



St. Matthew
Evangelical Lutheran Church

THE ACTS...of God's People

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- ✪ A Message from Pastor Glen
- ✪ Catechism Journey Continues
- ✪ Constitution and By-Laws
- ✪ Parking Lot Funding

UPCOMING EVENTS

- ✪ Senior High Mission Trip July 7-14
- ✪ Shakespeare on the Green July 7
- ✪ Sun Rise Group July 18
- ✪ Rally Day Sunday August 27

~July 2017~



“We all complain about this state of things, but we do not see that it is our own fault.” Martin Luther

I have been pondering on these words a great deal as we come to our annual celebration of America, patriotism and all that we love about our nation. I hear many ideas from many sides about problems in our country, about what is needful, what must be done and what must be undone. I hear these conversations as a citizen, but also as a Pastor, because much of what I hear is accompanied by the idea that what really needs to happen is that we need to become a more “Christian Nation.”

Even if (and maybe especially because) I’m not a politician, that is surely something I would want to speak to.

As a citizen, I wonder how those words sound to my neighbor who is not Christian. Do they find themselves excluded, unwelcomed, despised? I wonder (though I probably know) how they sound to my Christian neighbors who have long since given up on the church. They sound hypocritical, restrictive, tyrannical. They may be much of the reason they don’t go to church anymore.

But as a Pastor, I wonder about something much, much greater. I wonder how they sound to Jesus.

For as great as our aspirations may be, I fear that this is not a Christian nation.

If we define “Christian Nation” in terms of symbols, then we probably are. If we measure our faithfulness by billboards and bumper stickers, by slogans and pretensions, then maybe yes. If all we care about is the size of our churches or of our offerings or of our voting bloc, then probably yes. If our priority is the influence of our pastors and priests and preachers on the work of our politicians, then we are surely moving in that direction.

But is this what it means to be Christian? Is this all we want?

Is this all Jesus wants?

~ Continue On Next Page

☞ Pastor continued



Here in the midst of our study of the Luther's explanations of the Ten Commandments in the Small Catechism we find an important reality check. Luther teaches the *fullness* of the commandments, both their restraint of human sin but also their enticement to the Spirit given in our baptism. Faith is about more than the control of ourselves, of others. It is about the good that we can do, the ways God can use us as his instruments of grace. It is about the stuff that comes after the "but" of Luther's explanations.

And that is what makes a nation - a people - truly Christian.

You know where I'm going with this. Our mission is not about building a Christian nation, or a Christian religion, or even a Christian church. It is about building Christ's people so that they can do Christ-like things, not for themselves but for one another, in the example and in the spirit of the one who gave himself for us. And we are not the people we should be, living the lives we should live or doing the things we should do. This will never be a Christian nation while people are allowed to be sick and uncared for, hungry and unfed, oppressed and used and victimized without being set free. This will never be a Christian nation while some are favored and envied above others, while people are valued for how they can be used rather than who they are. This will never be a Christian nation while we plunder the goodness of creation and neighbor for our own comfort and security. This will never be a Christian nation while we proclaim the work of Christ with our tongues and do the work of the devil with our hands.

But knowing the right path is really not that hard.

Luther reminds us that the amazing truth of the Ten Commandments is, in the end, actually kind of ordinary. They are not especially particular or strange, they are about the right and good that we have always known in our heads as well as in our hearts. They are both reasonable and obvious, if only we will heed them, attend to them, follow them and keep them. They are interwoven in the very fabric of the creation itself. They are how we were made, and they should be how we live.

So come this Independence Day, I will celebrate in the usual fashion – I will eat too much and then light some fireworks. In all of this, I will be grateful that I live in this country, with both its problems and its possibilities. And as I go to bed, I will pray to the God of every nation, that his word will enliven and mold his people into the blessing I know we can be.

Pastor Glen

∞ Catechism Journey



~Luther's Catechism Topics~

July 2	6th/7th/8th Commandments
July 9	9th and 10th Commandments
July 16	Apostle's Creed (1st article)
July 23	Apostle's Creed (2nd article)
July 30	Apostle's Creed (3rd article)
Aug 6	Apostle's Creed (3rd article)
Aug 13	Lord's Prayer
Aug 20	Confession/absolution
Aug 27	Baptism
Sep 3	Communion

THE Catechism Journey continues. Sunday messages will take us through, week by week, Luther's Small Catechism and explore its teachings for faith and life. Then join the Facebook LIVE presentation on Wednesday evenings at 6:00 p.m. – or anytime after! – and go deeper into the topic for the week. Gather your family and gather your neighbors and take advantage of this chance to grow in faith and grace.

