



St. Matthew
Evangelical Lutheran Church

THE ACTS...of God's People

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~February 2021~



So many new things we have learned this year. So many new phrases introduced into our vocabulary. Including one I never thought I'd learn.

Unmute.

It happens when you're in a zoom meeting. Out of an abundance of politeness you have muted your own microphone so that the other people on the meeting don't have to listen to the strange noises from your home. But then you want to speak and you forget that you have muted yourself. Luckily, everyone can see, and so they are all waving their arms and raise their voices and tell you to unmute yourself.

It is both embarrassing and funny. And somewhat metaphorical for life.

We spend too much of our life muted, unable or unwilling to speak truth about ourselves or about our world, unwilling to challenge faithlessness and injustice wherever we meet it. Whether it is because we are trying too hard to be nice or just because we are afraid, too many important things go unsaid. And we are the worst for it. And the world is the worst for it.

But now the world is waving its arms and yelling at us to get our attention, that we might in Word and deed proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ and fulfill our calling. The events of the year past have opened our eyes to the effects of our complicit silence, and we should be silent no longer. We have something important to say. We have something the world needs to hear. This is our time.

Lent is a season for repentance. Not just for feeling bad about ourselves or the things that we've done, but to reflect on who we are and the path we're traveling and make an important turn and go in a new direction. That is the very definition of repentance. In 2021, that means unmuting and telling ourselves and the world the truth that must be spoken.

1. We must speak out against the temptations of this world, the lure of wealth and power, the cynicism and skepticism that keeps us from taking our faith seriously. We must be honest about our weaknesses in the face of evil, and remember who it is that we belong to.

Pastor continued



2. We must tell the true story of a faith, not a gospel of glory or prosperity, but one that leads to Jerusalem and the cross that waits there. We must be willing to follow Jesus, and we must tell the world what that means in full. The church has filled the world with false hope and people are lost. We must do better.

3. We must loudly and clearly preach the values of the Kingdom of God, of justice and peace. We must be willing to do the hard work of standing against greed and corruption, both in the world around us and even in the church. It is not enough for us to be charitable. We must stand against those who would use religion to advance their own agendas.

4. We must speak the love of God. We must recapture the proclamation that “God so love the world that he gave his only son.” We cannot allow the gospel to be subverted into a message of hate and judgment. We must dare to let the world know that we believe in love.

5. We must, by word and example, be the people of the cross. We must find the courage to live lives of service and sacrifice, even as Jesus showed us himself. We must be willing to sacrifice everything for the sake of our redemption. We must be willing to sacrifice everything for the sake of the world's redemption.

It has been noted that all it takes for evil to succeed is for good people to remain silent. Our inability and unwillingness to speak out has enabled the problems that we face in our own lives and empowered the struggles of the world. We have an important and sacred mission. We are the instruments of grace in the world, and we can no longer afford to shirk our duty. We need this new life.

May our Lenten journey guide us and strengthen us in our discipleship, that being found faithful we might be raised with Christ come Easter morning.

~Pastor Glen

Facebook



**Like and Share our St Matthew Facebook page!
You will find updates and news throughout the month—
and find links to our remote services!**

∞ 2021 Annual Meeting



CoVid will present certain challenges to holding our annual meeting this year. Nebraska laws do allow for online or electronic meetings and voting, so we are making arrangements accordingly. Voting will take place on Sunday, February 7th via several methods.

You can log into the Zoom meeting via computer or smart phone. You can see the meeting live on Facebook and the church website and use the comment section to share your questions and comments.

You will be able to dial into the meeting on any phone using one of the numbers below:

- +1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)
- +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)
- +1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)
- +1 301 715 8592 US (Washington D.C)
- +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
- +1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

When you are prompted, enter the meeting ID: 821 6069 3844.
(there may be a long distance charge depending on your phone plan)

The online link for the meeting will be shared online via email and the Facebook page.

∞ Annual Reports



Annual reports are available in print in the narthex, which is open on Wednesdays from 8 am to 8 pm. Electronic copies are available on the church website. The link has also been sent out via email.

