



St. Matthew
Evangelical Lutheran Church

THE ACTS...of God's People

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- ✪ A Message from Pastor Glen
- ✪ 2021 Stewardship
- ✪ Annual Meeting
- ✪ Annual Reports

UPCOMING EVENTS

- ✪ Annual Meetings– Jan 24 & 31
- ✪ Compline Prayer– Wednesdays
- ✪ Livestreamed Service– Sunday mornings
- ✪ Adult Bible Study– Thursdays

~January 2021~



Why does the sunshine seem so much brighter in the winter?

Maybe it's the added light of the reflection off of the new fallen snow. Perhaps it's just the emergence of the sun from underneath the grey clouds that seem all too dominant during the winter months. Possibly it's just that there are so few hours of sunlight during the day that each ray is all the more cherished. Whatever the reason, there is nothing like a sunny winter day.

We're going to need some of those now.

There will be a great desire within us to try to quickly put the past year behind us, to move away from the tragedies and challenges of the past months and pretend that all of it really did not happen, to get back to "normal" (an empty word now that only signals the depth of denial that pervades our souls.) That will not be good enough. In fact, that will be worse. If we cannot bring some meaning to, learn some lessons from what we have endured, gain some understanding of ourselves and our own culpability for the world in which we live, then we will not, nor should not, move on.

We cannot just move on. We are prisoners of an eternal winter of brokenness, of misspent grace and denied discipleship, and we will remain so. This past year was not an aberration, and we cannot just blame what has happened on the calendar. 2021 was created by the nexus of several strains of ancient sin – self-centeredness, violence, greed, and hatred, to name a few – abetted by a church sold out to worldly power and wealth. It was no accident. We caused all of this. Which means we can change it.

We can be the ray of sunshine on a winter day.

How will the grace of God break through in these dark days? As it always has – through his faithful chosen instruments. Through us. Through our desire for justice, through our compassion for our neighbors both near and far, by his word and the Spirit of our baptism, his promised reign will be established forever and ever Amen.

~ Continued On Next Page

Pastor continued



There will be hope. No longer will we cower of fear of tomorrow nor hide from the future. We will willingly and purposefully travel the path before us, knowing that we go as we have been directed and that our Savior walks with us, helping us when we stumble and picking us up when we fall.

There will be joy. We will cast off the shadows that loom about us. We do not deny the truth of pain and suffering that comes with this life, but even in its midst of it we will not lose sight of God's presence and sustaining grace in all things, and for that we are constantly thankful.

There will be love. We will live everyday by grace, by the unconditional, undeserved love of God in Jesus Christ. We must face our brokenness with honesty and courage, learning from our failures to do better, to grow in discipleship and move closer, day by day, to the envisioned Kingdom of God.

There will be peace. We will learn to love ourselves as God loves us, to restrain the sin that chafes against faith, to let go of our own striving and our own cravings and allow ourselves to be used as God chooses to use us.

Those are the elements of winter light – hope, joy, love and peace. These are the gifts of faith, the fruits of the Spirit, the artifacts of baptism. This is what is different about us, and this is why we are here.

Let us resolve to make 2021 the year that the followers of Jesus make a difference.

~Pastor Glen

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.

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. There will be a combination zoom / Facebook meeting on January 24th and 31st after the worship services. These will be informational meetings to present the 2021 budget and nominations and talk about other items on the agenda. 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



**Due into the office no later than Friday
January 8th, 2021.**

This includes all committees and organizations of the church.

All organizational financial reports are due in the church office
no later than Monday, January 11th, 2021.

The Annual Report will be available beginning
Wednesday, January 20th , 2021.

☞ Rock of Ages



On walks, I enjoy searching for heart-shaped rocks. One day in 2020, I spotted a broken heart, which seemed fitting as illness, racism and suffering dominated the headlines. I thought of Psalm 34:18, NIV: “The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.”

Humans can be hard-hearted — pointing fingers, assuming the worst and failing to extend compassion. We often reject people who look, think or act differently from us. All these things break hearts, including God’s. Only with his help can we rise above hatred, learn to listen more than we speak, and express kindness, empathy and a willingness to learn.

Jesus, be our rock as we face life’s brokenness. Stay near and start the healing. Amen.

—Julie Lee

☞ Live in the Light



Often we want to be able to see into the future. We say, “How will next year be for me? Where will I be five or 10 years from now?” There are no answers to these questions. Mostly we have just enough light to see the next step — what we have to do in the coming hour or the following day.

