



St. Matthew
Evangelical Lutheran Church

THE ACTS...of God's People

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~November 2020~

Pastor Glen



It's November and you know what that means. Time for everyone's favorite annual family gathering filled with turkeys and parades and naps during football games, seasoned this year with awkward political conversations.

In my family we are making plans for a "virtual" thanksgiving. Given that we will be mostly quarantined for a variety of reasons and farther apart from one another than usual, we're going to try to set up computer monitors at each table setting and be present together via the internet, assuming that the technology works.

I know it's not much.

But that is the day in which we live now, at the intersection of an uncontrollable disease and a grudging and incompetent response which has left us in a place of frustration and exhaustion, trying to make the best of an impossible situation. We want to be safe but we also want to have our normal lives back and we can't seem to figure out how to balance the two. We want things to be better. To now surprise, they continue to get worse.

And now, at the beginning of what experts are forecasting to be a long dark winter, we are going to sit at table, together or apart, and try to the best of our ability to summon up a spirit of thanksgiving. Here's the good news – it's already there.

Thankfulness is a gift of grace. The God who gave all for us, even the life of his own son, built into the covenant the instructions for living out our gratitude every day. Everything in the Word – the prayers, the praises, even the commandments themselves are gifts to stir up the spirit of gratefulness that is built into being a child of God.

Sometimes we catch ourselves trying to summon thankfulness by force from within or without, grasping about for something bright and shiny to focus on, listening intently for some heartwarming story, searching our memories for anything that might recreate even the smallest feeling of joy. We think it's up to us to be thankful. We believe that we need something to be thankful for. The difficulties of life, whether it be some extraordinary time like this or just the general challenges of getting by day to day, cast a shadow over our hearts and make gratitude hard.

☞ Pastor continued

That's a problem.

Gratitude is an important spiritual practice.



~Pastor Glen

☞ Hike for Hunger

On November 13th we will be celebrating a partnership with the US Army National Guard with a *Hike for Hunger*.



Soldiers from across Omaha will be hiking 14 miles with 30 lbs. of food on their backs to support our pantry. These men and women have volunteered to not only purchase this food for our pantry, but will carry it from the Aksarben area out along the Papio trail to Fort Street and back to the church.

If you are available on November 13th, come to the church and help show our appreciation for their service to not only our country but to our community as well. (Also I can use the help in counting and restocking the shelves!!) The estimated time that they will arrive back to the church is 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. I have obtained a Thrivent Action Team grant and we will use that money to provide box lunches to all the participants.

We will be practicing COVID-19 safety guidelines, so everyone will be required to wear a mask and social distance. It is our hope that the weather will cooperate and we can meet outside in the parking lot. If weather does not cooperate, we will move things inside to Fellowship Hall, so we may have to limit how many people can be in there at the same time.

☞ 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)

Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry



THANKSGIVING! November is the time of year that we set aside to give THANKS for all our blessings. We need to not only give THANKS for the blessings that we have received but also remind ourselves of the blessings we give to others.

Our guests are blessed every month by your generosity. We have 13 families signed up to receive Thanksgiving Baskets this year which will include a turkey and all the fixings for a wonderful Thanksgiving meal that they can share with their loved ones. THANKS to our partner, Project Hope, and many congregations throughout Omaha, including ours, we are able to make Thanksgiving a very special day for those suffering from food insecurity. Project Hope has projected that they will serve 500 families this year! THANK YOU to all who supplied turkey stuffing mixes and gravy packets!

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Food Pantry (cont.)



Last year was the first year we did this and we received 475 items for our pantry. SSG Neal Wesley says that his troops enjoyed it so much last year they have expanded it to other troops in the area to participate. He is hoping for an even bigger turnout this year! Just something else to be THANKFUL for!

I also need to give THANKS for all the volunteers that make our pantry run smoothly. With the restrictions of COVID-19, many of you have not had the opportunity to serve as you so willingly want to. I apologize for that, but hope that when things get back to normal, you will be willing to answer the call to serve. THANK YOU for understanding. THANK YOU to Andrew, Brent, Kelli, Bill, Kent, Margie, Jen and Veda for your faithful service each month.

GIVE THANKS! KEEP OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN NEED IN YOUR PRAYERS AS YOU GIVE THANKS! AND THANK YOU FOR ALL THE SUPPORT!

~Sue & Kent Ties

Virtual Sunday School



Now more than ever, we need our church friends and family to surround and support us- that includes our youth!!

Starting on Sunday, October 4th, 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!

Today's middle and high school youth are facing the ever-pressing question of, "How does the church apply to me? How do I fit in here?" These students will meet on Wednesday evenings at 7pm with Luke to study and fellowship together LIVE via Zoom.

