



St. Matthew
Evangelical Lutheran Church

THE ACTS...of God's People

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~October 2020~



We are enjoying some lovely fall days now, with cool nights and warm, sunny days. Well, except for one thing – the smoky haze in the sky.

Fires are burning on the west coast and creating tragedies in the lives of millions of people. At some level, it is just one more tragedy that is making this year what it is. At another, it is a perfect archetype of life in the 21st century.

It's easy for us to experience the fires as simply news, events that happen to other people far, far away. We could say the same of other natural disasters. It is our nature to be focused primarily on what is near us, within our reach, things that affect us directly. Even as the world gets smaller and we learn more and more about strange and far-away places, our devotion narrows. Instead of embracing what is strange and foreign, we retreat to what is comfortable and familiar. In the process we create a disconnect between ourself and our neighbor, and between us and our Savior.

Your name, O God, like your praise, reaches to the ends of the earth. Psalm 48:10.

The haze in the sky is the smoke reaching across 1500 miles to remind us that we are more connected to the rest of the world than we know. Or perhaps, more connected than we want to admit. The inconvenient truth is that while there have always been (and will probably always be) fires, this year's have been much worse because of the record setting drought, a product of the most significant human disaster of this age: climate change. You can add record numbers of hurricanes and tornadoes and any number of other weather disasters to the list.

And who's fault is that?

Ours. All of ours. Damaging the creation is not the work on any individual, it is the work of every individual, and its solution requires that we all work together to change behaviors and systems that are causing the problem. It requires us to hold ourselves and each other accountable, to name preserving our earth a common value and stop pretending that it's just a matter of individual choice.

Pastor continued



And there it is. The great sin of the world today is Individualism. Not individuality, the gift of created uniqueness that adds depth and diversity to our community. Individualism is the worship of self, the lie we tell ourselves that our actions don't affect others, that we owe nothing to anyone and that we are entitled to keep whatever is ours.

This is the sin that is tearing our world apart. And what does it say about our faith in the God of the entire creation? Are we the only objects of salvation, or is the Kingdom bigger than what meets our eyes? In the psalms, even the rocks and hills sing praise to God. Over and over again the prophets point to the day when all the nations will be redeemed by the hand of God. Often it seems like our vision of God is too small, too narrow, too personal. Consequently, so is our faith.

These are daunting times. We are confronted by overwhelming troubles, much of our own making. We are the ones destroying the creation. We are the ones (at least tacitly) preserving racism and bias in our society. We are the ones who turn off the TV when the news gets bad or give up social media when we are confronted with the responsibility to speak truth that might challenge relationships which we take for granted.

But the grace of God is bigger than this moment, bigger than our needs and bigger than our fears. We are waiting for all of this to go away, for these troubles to pass. But Jesus is beckoning us to the path of discipleship, where we are often overmatched by a hostile world, where powers and principalities threaten us. Yet, as Paul reminds us, even these cannot separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ.

2020 has raised questions about us and our world and our priorities that hang over us like the smoke of a distant fire (to borrow the phrase), but although it beckons us to change much, it reminds us of what will never change. God is present with us in the difficult days, holding us up when we are in need, strengthening us for the work that lies ahead. May we be filled with his grace and wisdom.

~Pastor Glen

Sunday Mornings

Online worship will be at 8:30 am via the church
Website www.smlutheran.com or on our
Facebook page or anytime afterwards.



Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry



We served 10 families and 22 individuals in September. We were blessed with being able to add a box of fresh produce to their pantry from our partners at Project Hope. They also received milk, cheese and 1/2 dozen eggs. We even surprised them with ice cream! It is always so fun to be able to add additional things to their orders without them knowing!

I would also like to extend gratitude to the women of the Jochebed Circle for their helping hands and green thumbs in planting and maintaining the garden located behind the Walnut House. Our guests have been able to enjoy fresh celery, tomatoes, peppers, onions, broccoli and green (although ours were purple) beans and squash throughout the summer. **THANK YOU LADIES!!!!**

We have some exciting things happening in the next couple of months. In October, guests will be registering for a Thanksgiving Meal basket that they will receive at the November pantry. Project Hope will again be providing the Turkeys and with the help of area churches and our very own, we will be able to provide all the fixings to go with it. Our church has been asked to collect 100 boxes of stuffing mix and 200 packets of turkey gravy. I know we are up for the challenge! Dave Sherwin and the Community Care committee will be announcing more details about this collection as to where and when you can drop off your donations. Stay tuned!

On November 13th the US Army National Guard has once again offered to hike for hunger and give their donations to our pantry! They will be hiking 14 miles with at least 30 pounds of food on their backs! Last year, you may recall they did this same hike which helped us reach our 500 items challenge from Thrivent. SSG Neil Wesley, assures me that they will have even more troops hiking this year!

I am planning on welcoming these men and women between 11:00am - 1:00pm in our parking lot and hope to offer them a boxed lunch. Anyone who would like to join me in welcoming them in and helping distribute meals is welcome! Masks will be required and social distancing will be practiced. If we have in-climate weather, we will move things into Fellowship Hall. Further restrictions may have to be implemented if we need to do this.

I am so excited for these opportunities to share with our community. **THANK YOU** in advance for your thoughtfulness and generosity in supporting these efforts!

🌀 Food Pantry (cont.)



REMEMBER: look for information regarding the Thanksgiving Meal collection of stuffing mix and gravy packets and keep our men and women in uniform who are so willing to share with us in your thoughts and prayers for a safe hike!

