



Saint Matthew
LUTHERAN CHURCH

St. Matthew's Messenger

St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church

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FORTY DAYS

Greetings Siblings in Christ!

This month begins Lent and its traditional disciplines: prayer, alms-giving, and fasting. Prayer is, of course, not limited to the Lenten season; these 40 days invite us to consider a new, different, or additional prayer practice, particularly one that encourages the introspection that leads to repentance. Likewise, the poor are always with us and therefore always deserving of our concern and care; the special generosity we undertake during Lent keeps us from focusing so narrowly on our own piety that we forget our God-given purpose to be of service to one another. Fasting evolved over time and in different ways depending on cultural contexts; refraining from food (or certain foods) would certainly mean something different to us now than at periods in history when famine and poor harvests made food insecurity a common experience. Perhaps some other form of fasting would have a greater impact on us now.

However we choose to observe Lent, these 40 days are less about our willpower or strength and more a reminder to turn to Christ in our weakness. Lent is a season of repentance; these disciplines help us see where we could be more Christ-like and practice living more fully into Jesus' way. Whether regarding prayer, giving, or fasting, we should not be waiting for Lent to end so we can return to "normal" behavior; this is a time to practice more clearly reflecting the light of Christ through our lives to others—the life-long charge given to us in baptism.

Lent takes its 40 day format from Jesus' 40 days of temptation, the Israelites' 40 years in the wilderness, and Noah's 40 days and nights of rain. But these 40 days (plus Sundays) of Lent serve a practical purpose as well. Neuroscientists tell us that this is the amount of time required to "re-wire" our brains to build or break habits. If we do something consistently for this long, it feels more natural for us to keep doing it than to skip it. The opposite is also true: if we avoid something for that long, it feels unnatural to start doing it again. A wise and humorous pastor once suggested that if 40 days feels too long, try doing it for six weeks; if six weeks still seems daunting, just try it for a month and a half.

Like Lent, the pandemic caused us to change some of our behaviors—not only for our own benefit but for the sake of our community. After so many months, we might find it hard to envision returning to "normal" even when it is safe to do so. Although that horizon of safety is still a way off, we may want to take some time now to think not just about what aspects of our lives we are waiting to resurrect, but also about what good habits we've established that we'll want to maintain. After all, if we've found a way to live more fully into the life Jesus calls us to live, why limit ourselves to 40 days of Lent (or several months of pandemic)? May this time be fruitful for us, not just now but as we move into the future.

+Pastor Traci

Ash Wednesday—February 17th



Virtual Ash Wednesday services will be on Facebook Live at 9AM and on Zoom at 12PM and 7PM. All three services will be the same, but you can have a fuller communal experience on Zoom if you choose. If you want to impose ashes at home as part of the liturgy, ashes will be available to pick up at the church Sunday, February 14th through Wednesday, February 17th, inside the door to the Fellowship Hall. (You may prepare your own ashes at home by burning palms from previous Palm Sundays. Ashes may stay on longer if you mix the dry ash with a little olive oil. Do NOT mix ashes with water; this will burn your skin.)

Lent-In-A-Bag

We will gather on Zoom for a time of devotion with music and crafts on Thursdays during Lent at 7PM. Materials for the crafts will be available for you to pick up at the church Sunday, February 14th through Wednesday, February 17th inside the door to the Fellowship Hall. Please take one bag per person in your household who wants to participate. We hope to see folks of all ages; very young children may need a little help with the crafts.



Lenten Journey for your Fridge

Post our map on your refrigerator to follow a Lenten journey of daily devotions. Each day has a recommended activity to go with a verse or story from scripture and questions for discussion or personal reflection. Find the maps, a magnet to track your progress, and the accompanying devotional material at the church Sunday, February 14th through Wednesday, February 17th, inside the door to the Fellowship Hall.