The art of living is to enjoy what we can see and not complain about what remains in the dark. When we are able to take the next step with the trust that we will have enough light for the step that follows, we can walk through life with joy and be surprised at how far we go. Let’s rejoice in the little light we carry and not ask for the great beam that would take all our shadows away.

—Henri Nouwen, *Bread for the Journey*

☞ Truth & Love



I refuse to accept the view that mankind is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism and war that the bright daybreak of peace and brotherhood can never become reality.

I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word.

—Martin Luther King Jr.

Calendar of Events @ St. Matthew

January

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.

~SUNDAY, JANUARY 3~
WORSHIP LIVESTREAM 8:30 AM
VIRTUAL COFFEE HOUR 9:15 AM



MONDAY, JANUARY 4

9:30 am Tanzanian Treasures

TUESDAY, JANUARY 5

7:30 pm Children & Youth Ministry

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 6

8:00 pm Compline Prayer via Zoom

THURSDAY, JANUARY 7

1:30 pm Adult Study via Zoom

SATURDAY, JANUARY 9

8:30 am Jochebed Circle

~SUNDAY, JANUARY 10~
WORSHIP LIVESTREAM 8:30 AM
VIRTUAL COFFEE HOUR 9:15 AM



MONDAY, JANUARY 11

Annual Financial Reports Due
9:30 am Tanzanian Treasures

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13

8:00 pm Compline Prayer via Zoom

THURSDAY, JANUARY 14

1:30 pm Adult Study via Zoom

SATURDAY, JANUARY 16

10:00 am Loaves & Fishes

~SUNDAY, JANUARY 17~
WORSHIP LIVESTREAM 8:30 AM
VIRTUAL COFFEE HOUR 9:15 AM



MONDAY, JANUARY 18

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

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20

8:00 pm Compline Prayer via Zoom

THURSDAY, JANUARY 21

1:30 pm Adult Study via Zoom
9:00 am Sewing For Babies

SATURDAY, JANUARY 23

9:30 am Deborah Circle

~SUNDAY, JANUARY 24~
WORSHIP LIVESTREAM 8:30 AM
VIRTUAL COFFEE HOUR 9:15 AM
ZOOM/FACEBOOK ANNUAL MEETING



MONDAY, JANUARY 25

9:30 am Tanzanian Treasures

TUESDAY, JANUARY 26

7:00 pm Phoebe Circle

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 27

8:00 pm Compline Prayer via Zoom

THURSDAY, JANUARY 28

1:30 pm Adult Study via Zoom

~SUNDAY, JANUARY 31~
WORSHIP LIVESTREAM 8:30 AM
VIRTUAL COFFEE HOUR 9:15 AM
ZOOM/FACEBOOK ANNUAL MEETING



Worship Servants



~January 2021~

Date	Time	Council Rep	Camera Tech	Video Tech
Jan 3	8:30	Brett Fuller	Jacob Y	Luke Compton
Jan 10	8:30	Bill Stott	Glen T	Naomi K
Jan 17	8:30	Randy Cramer	Luke C	Kent T
Jan 24	8:30	Tammy Nelson-Lovett	Dave S	Andrew R
Jan 31	8:30	Dave Sherwin	Jacob Y	Shane W

Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry



~Current Pantry Needs~

Bar Soap	Paper Towels
Bottled Juice	Crackers (Ritz or Saltines)
Boxed Pasta	Deodorant
Dish Soap	Whole Wheat Flour
Ketchup	Salad Dressing
Dried Fruit (fruit snacks)	Baked Beans
Knorr Rice Side Dishes	

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.

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!**

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.

☞ 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.

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

~November 2020~



General Fund Activity

Beginning			Transfers	Ending
Balance	Receipts	Payments	In (Out)	Balance
43,089.04	14,166.35	17,200.54		40,054.85

Benevolence Offerings

Receipts	Dispersed
1,620.00	1,460.00

Hunger Offerings

Receipts	Dispersed
125.00	105.00

Women of the ELCA



~Bible Study Groups~ Deborah Circle

9:30 am Saturday January 23rd

Study Leader: Donna Reinig

Hostess: Judy Miller

Jochebed Circle

8:30 am Saturday January 9th

Study Leader: Lorie Thomas

Hostess: Cindy Gengel

Phoebe Circle

7:00 pm Tuesday January 26th

Study Leader: TBD

Hostess: TBD

Service Project ~ Soup

~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!