∞ Children & Youth Ministry



~Senior High Youth Mission Trip to Rapid City~

PLEASE keep our students in your prayers as they travel to Rapid City South Dakota on this year's mission trip. Students from St. Matthew will be joining students from Immanuel Lutheran Bellevue as we journey together to serve our neighbors. You can follow our journey on the St. Matthew Facebook page during the week of July 7-14! Students will spend their time in service and reflection during this journey.

Watch the St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church Facebook page for the latest updates and information on what is happening at St. Matthew.
www.facebook.com/St-Matthew-Evangelical-Lutheran-Church-191409984237851/

🌀 Constitution & By-Laws



~Constitution & By-Laws Review~

AT the direction of the Congregation Council, a group has been formed to study and suggest revisions and/or other actions to the Congregation pertaining to the existing 1997 Congregation Constitution, 1995 Continuing Resolutions, and 2000 By-laws.

The Nebraska Synod approved a Model Constitution for Congregations in 2016. Our own By-Laws mandate they be reviewed every four years, with which we have not been in compliance. It is the desire of the Congregation Council that we bring all these documents up-to-date, and the Council and Congregation stay in compliance.

The study group will make recommendations to the Congregation Council for study, modification and approval. All final actions pertaining to adopting revised Constitution and By-Laws must be approved by a special meeting of the Congregation solely for this purpose. Study group members include: Pastor Glen Thomas, Veda Keebler (staff), James Moeller (past Council), Don Thompson (Trust Fund Board), Dennis Magnuson (legal advisor), and Scott Albright (Congregation president).

Topics under discussion have included (but not limited to): issues of membership and voting, Congregation Council and officers, required committees, facility usage, organizations, and use of electronic notification.

In-progress drafts of revisions may be requested from the Church office. Also, feel free to contact any of the study group members.

Scott Albright

🌀 VBS - Reformation Adventure



THANKS to all volunteers who helped us create this adventure for all generations. Participants each received a Playmobil Martin Luther figure. Over the summer vacation we will look forward to photos of Martin Luther's adventures as he travels around seeking new adventures!

VBS presents us with the opportunity to share, learn, and play as a faith community across generations. What a great opportunity for all those who participate to see faith through the eyes of the youngest members of our community.

☞ Sacrament of Holy Baptism



CAROLYN Marie Hotchkiss, baptized on June 4, 2017. Carolyn's parents are Scott and Christina Hotchkiss and her grandmother is Linda Hill. Carolyn's baptismal sponsors are Stephanie Weir and Karen Wedergren. Kyle, Austin and Cheyenne are her older siblings.

☞ Thank You!



THANK you to Kathy Cole, Nancy Ehlers, Charlene Lawless and Pat Mandel for volunteering to answer the phone, process the mail and greet visitors in the church office while I was on vacation. Pastor and I appreciate your assistance during my time off.

Veda Keebler

☞ Food Pantry



~Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry~ Pantry Items Needed

Canned beans - any kind, canned tuna or chicken, and pork & beans.

☞ Omaha Gives!



WE raised over \$1800.00 during our Omaha Gives community giving event. Thank you to all the St. Matthew friends who donated. In addition, our friends from the Chin Baptist donated \$1000 toward this project.

We now have enough funds to proceed with work on the parking lots and concrete back entrance. We have plans to start with repairing and overlaying the parking lots shortly with the other concrete repairs to be done after that.

Thanks for your patience and your support!