*****3 Things to Pick Up at St. Matthew*****

Sunday, February 14th through Wednesday, February 17th, please drop by to pick up:

- Ashes for Ash Wednesday
- Lenten Devotional Journey Map & Materials
- Lent-In-A-Bag Devotional and craft supplies

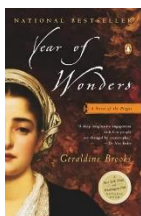
Materials will be inside the door to the Fellowship Hall.

Worship

Sunday Live-stream 9:30 AM
Monday & Friday Hymn Devotions
Tuesday & Thursday Morning & Night Prayer 9 AM & 9 PM
Wednesday Holden Evening Prayer 7 PM

Study

Wednesday Bible Study by Zoom immediately following Holden Evening Prayer (approximately 7:30 PM)
Kids' Devotions Tuesday-Friday
Book Discussion of the novel "Year of Wonders: A Novel of the Plague" by Geraldine Brooks**



Book Study

Insight: When an infected bolt of cloth carries plague from London to an isolated village, a housemaid named Anna Frith emerges as an unlikely heroine and healer. Through Anna's eyes we follow the story of the fateful year of **1666**, as she and her fellow villagers confront the spread of disease and superstition.

We will meet on Zoom for book study on Geraldine Brooks' "Year of Wonders: A Novel of the Plague" on Monday, February 22nd at 3PM and 7PM. We will discuss the whole book at either session; pick the time that is most convenient to you.

Martinsburg Food Pantry

Volunteers from Salem United Church of Christ, along with regular volunteers, will be assisting with the distribution of food on Thursdays, February 4 and February 18 from 9:00am until 11:00am. The February items most needed are: Fruit, Tuna or Hamburger Helper, Macaroni, Tomato Sauce and Paper Towels.

Our Thanks to St. Matthew Church Council for the end of the year donation of \$100! We appreciate the support in providing food, relief and hope for needy families in our community. **Linda K. Smith**



Mitten Tree/Box

Also, there were 68 items collected from the "Mitten Tree":

- 25 hats
- 18 pairs of mittens, gloves
- 18 hat, mitten, glove sets
- 2 scarves
- 5 pairs of socks

These were taken to the school nurse for children in the 2 elementary schools. Money donations will be used for purchasing additional needed items.



**NOTE!
ADDRESS CHANGE**

NEW ADDRESS

Catherine Corcoran

13154 SW 62nd Ave
Portland, OR 97219-8008

Bob & Annette Ritchey

1646 Curryville Rd
Martinsburg, PA 16662-8733

Kyle Guyer

294 Twin ridge Rd
New Enterprise, PA 16664-9819

The American Red Cross is very grateful for your generous gift of \$100.00 for the local chapter.



Gail McGovern President & CEO

Thank you for your generous contribution of \$300.00 and continued support of the Hollidaysburg American Legion Ambulance Service.

Holbg. Ambulance Service

On behalf of Habitat for Humanity Blair County, we thank you for your donation of \$50.00 to the local chapter.

Amanda Conway, Office Mgr.

Thank you for the opportunity to work with you this past year on your fencing needs. We wish you and the members of St. Matthew all the best this new year.

Martin & Sons Fencing

Your dedication to our mission to serve all people is clearly demonstrated by your financial support of Allegheny Lutheran Social Ministries of your donations of \$317.00.

Patricia Savage, President & CEO

Thank you to the members of Council and of St. Matthew for the Christmas Bonus. Thank you for the opportunity to make music for and with you.

Dr. Adam Smith

Many thanks for the Christmas bonus and gifts that my family and I received during the holidays. It is definitely a pleasure working for St. Matthew all these years.

Lori Tremmel

Thank you for your contributions throughout the year and for your December donation of \$200.00.

Rev. Nathan Pile, Exec. Dir./Pastor

Many thanks to Council for the monetary Christmas gift. I appreciate your kindness.

Mary Nelson

Thank you for your support with prayers and financial donations to United Lutheran Seminary.

