (Bell Choir Room)	4 8:00am *4th ANNUAL HIKE FOR HUNGER*	5 8:00am *4th ANNUAL HIKE FOR HUNGER*

WORSHIP SERVANTS

Readings are e-mailed weekly on Mondays (contact the church office if you do not receive them), and if you are unable to make your scheduled service, please attempt to find a substitute and notify the church office of your unavailability and replacement. Thank you for your faithful service!

OCTOBER 2022

Date/ Time	Lector	Communion Assistant	Ushers	Camera Tech	Altar Guild
Oct 2 9:30 am	N/A	Nate Houfek	Dennis and Margie Magnuson	Derek C.	Deanna Hansen/ Marlys Hanson
Oct 9 9:30 am	N/A	Chris Chubb	Michael Lisko/ Terri Yeoman	Derek C.	Deanna Hansen/ Marlys Hanson
Oct 16 9:30 am	Michael Waits	Susan Hollenbeck	Dave Sherwin/ Rochelle Foy	Derek C.	Deanna Hansen/ Marlys Hanson
Oct 23 9:30 am	Linda Hill	Marlys Hanson	Randy Cramer/ Val Zentner- Cramer	Derek C.	Deanna Hansen/ Marlys Hanson
Oct 30 9:30 am	Scott Albright	Deanna Hansen	Kent Ties/ Nate Houfek	Derek C.	Deanna Hansen/ Marlys Hanson

Hello everyone,

Saturday, September 19th started out a little wet, but we had the most visitors to our pantry so far this year! We served 20 families and 36 individuals. Seven of these families had never been to our pantry before. The need is rising! Food insecurity is growing among our community and most of our families come from the working poor. Being able to provide these families with food is such a blessing. And I have you all to thank for your generosity in making that happen.



I need to thank Bill & Kelli Stott, Carl Peters, and Lucy Younie for your willingness to give of your time in assisting in serving our brothers and sisters in need. I would like to thank Margie Magnuson for her donation of peppers from her garden and Jen Schell for picking tomatoes from our garden to add to the fresh produce given out to our guests.

A very special thank you to Gavin. This gentleman rode his bicycle to St. Matthew from Pappillion to attend a meeting. While Kent was carrying in food, he noticed this man sitting on the steps just waiting for his meeting to start. Kent asked him if he could use some water and he was very appreciative for the offer. While drinking his water, he asked Kent if he needed any help. Kent put him to work and he filled all the toilet paper/bar soap bags that we give out to our guests. This is a wonderful example of how our "upstairs church" can interact with our "downstairs church". If you meet someone in the parking lot, don't be afraid to interact with them. Reach out and extend that cup of water!

Another big happening in October for our pantry is the 4th Annual Hike for Hunger! Please look for more information in this Acts to learn more about it and how maybe you can participate in this exciting and very rewarding event!

Our needs for this month include:

Boxed potatoes, bottled juice, jelly, SPAM, toilet paper, paper towels, bar soap.

Thanks for your continued support of this very much needed ministry!

Sue



4th Annual Hike for Hunger

October 28th marks our 4th Annual Hike for Hunger! We will once again partner with the Nebraska Army National Guard to fill the shelves in our pantry. The men and women of the Nebraska Army National Guard will hike 14 miles with 30 pounds of food in their packs and deliver those food items to St. Matthew.

We ask for your thanks and prayers for these soldiers who serve not only our country but also our community.

The hike will start approximately at 8:00 am from Aksarben and continue along the Keystone Trail to Fort Street and then back to the church. We will have volunteers waiting to greet the soldiers, help them unpack their packs, feed them lunch and then sort and count the items collected.

That's where you come in!

We need volunteers to help serve lunch, unpack packs and sort by food item, count the items and then put the items onto the shelves in the pantry. Volunteers would need to arrive and be ready to go to work around 11:00 a.m. (You will be fed too!). I also need a couple more crock pots of chili. If you would like to make a pot of chili, I would need that to the church by 11:30 if it comes hot. Otherwise, I would need it there around 9:30 in order to get it hot by the time the soldiers arrive.

If you would like to participate in this really great event, please contact me at 402-871-9166.

Thanks a million for your consideration in helping!

Sue Ties

CHURCH STAFF

Pastor ~ Glen Thomas
Office Administrator ~ Lena Johnson
Music Director ~ Ric Swanson
Organist ~ Kim Hansen
JuBELLation Ringers Director ~ Ginger Britt
Custodian ~ Jack Wiese

CHURCH OFFICE INFORMATION

OFFICE HOURS ~ Monday through Friday 10:00 am to 2:00 pm.
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, please call the church office and speak to Lena Johnson, our Office Administrator. She will be happy to assist you!

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 **20th of each month.**

PAPER RECYCLING ~ We recycle church bulletins and other printed items once no longer needed. You may leave your Sunday bulletin in the box on the table in the narthex when the service is over.

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

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Omaha, NE 68106-2149

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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!



~CONTACT INFORMATION~

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

~WORSHIP SCHEDULE~

Sunday @ 9:30 a.m.
Holy Communion Every Week

~SUNDAY COFFEE AND FELLOWSHIP~

10:30 a.m. in Fellowship Hall