July 2017

Worship Donations & Volunteers





~July 2017~

DATE	8:30 SERVICE	10:30 SERVICE
7/2	LECTOR - Dennis Magnuson COMMUNION ASSISTANT - Dennis Magnuson and Curt Losee VIDEO TECH - Deanna Hansen ACOLYTE - Shane Waits USHERS - John Gormley, Charlotte Jensen and Ryan Keebler	PRAISE TEAM COMMUNION ASSISTANT - Susan Hollenbeck VIDEO TECH - Jim Moeller ACOLYTE - Max Carter USHERS - Nathan Houfek and Jason Hayek
7/9	LECTOR - Michael Waits COMMUNION ASSISTANT - Michael Waits and Lorie Thomas VIDEO TECH - Kent Ties ACOLYTE - Rachel Bazer USHERS - Charles Cole, Pauline Burke and Ernie Madison	PRAISE TEAM COMMUNION ASSISTANT - Brent Thomsen VIDEO TECH - Andrew Rouillard ACOLYTE - Audrey Schell USHERS - Richard Hollenbeck and Rochelle Foy
7/16	LECTOR - Roger Zeeb COMMUNION ASSISTANT - Roger Zeeb and Jim Wertz VIDEO TECH - Michelle Keebler ACOLYTE - Shane Waits USHERS - Michael Lisko, Dennis and Margie Magnuson	PRAISE TEAM COMMUNION ASSISTANT - Andrew Rouillard VIDEO TECH - Orestes Cooper ACOLYTE - Max Carter USHERS - David Sherwin and Andrew Rouillard
7/23	LECTOR - Deanna Hansen COMMUNION ASSISTANT - Deanna Hansen and Marlys Hanson VIDEO TECH - Lorie Thomas ACOLYTE - Rachel Bazer USHERS - Michael Pribyl, Laura Pribyl and Lucy Younie	PRAISE TEAM COMMUNION ASSISTANT - Jessica Wertz VIDEO TECH - Jim Moeller ACOLYTE - Audrey Schell USHERS - John Hollenbeck and Veda Keebler
7/30	LECTOR - Scott Albright COMMUNION ASSISTANT - Curt Losee and Kathy Cole VIDEO TECH - Curt Losee ACOLYTE - Shane Waits USHERS - John Gormley, Darwin and Phyllis Preuss	PRAISE TEAM COMMUNION ASSISTANT - Nate Houfek VIDEO TECH - Andrew Rouillard ACOLYTE - Max Carter USHERS - Nancy Ehlers and Judy Miller

DATE	COFFEE HOUR HOSTS	ALTAR FLOWER DONATIONS	ALTAR FLOWERS DELIVERY
7/2	WELCA Board Members Randy Cramer & Valorie	Rogene Foy	Donald Thomsen (7/7)
7/9		Ryan & Michelle Keebler	Bobbi Smith (7/14)
7/16		Mary Ann Olig	Fritz Rokahr (7/21)
7/23			Rogene Foy (7/28)
7/30		Anonymous	

SANCTUARY CANDLES: Darwin & Phyllis Preuss
ALTAR GUILD: Deanna Hansen and Kathy Hayek

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
<p>2 WORSHIP WITH HOLY COMMUNION 8:30 AM and 10:30 AM 9:30 am Coffee & Fellowship</p> <p>Brett Fullers</p>	<p>3 Monday Morning Men 9:00 am – 2:00 pm Tanzanian Treasures</p> <p>Rogene Foy</p>	<p>4 Office Closed</p>  <p>Rochelle Foy</p>	<p>5 9:30 am</p> <p>6:00 pm Prai 7:30 pm Chil Meeting</p> <p>Frank Fleming</p>
<p>9 WORSHIP WITH HOLY COMMUNION 8:30 AM and 10:30 AM 9:30 am Coffee & Fellowship 9:30 am Blood Pressure Checks</p> <p>Youth Mission Trip</p> <p>Mark Davis</p>	<p>10 Youth Mission Trip Monday Morning Men 9:00 am – 2:00 pm Tanzanian Treasures</p> <p>Randy Cramers</p>	<p>11 Youth Mission Trip 9:00 am – 3:00 pm Sewing for Babies</p> <p>6:00 pm Worship Ministry Meeting</p> <p>Carrie Conley</p>	<p>12 Youth Mission Trip 9:30 am Wee</p> <p>6:00 pm Prai</p> <p>Charles Cole</p>
<p>16 WORSHIP WITH HOLY COMMUNION 8:30 AM and 10:30 AM 9:30 am Coffee & Fellowship</p> <p>Ron Carpenter</p>	<p>17 <u>Newsletter Deadline:</u> <u>All Articles Due in the</u> <u>Office Today</u> Monday Morning Men 9:00 am – 2:00 pm Tanzanian Treasures 7:00 pm Congregation Council Meeting Lois Callahan</p>	<p>18 9:00 am – 3:00 pm Sewing for Babies</p> <p>Pauline Burke</p>	<p>19 9:30 am</p> <p>6:00 pm Prai</p> <p>Ginger Britt</p>
<p>23 WORSHIP WITH HOLY COMMUNION 8:30 AM and 10:30 AM 9:30 am Coffee & Fellowship</p> <p>Jacob Bazers</p>	<p>24 Monday Morning Men 9:00 am – 2:00 pm Tanzanian Treasures</p> <p>Joel Babbs</p>	<p>25 2:00 pm Sun Rise Group Phoebe Circle Outing</p> <p>Robert Andersons</p>	<p>26 9:30 a</p> <p>6:00 pm Prai</p> <p>Janet Ander</p>
<p>30 WORSHIP WITH HOLY COMMUNION 8:30 AM and 10:30 AM 9:30 am Coffee & Fellowship</p> <p>Lucy Younies</p>	<p>31 Monday Morning Men 9:00 am – 2:00 pm Tanzanian Treasures</p> <p>Jack Wieses</p>		 <p>Say</p>