Rev. Dr. Martin Otto Zimmann

Thank you for your donation of \$400.00 to the Martinsburg Fire Company. Your donation is much appreciated and helps the community.

Tara Hoover, Financial Sec.

Thank you so much for all the cards and well wishes I received for my 90th Birthday. All 65 were very much appreciated.

Jean Stonerook



February 2021

There is truly no time like the present ... NOW!

There is a sad, but true story of a man of considerable means that could not attend worship on Sundays because that was the day he had to count the last week's receipts from one of the several businesses he owned. However, the business man had told the pastor that while he was not currently giving to the church, when he died the church would receive a nice bequest. Well, about two years later, the man died and the church was not even mentioned in his will. Not because he wasn't well-intentioned, but because he had never gotten around to it.

He put his stewardship of the blessings God had given him on hold ... rather than acting on it ... NOW!

St. Paul wrote to the church in Corinth these words: "Now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation." (II Corinthians 6:2) We can add to that: "Now is also the day of stewardship." After all, it is not how we plan to serve Christ in the future (after our own business and pleasures); it is how we seriously serve Christ today. Salvation today requires stewardship today. "The love of Christ urges us on..." wrote St. Paul. (II Corinthians 5:14) And so it does! It really does! Today. NOW!

Prayer: *Gracious Lord, you have opened your hands toward us again and again with gifts galore. Stir us up to use these gifts not only for ourselves, but for your church and the hurts of the world. In Christ's name. Amen*

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You can get a digital copy on our website: stmatthewLC.com

Transformational Ministry

Each month and on a daily basis, we ask you to join us in prayer. Our February special prayer request:

Heavenly father give us the grace to maintain our hope in you, that you will guide us through all of the life changes that have affected our daily lives because of Covid-19.

We pray for all those that have been affected by this virus, our first responders, our teachers, and our frontline workers. Pray they keep strong, healthy, and safe. We ask these things in your holy name. Amen.

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Samuel L. Stahl
- 2 Brian Brumbaugh
- 4 Ashley Smith
- 5 Mary K. Baker
Barbara J. Beyer
Olivia Day
Elaine Smith
- 6 Steve Claycomb
- 7 Camden A. Hoover
- 8 Jenna Carder
Gavin Ross
- 9 Elizabeth Haffling
Casey J. Hoover
Loy C. Replogle
- 10 Gabrielle Decker
- 12 Jane L. Fagans
Pam Russell
- 14 Steve Ebersole
Jeffrey K. Hite
John H. Lear
- 15 Richard Snyder
- 17 James R. Fagans
James A. Stewart
Elaine (Joy) Williams
- 18 Brett Buchart
Kinsley Frederick
- 19 Barbara Moorhead
- 20 Greg Dick
A J Hoenstine
Dani Wright
- 21 Jeffrey L. Garner
Doris A. Henderson
- 22 Betsy Snyder
- 24 Walter I. Szymckec
- 28 Eric R. Frederick
Matthew Freyer
Allen Kuster
- 29 Anne E. Stewart

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

- 10 Warren & Dottie Daniel
- 13 Mark & Debra Guyer
- 22 Richard & Kay McGraw
- 26 Dan & Gloria Guyer
- 27 Jay & Laura M. Webb



THIRD CENTURY FUND (ENDOWMENT FUND)

The Third Century Fund had good earnings year in 2020 and as a result has \$5,437 for distribution in 2021. You or your committee may request funding in writing by contacting David Lehman, chairperson or committee members Allen Kuster, Laura Orzcek, Beth Garner or Pastor Traci.

Deadline to submit a request is Sunday, May 30, 2021. Funds will be distributed in June 2021.

The following is from the by-laws of the Third Century Fund and outline the guidelines for fund requests.