∞ An Interlocking Community



Christ distributes courage through community; he dissipates doubts through fellowship. He never deposits all knowledge in one person but distributes pieces of the jigsaw puzzle to many. When you interlock your understanding with mine, and we share our discoveries, when we mix, mingle, confess and pray, Christ speaks.

—Max Lucado, *Fearless*

Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry



January 16 was our first pantry of 2021. We served 9 families and a total of 25 individuals. Our guests received our regular choice pantry but also eggs, milk, cheese, a box of fresh produce, pre-made salads and deli sandwiches from Project Hope.

We are still practicing safe distancing and not allowing our guests to enter the building. We plan to remain doing this until a vaccine is available to all persons. We believe that this is the safest way to keep everyone well. Hopefully by this summer we may be able to reopen the building and be able to use more volunteers. We miss working with you! I have included our current needs and so appreciate the support we continue to receive from you!

~Current Pantry Needs~

Boxed Cereal

Breakfast Bars

Bottled Juice

Peanut Butter

Boxed Pasta (not spaghetti)

2021 Pledges



Stewardship information for 2021 has been sent out via mail. Thank you to those that have returned their pledges! If you have not returned your form yet, please do so or contact the church office if you have questions or need assistance.

If you are considering enrolling in electronic giving, you have until the end of the year to fill out the form and return it to church. The form can be found on the church website. If you are a current electronic giver and have increased your pledge this year, you do not have to complete a new form.

Important Dates

Black History Month
Transfiguration Sunday, February 14
Valentine's Day, February 14
Presidents Day, February 15
Ash Wednesday, February 17



Calendar of Events @ St. Matthew

February

All in-person worship services and events at St. Matthew are suspended until further notice. This calendar includes only days with events during this time.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 1

9:30 am Tanzanian Treasures

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 2

6:00 pm Worship Ministry Team

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 3

7:00 pm New Bible Study Online
7:30 pm Children & Youth Ministry Team

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 4

1:30 pm Adult Study via Zoom

**~SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 7~
WORSHIP LIVESTREAM 8:30 AM
ANNUAL MEETING- VIRTUAL**



MONDAY, FEBRUARY 8

9:30 am Tanzanian Treasures

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 10

7:00 pm New Bible Study Online

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 11

1:30 pm Adult Study via Zoom

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 13

10:00 am Jochebed Circle

**~SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 14~
WORSHIP LIVESTREAM 8:30 AM
VIRTUAL COFFEE HOUR 9:15 AM**



MONDAY, FEBRUARY 15

ACTS Articles Due
9:30 am Tanzanian Treasures
7:00 pm Council Meeting

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17

7:00 pm New Bible Study Online

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18

1:30 pm Adult Study via Zoom

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20

10:00 am Loaves & Fishes

**~SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 21~
WORSHIP LIVESTREAM 8:30 AM
VIRTUAL COFFEE HOUR 9:15 AM**



MONDAY, FEBRUARY 22

9:30 am Tanzanian Treasures

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 23

7:00 pm Phoebe Circle

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24

7:00 pm New Bible Study Online

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25

1:30 pm Adult Study via Zoom

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 27

9:30 am Deborah Circle

**~SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 28~
WORSHIP LIVESTREAM 8:30 AM
VIRTUAL COFFEE HOUR 9:15 AM**



Worship Servants



~February 2021~

Date	Time	Council Rep	Camera Tech	Video Tech
Feb 7	8:30	Veda	Glen T	Naomi
Feb 14	8:30	Dave	Luke C	Kent T
Feb 21	8:30	Bill	Dave S	Andrew R
Feb 28	8:30	Brett	Jacob Y	Shane W

Taking Back the Bible



Conflict about the Bible is the single most divisive issue among Christians in North America today.

--Marcus Borg

We are living in the midst of a great spiritual crisis. And divisions among Christians on what the Bible says is a major contributing factor to the divisions in the world around us. Learning to read, study and proclaim the Word of God is our salvation, and the instrument by which we can bring the light of the Kingdom into the world.