We look forward to seeing everyone soon and celebrating the start of a new Sunday School season with you!

Calendar of Events @ St. Matthew

November

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, NOVEMBER 1~
ALL SAINTS' DAY
WORSHIP LIVESTREAM 8:30 AM
VIRTUAL COFFEE HOUR 9:15 AM



TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3
ELECTION DAY

6:00 pm Worship Ministry Team Mtg

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4
7:30 pm Children & Youth Ministry
8:00 pm Compline Prayer via Zoom

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5
1:30 pm Adult Study

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



WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 11
VETERANS DAY
8:00 pm Compline Prayer via Zoom

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12
1:30 pm Adult Study

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 13
11:00 am Hike for Hunger National Guard Lunch

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14
8:30 am Jochebed Circle

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



MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16
7:00 pm Council Meeting

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18
8:00 pm Compline Prayer via Zoom

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19
1:30 pm Adult Study

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21
10:00 am Loaves & Fishes

~SUNDAY, NOV 22~
WORSHIP LIVESTREAM 8:30 AM
VIRTUAL COFFEE HOUR 9:15 AM



MONDAY, NOVEMBER 23
ACTS Articles Due

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 24
7:00 pm Phoebe Circle

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 25
8:00 pm Compline Prayer via Zoom

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 26
Happy Thanksgiving!

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 27
9:00 am Funtastic Fibers

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 28
9:30 am Deborah Circle

~SUNDAY, NOV 29~
FIRST DAY OF ADVENT
WORSHIP LIVESTREAM 8:30 AM
VIRTUAL COFFEE HOUR 9:15



Thank You!



THANK YOU to all who attended our Mini Quilt Show and Sale Covid Style, October 16 and 17th. We also thank God for the generous people who sent donations. We are thrilled to report that we will be sending at least three young women from our Partner Parish Tella Lutheran located on Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, East Africa, to the Angaza Woman's Training Center. We are hoping to perhaps send another student or two to school as well.

If you would like to shop at St Matthew or give a donation, write your check to Women of the ELCA.

Tanzanian Treasures, Fabric and More is a mission project of St Matthew Lutheran Church providing scholarships for young people in our partner parish in Tanzania, East Africa to attend the Angaza Women's Training Center or Machame Hospital Nursing School.

We also provide tuition for Charle Owenya, a young man attending Nursing School at Machame Hospital who is studying to become a Physicians Assistant.

We accomplish this by selling African fabric, clothing, purses, jewelry, kits, quilt patterns and more. We vend at Quilt shows, sell by appointment, give programs, have a benefit retreat called Tanzanian Fabric, Fun, and Facts end of February each year, and provide displays.

For more information contact Mary Mayfield, mayfieldim@cox.net, 402-778-0291 and leave a message. She is usually available on Monday and Thursday mornings from 9 to 11:30 in art room at St Matthew Lutheran Church, 1725 South 60th in Omaha, Nebraska 68106. Call for an appointment.



🌀 Growing Through Gratitude



Thankfulness, studies show, has multiple physical, mental and emotional benefits. Psychologist Robert Emmons calls gratitude “fertilizer for the mind” because of its powerful effects.

He admits gratitude isn’t always easy — especially when life throws us curveballs (see the year 2020) — but says it can be most helpful during and after difficulties. Emmons suggests reframing challenges using thankfulness-based language. Ask, for example: Though I wasn’t grateful for the experience at the time, how can I be now? What lessons did I learn, and how did I grow as a person?

Throughout his letters, the apostle Paul reframes his extensive sufferings and urges us to do the same. “Give thanks in all circumstances,” he writes, “for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus” (1 Thessalonians 5:18, NIV).

🌀 Special Dates



- All Saints’ Day, November 1, 2020
- Daylight-Saving Time ends, November 1, 2020
- Election Day, November 3, 2020
- Veterans Day, November 11, 2020
- Thanksgiving Day, November 26, 2020
- First Sunday of Advent, November 29, 2020

🌀 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!

🌀 Availability



Pastor Glen will be reducing his time in public as much as possible without neglecting his call. **IF YOU ARE IN NEED OF A PASTORAL PRESENCE HE WILL BE THERE FOR YOU!** Call him and he will be there– of just call to talk!

Pastor Glen Cell (402)740-6395

☞ Don't Social Distance from Faith



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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

~September 2020~



General Fund Activity

Beginning			Transfers	Ending
Balance	Receipts	Payments	In (Out)	Balance
39,223.32	12,903.00	14,370.60		37,755.72

Benevolence Offerings

Hunger Offerings

Receipts	Dispersed	Receipts	Dispersed
1,430.00	1,359.00	112.05	125.00

Women of the ELCA



Service Project ~ Juice

~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.

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.



"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!