PURPOSE

The St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church Mission Endowment Fund is established to encourage responsible Christian stewardship and to promote the mission of the congregation. In response to God's love and mercy, the Endowment Fund seeks to enhance and expand the mission outreach objectives of St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Members and friends of St. Matthew congregation are encouraged to practice responsible Christian Stewardship by making contributions to the Endowment Fund. There are a variety of ways such gifts can be made such as, Cash, Securities, Bequests through wills or living trusts, Life insurance policies, charitable gift annuity and Life estates.

The Endowment Fund provides financial support for the church in a manner that is separate from the expenditures normally funded by the annual operating budget of the congregation,

USE OF THE FUND

All contributions to the St. Matthew Lutheran Church Endowment Fund will be undesignated and added to the principal balance of the fund. The Endowment fund principal balance will be retained and only the dividend income will be used for annual disbursements.

Consideration for awarding fund requests will be given using the following guidelines.

1. Youth of all ages - scholarship support of congregational members and their children; for youth events, for church camps or similar Christian programs and education.
2. Christian outreach ministries and missions of St. Matthew Lutheran Church, its members and the ELCA.
3. Worship and music - support for the worship of St, Matthew.
4. Capital Projects - major renovations or building projects of St. Matthew.

January 29, 2021



**Dear Lord, As we enter
this Solemn and Holy
Season, we pray that
you would send your
Holy Spirit upon us that
we might prepare ourselves
for these coming 40 days of Lent.
Even though we may no longer wear sackcloth
and ashes, we do seek to humble ourselves so
that we can understand the magnificence of Your
Love for us as You humbled Yourself and gave Your
Life on the Cross that we might receive the gift of
Eternal Glory with You. AMEN.**

2021 COUNCIL DIRECTORY AND MINISTRY STAFF

Pastor	Rev. Traci Marriott	935-9267	Property	Ed Kreider	793-4302
Admin. Assist.	Lori Tremmel	696-3802	Christian Ed.	Jean Sinal	793-9507
Assist. Admin. Assist.	Laura Orczeck	224-1208	Evangelism	Vacant	
President	Melissa Fetzer	793-2735	Stewardship	Greg Haffling	793-9827
Vice President	Peggy Steinfurth	515-6205	Finance	Jim Barley	793-4623
Secretary	Elaine Smith (434)	981-0560	Social Ministry	Peggy Freyer	614-4552
Treasurer	Beth Garner	793-3966	Worship & Music	Jane Fagans	793-4401
Financial Secretary	Anna Klepser	793-2094	Staff Support	Kaye Burket	224-5224

HIGHLIGHTS BY COUNCIL IN JANUARY

1. Council voted on hiring Camden Kuster as our Audio Technician as of January 12, 2021 retroactive to the 10th of January 2021.
2. Council agreed to designate \$15,500 of Pastor Traci's total compensation as housing allowance.
3. Council agreed to reappoint Dave Lehman as the 3rd Centuries Committee Chair (Endowment).
4. Council agreed that the deficits in Current Expense and Benevolence were to be made up by the government loan we received in 2020.
5. Council agreed to continue the Families first Coronavirus Relief Act until March 31, 2021.

Giving

2020 December		Year to Date as of 12/31/2020	
Current	\$24,256.77	Current	\$183,226.35
Benevolence (Synod)	\$2,538.00	Benevolence (Synod)	\$21,475.50
United Lutheran Seminary	\$1,298.00	United Lutheran Seminary	\$3,267.64

2019 December		Year to Date as of 12/31/19	
Current	\$31,693.08	Current	\$203,770.19
Benevolence (Synod)	\$2,894.00	Benevolence (Synod)	\$20,778.55
United Lutheran Seminary	\$2,007.50	United Lutheran Seminary	\$4,145.50

2020 Income vs Expenses		
Current	December	Year to Date as of 12/31/2020
Actual	\$6,635.10	(\$6,893.57)
Per Budget	\$5,625.69	(\$40,346.65)
<u>Benevolence</u>		
Per Commitment to Synod	\$371.33	(\$4,524.50))