PS. Thank you to the Stott and Roulliard/Thompson families for continuing to support the pantry with their time during pantry day distribution!

~Sue & Kent Ties

Pantry Needs:

Ritz Crackers	Bottled Juice
Hamburger Helper	Jelly
Boxed Potatoes	Kleenex
Bar Soap	Paper Towels

🌀 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

October

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17
10:00 am Loaves & Fishes

~SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18~
WORSHIP LIVESTREAM 8:30 AM
VIRTUAL COFFEE HOUR 9:15 AM



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, OCTOBER 19
ACTS Articles Due
7:00 pm Council Meeting

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21
8:00 pm Compline Prayer via Zoom

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22
1:30 pm Adult Study

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23
9:00 am Fantastic Fibers

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24
9:30 am Deborah Circle

~SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25~
WORSHIP LIVESTREAM 8:30 AM
VIRTUAL COFFEE HOUR 9:15 AM



TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27
7:00 pm Phoebe Circle

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28
8:00 pm Compline Prayer via Zoom

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29
1:30 pm Adult Study



THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1

1:30 pm Adult Study

~SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4~
WORSHIP LIVESTREAM 8:30 AM
VIRTUAL COFFEE HOUR 9:15 AM



WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7

7:30 pm Children & Youth Ministry
8:00 pm Compline Prayer via Zoom

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 8

6:00 pm Worship Ministry Team Mtg

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10

8:30 am Jochebed Circle

~SUNDAY, OCTOBER 11~
WORSHIP LIVESTREAM 8:30 AM
VIRTUAL COFFEE HOUR 9:15 AM



WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14

8:00 pm Compline Prayer via Zoom

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15

1:30 pm Adult Study



YOU ARE INVITED!

On October 16-17th, Tanzanian Treasures, Fabric, and More are partnering with Fremont's Prairie Piecemaker Quilt Guild for Quilt Show/Covid Style.

St Matthew Lutheran Church will host a Mini Quilt Show and Sale from 9 to 5 both Friday and Saturday. You will be asked to wear a mask and social distance. Please enter by the main door on Walnut Street across from Belle Ryan Elementary School.

We will be featuring a display of 20 wall-hangings made of hand dyed fabrics by the ladies in MaMa Shoo's Co-op located at the foot of Mount Kilimanjaro in Moshi, Tanzanian, East Africa. You can see photos of many of these items on the website. We also have a two woman show of photos, quilts, and wall-hangings done by Tammy Ward and Mary Mayfield.

Many of these will be for sale as well with 50% of the purchase price going to the Tanzanian Women's Scholarship fund. Our shop will have a variety of fabrics from Tanzania, East Africa. There will be fat quarters, 1 yard cuts, and some larger pieces in commercial, hand dyed, and wax resist batik. These are made by Mama Shoo's Co-op, by individual artisans and some our students at the Angaza Women's Training Center.. Our merchandise is purchased in Tanzania and brought back by me and my friends as we visit our partner parishes in the Mount Kilimanjaro area.

We will have patterns, kits, artwork, photos, cards, jewelry, clothing, purses, baskets, and more. We prefer cash or checks...Thanks.

COME VISIT US! We would love to see you!

For more information contact Mary Mayfield, mayfieldim@cox.net
402-778-0291 and leave a message.



☞ Thanksgiving Meals



Items Needed

As the food needs will be great this fall, we would like to assist with gathering items for the Project Hope food pantry. This year they are looking to serve 500 families including the St. Matthew pantry clients. To assist with this program, we would like to target gathering 100 stuffing mixes and 200 gravy packets. Items can be dropped off at church. If making a cash donation, please designate Thanksgiving Food Pantry.

We would like all donations to be dropped off at church on or before October 29th.

☞ A Lesson in Appreciation



During a church anniversary celebration, a pastor overheard a group discussing various congregational leaders over the years. Her ears perked up when an older member said, “Whenever someone asks which of our pastors I liked best, my answer is always, ‘The one we have at any given time is my favorite.’”

What a relief for the pastor to hear — and what a great lesson for Pastor Appreciation Month. God sends each shepherd to us with a specific set of spiritual gifts and then works through those gifts to bless us.

☞ Christian Symbol– The Plow

This farming implement is mentioned frequently in the Bible, often in verses about the harvest. Plowing symbolizes preparing the heart to receive God’s truth, or the “seed” of God’s word. The plow also represents commitment; Jesus says, “No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God” (Luke 9:62, NIV). The prophet Elisha burns his plow to show his commitment to answer God’s call (see 1 Kings 19:21).



☞ 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)

☞ Availability



Pastor Glen is in the office on Wednesdays and Carrie is in the office on Thursday afternoons. Please call before coming to the church to ensure that someone is available.

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

☞ 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!

www.facebook.com/St-Matthew-Evangelical-Lutheran-Church-191409984237851/

☞ Special Dates



Pastor Appreciation Month
World Communion Sunday, *October 4, 2020*
Reformation Sunday, *October 25, 2020*
Reformation Day, *October 31, 2020*

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

~August 2020~



General Fund Activity

Beginning				Transfers	Ending
Balance	Receipts	Payments		In (Out)	Balance
39,908.90	13,451.60	17,374.18			35,986.32

Benevolence Offerings

Hunger Offerings

Receipts	Dispersed		Receipts	Dispersed
1,359.00	1,206.00		125.00	105.00

Women of the ELCA



Service Project ~ Deodorant

~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!