2017

ical Lutheran Church

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Wednesday Women se Team dren & Youth Ministry gs	6 1:30 pm Adult Study Gloria Eriksen	7 Youth Mission Trip Curt Englunds	1 Teri Gabel <hr/> 8 Youth Mission Trip Nancy Ehlers'
outh Mission Trip dnesday Women se Team es	13 Youth Mission Trip 1:30 pm Adult Study Christine Chubb	14 Youth Mission Trip Carolyn Casteel	15 10:00 am Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry 10:00 am Jazz Service Rehearsal Melissa Carters
m Wednesday Women se Team	20 1:30 pm Adult Study Catherine Beener	21 Rachel Bazer	22 9:30 am Deborah Circle Ken Bazers
m Wednesday Women se Team ersons	27 1:30 pm Adult Study Scott Albright	28 Jack Zich	29 Roger Zeebs
 a prayer for ...	Remember in prayer the family listed at the bottom of each day's schedule.		

Church Staff



Pastor ~ Glen Thomas
Minister to Children & Youth ~ Janet Anderson
Secretary ~ Veda Keebler
Custodian ~ Jack Wiese
Music Director ~ Ric Swanson
Organist ~ Kim Hansen
JuBELLation Ringers Director ~ Ginger Britt

Church Council



Glen Thomas ~ *Pastor*
Scott Albright ~ *President*
Andrew Rouillard ~ *Vice President*
Jenny Fuller ~ *Secretary*
Margie Magnuson ~ *Financial Sec.*
Laura Pribyl ~ *Treasurer*

Cindy Gengel ~ *Community Care*
Ryan Keebler ~ *Faith Formation*
Teri Lisko ~ *Hospitality*
Curt Losee ~ *Property*
Carl Peters ~ *Property*
Randy Cramer ~ *Worship & Music*

Church Office Information



OFFICE HOURS ~ Monday through Friday 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

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 on the answering machine 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 Veda.

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.

Women of the ELCA



~Bible Study Groups~ Deborah Circle

Saturday, July 22, 2017 @ 9:30 a.m.

Study Leader: Nancy Ehlers

Hostess: Judy Miller

Jochebed Circle

No Meeting

Phoebe Circle

Tuesday, July 27, 2017

Summer Outing

Service Project ~ Peanut Butter

~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.

Sun Rise Group



THE Sun Rise Group will meet on July 18 at 2:00 p.m. Come join the fun and bring a friend.

Health Ministry



**~Blood Pressure Screening~
July 9, 2017
9:30 - 10:30 a.m.**

HAVE your blood pressure checked between services.



~KANGA and KITANGA!~

THE northern diocese of Evangelical Lutheran Church Tanzania, East Africa is the Nebraska Synod of the ELCA's companion synod partner. We at St Matthew are privileged to have a partner parish, Tella Lutheran.

When visiting Tanzania you will see many Kangas, a two meter fabric wrap with border and sayings in Swahili. It is an all purpose piece of cloth for everyday wear. It is worn by every age of woman and child in Tanzania. Even the men use Kangas.

Kangas are sold in sets of two...If you are good friends, you might exchange one of your kangas with that special person.... Or your Women's Group at church might all have kangas alike...sort of like our T shirts. Women, are often seen in more than one set of kangas, colors don't have to match or co-ordinate in Tanzania.

A kanga is used as an apron, a hot pad when cooking, as a towel for drying off after bathing, etc. It can be a shawl when the weather gets chilly, or used as an umbrella when it rains. The kanga is often used as a wrap for a baby, it can act as an infant carrier, on the back or front of the mother. A kanga is worn by children when not in their school uniforms, especially at home. A kanga can be a head piece, and can become a dress, in fact several styles of dresses.