Maybe you have been reluctant to study the Bible because you don't like what you have been told it "says." Maybe you've just found it too complicated. Maybe you think it's just boring. You are missing out on an important spiritual gift of God, an experience that can bring you closer to his grace and love. This is the first step - learn what the Bible really is and discover it all over again.

Join Pastor Glen live on Facebook and the church website Wednesdays at 7:00 pm (through February 10th) or watch the study at your own convenience. I will try to monitor the comments and respond to your questions throughout the week. Forget what you think you know about the Bible or what you see on the TV and come learn and love the Bible all over again.

Virtual Sunday School



On Sundays, Lower and Upper Elementary students will have the opportunity to participate in Sunday school ONLINE!

Each Sunday, the St. Matthew Sunday school team will present a fun, pre-recorded lesson for families to enjoy on their own schedule! Join Kiley and Bri every Sunday morning for Bible lessons, crafts, and music!

Middle and high school youth will meet on Wednesday evenings at 7pm with Luke to study and fellowship together LIVE via Zoom.

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 on the website and return it to the church office. Donations can be debited automatically from either a checking or savings account.

New Church Hours

The Church building will be open on Wednesdays from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm. The South doors (Walnut Street entrance) will be unlocked in case you need something at the church.

Currently, your 2021 offering envelopes are available to be picked up. We appreciate if you could save us the postage! And if you see the envelopes belonging to a neighbor that you could deliver, all the better.

Don't Social Distance from Faith



There are many opportunities to connect with one another even as we are physically separated because of the pandemic.

New Bible Study– Wednesday, 7:00 pm (live on Facebook)

Compline - Wednesday, 8:00 pm (via Zoom)

Bible Study (via Zoom) - Thursday, 1:30 pm

Online Worship - Sunday, 8:30 am (or anytime after). Link on church website www.smlutheran.com or on our Facebook page

Virtual Coffee & Fellowship Time - Sunday (about 9:15 am via Zoom)

A New App



Keep in touch, give and participate with our new app!

We have exciting news about a new way you can connect with St. Matthew! We are now using Vanco Mobile, a mobile app that will allow our congregation to virtually gather and communicate.

The way we come together to worship today is different since we have shifted to virtual ministries, but we are still a community.

Vanco Mobile will help us strengthen and maintain that connection.

We will use this app to let you know about upcoming events, share news about our community and speak directly with you. You can use Vanco

Mobile to communicate with church staff and fellow members, get involved in our many ministries and express generosity through eGiving.

We encourage you to join our church's app, Vanco Mobile. You can download the app for free at the Apple App Store or Google Play. Once downloaded, simply open the app and search for our church name.

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

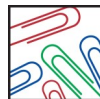


Glen Thomas ~ *Pastor*
Brett Fuller—President
Bill Stott—Vice President
Randy Cramer— Secretary
Tammy Nelson—Treasurer

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.

Financial Report

~December 2020~



General Fund Activity

Beginning			Transfers	Ending
Balance	Receipts	Payments	In (Out)	Balance
40,054.85	19,675.00	18,066.37		41,663.48

Benevolence Offerings

Receipts	Dispersed
1,260.00	1,620.00

Hunger Offerings

Receipts	Dispersed
130.00	125.00

Women of the ELCA

~Bible Study Groups~ Deborah Circle

9:30 am Saturday February 27th

Study Leader: Charlotte Jensen

Hostess: Lucy Younie



Jochebed Circle

10:00 am Saturday February 13th

Study Leader: Deb Albright

Hostess: Patty Greene

Change: Meetings will now be the 2nd Sat. of the month at 10 am

Phoebe Circle

7:00 pm Tuesday February 23rd

Study Leader: Barb Englund

Hostess: ALL

Service Project ~ Shampoo

~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.



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



~CONTACT INFORMATION~

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

St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church
1725 S 60th Street
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!