There is a book for sale called "101 ways to wear a kanga". It even tells you how to make a swimsuit. So in Tanzania on any given day, you will see hundreds of kangas on every age person from young to old.

A Kitanga is a pattern piece of cloth used like a Kanga. It has no border or Swahili motto on it and is often sold in 6 meter length.

Consider joining us for our Open House in late September when our friends from Tanzania visit and you can experience wearing a kanga, too.

It is a popular gift given in a ceremony with a "gifting song".

Reformation

Mark your calendar now
for a special German dinner.

October 29, 2017

Catered by Gerda's and honoring our heritage.



SALT Group

~Shakespeare on the Green~

The Merry Wives of Windsor

Friday, July 7, 2017

8:00 p.m.



JOIN us at Young Park, a lovely tree-lined grove, nestled just south of UNO's Bell Tower and the home of Shakespeare On the Green. We will show up early and save a section of grass. Bring your blanket/chair, dinner and beverage of choice, or choose to purchase your dinner at one of the food kiosks. There are pre-show entertainment and activities for everyone to enjoy beginning around 6:00 p.m. The show begins at 8:00 p.m.

**Please R.S.V.P to Kent or Sue Ties (402-334-3842)
by July 5 so we know how many places to save!**

Volunteer Opportunity

**~Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministries~
Monke Lodge at The Springs**



THIS summer, the Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministries are partnering with Mission Builders to construct Monke Lodge at The Springs! They need many groups of 3-5 adults to help with construction for one or multiple days. All skill levels are welcome.

Learn more and sign up by visiting NLOM.org/Volunteer or calling them @ 402-944-3544.

Quilt Auction

**~Carol Joy Holling Camp~
Saturday, July 29, 2017
350+ Quilts - All Styles and Varieties**



Quilts on Display starting @ 9:00 a.m.
Auction begins @ 9:30 a.m.
Barbecue Lunch Served from 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Lunch Cost: Adults - \$6, Children (4-12) - \$3
Blessing of the Summer Service Project @ 2:00 p.m.
Swimming Open 12:30 - 5:00 p.m.
Hayrack Rides & Camp Tours Available All Day

Children & Youth Ministry



~Confirmation Camp! In June~

WE started out the summer with our annual Confirmation Camp at Carol Joy Holling. We are very proud of the hard work by our students as we explored the Reformation. Max led the entire community at The Springs in prayer one morning! Way to go Max! Usually we only see the camp counselors leading prayer. Thanks Max!

~Nebraska Synod Heart Journey~

CHILDREN and Volunteers from all over Nebraska gathered in Omaha during the week of June 11-16 to help our serving arms of the ELCA. Volunteers of all ages worked with Mosaic, Local congregations, Table Grace, and Lutheran Family Services. We learned about service organizations and how we can make an impact right here in Nebraska.

Students had a special treat...they were joined by Bishop Brian Maas during worship. The students blessed Bishop Maas before sending him on his sabbatical. We are blessed to be part of a wonderful faith community. We experienced firsthand what it is like to translate words into action as we served those in need!.

Financial Report

~May 2017~



General Fund Activity

Beginning Balance	Receipts	Payments	Transfers In (Out)	Ending Balance
(2,859.81)	16,644.44	20,810.71		(7,026.08)

Benevolence Offerings

Receipts	Dispersed
1,828.00	2,159.73

Hunger Offerings

Receipts	Dispersed
131.00	115.92

Coffee Mugs



ONLY \$6 each, dishwasher safe. Pick yours up from Pastor today.

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.

For those members who use electronic giving to make their offerings to the church, the blue cards in the pews may be put in the offering plate allowing you to participate in the liturgy of giving.



"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

Fax (402) 556-1344

Email: office@smlutheran.com

Web Site: www.smlutheran.com

~WORSHIP SCHEDULE~

Sunday @ 8:30 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.

Holy Communion Every Week

Nursery space available to families with infants and toddlers during worship services.

~SUNDAY COFFEE AND FELLOWSHIP~

9:30 a.m. in Fellowship Hall

~SUNDAY SCHOOL~

9:40 a.m. - 10:20 a.m.

A journey for every child in August!

Sunday School will resume in August!

Developmentally Disabled

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!