



Saint Matthew
LUTHERAN CHURCH

St. Matthew's Messenger

St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church

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Dear Siblings in Christ:

As the pandemic stretches on, we find ourselves grieving not only the loss of the life and health of so many in our nation and world, but also the loss or change of many of the joys that normally punctuate the long days of summer: graduations, baseball, fireworks, summer camp, travel. As our patience and energy wane and our grief continues, it has unfortunately become popular to contrast the efforts of mitigation with personal freedom, which is unhelpful and even dangerous rhetoric as we prepare to celebrate Independence Day.

Freedom is central to our national identity, and we do not take for granted the freedom to practice our religion. However, the concept of freedom means something different to us as Christians. In scripture, we read that now that we are freed from sin we are enslaved to God (Romans 6:22). Therefore, although we are no longer forced into a particular way of living for our own eternal well-being, we are called to acts of mercy, justice, and love for the benefit of others in response to God's freeing redemption. In other words, our freedom comes with responsibility.

So again, I want to reiterate that our suspension of in-person worship is not because of government orders; and as we begin planning for in-person worship, the changes and accommodations we will have to make to our services will not be motivated primarily by legal concerns (although we are also attentive to those). We are making difficult decisions out of our care for the health and well-being of one another and our broader community. Christ's call to love our neighbor simply outweighs any personal civil rights that, if we would exercise them, could negatively affect others.

To apply the theme of our ongoing pandemic approach to this holiday season, and to share a bit of humorous internet wisdom: Just because we're Ameri-can doesn't always mean we Ameri-should. Through baptism, we are sanctified for lives that reflect more than merely what we can get away with doing. Nobody is saying that forgoing in-person worship, limiting our activities and interactions, or wearing a mask that doesn't protect us as much as it protects others is easy, but sometimes we are called to do hard things. I thank you for continuing to be disciples who follow Jesus' example of self-sacrifice in loving service to others.

Peace,
Pastor Traci

Return to In-person Worship Survey

The Council of St. Matthew has convened a task force to plan for resuming in-person worship while limiting (though not eliminating) health and safety risks. The target date for resuming in-person worship is September 6th. The task force has created a very brief survey to collect necessary information to enact a plan. Please have one person from your household take the survey to help the task force make the best choices for the congregation. You only need to take the survey in one format--online or printed and mailed back to St. Matthew. Thank you for helping us on the road to getting back together in person.

July Worship Schedule—Please Note Changes

Sundays: 9:30 AM Worship on Facebook, 10:15ish Fellowship on Zoom

Mondays & Fridays: Hymn Devotions posted at 9 AM

Tuesday & Thursdays: Morning Prayer at 9 AM & Night Prayer at 9 PM

Wednesdays: Holden Evening Prayer at 8 PM

July Study Schedule

Wednesday morning Zoom bible study will be taking a summer break.

The final two sections of the book study on Awaken Your Senses (hearing and smell) will be discussed together at 3 PM or 7 PM on Thursday, July 2.

Martinsburg Food Pantry

We will be open for distribution of food on Thursdays, July 2 and July 16 from 9:00-11:00 a.m.



We have continued serving those in need during this coronavirus crisis with the help of many that generously have donated. Since March we have prepared food bags for families, and only had individuals come one at a time to receive food and food vouchers. We plan beginning in July to let no more than 5 families come in at a time to keep social distancing and continue wearing masks.

Church volunteers will be helping again, and Brethren in Christ Church will be assisting along with regular volunteers.

Following are items most needed for July: Beverages, Cereal, Peaches, Pancake Mix and syrup and personal items.

Not all churches have been open, but a box is provided at C & S Market to place food items, or a check can be marked **Martinsburg Food Pantry** and be mailed to Linda Smith at 118 Spring St., Martinsburg, PA 16662.

Many thanks for all the help given during this time!

Coming to a Lawn Near You...

Now that the weather is nice and Blair County is in the "Green" phase of reopening, Pastor Traci is able to make socially-distanced outside visits and has her lawn chair packed in the car, ready to go. Call if you'd like her to come sit outside with you for a visit (814-935-9267). If you provide your own bread and wine, you can have communion. Otto the dog is also available for visits (or not) every other week.

Thank You!

Thank you for the prayers and cards during my recent illness. They meant a lot. **Joey Tremmel**

Thank you for your gift to purchase Bibles. The donation includes the cost of getting a Scripture placed into the hands of someone who needs it.

The Gideons International

Dear Friends, After sharing our joy with you for our Mother Betty Jane's 90th birthday in October 2019, during which she received well over 300 cards, letters and phone calls, it is with great sorrow we now share with you that our mother Betty Jane has on 20May20 joined our Father Pastor Clarence in the church triumphant. She passed peacefully with family holding her hand. We all praise God for having given us such loving parents. As Dad, Pastor Clarence, always said, "We will see you all there!!!" We thank you for your thoughts and prayers during this time. God be with you all.

Kirk, Jeff and Pam, Arnold, Amy and Michael and families.

Thank you for the generous scholarship from the Third Century Fund. I am very appreciative of the money to further my education at Juniata College where I will be starting this fall. I miss attending worship services and seeing the members of St. Matthew.

Olivia day

Thank you for your recent gift of \$2,525.00 from your Third Century Fund, to Sequanota's ministry. Your willingness to contribute has made a lasting impact!

Rev. Nathan Pile, Exec. Dir./Pastor



**Attendance
Counts**

Attendance for June 2020

No regular attendance was observed since Covid-19 started March 15, 2020 for St. Matthew. We worshiped online through Facebook and Zoom with an average attendance of 100 viewers.

Chapel Service Attendance None
because of Covid-19

Average Sunday Worship attendance 2019 – 84

Average Sunday School attendance 2019 – 99



Ashley, Adam, Ava, Alex and Alivia Zanfino

110 Link Ln
Duncansville, PA16635-4530

Jim Calvert

916 Hickory St Lutheran Home
Hollidaysburg, PA 16648-2248

Jason and Jessica (Orczek) Close

1699 Wiltshire Rd
Akron, Ohio 44313

DeYogaVotions In the Park



Saturday, July 25th at 9AM
Pastor Traci will offer gentle yoga with guided scriptural mediation outside at Canoe Creek State Park. All are

welcome, including friends; please be aware that this will be a socially distanced event and masks should be worn before and after the practice; please bring your own mat.

Transformational Ministry



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

Dear God, our world is hurting and broken.

We pray for those who have lost loved ones in recent months, please comfort them in their grief and loss, cover them with your peace and presence, as only your Spirit can do. We know that in whatever we face, you are our peace and refuge, a very present help in times of trouble. Thank you that you remind us throughout your word, we do not face the storms alone, but you are always with us. Whispering calm. Speaking peace. Bringing rest to our souls.

We confess our need for you. We ask you to forgive us for trying to figure everything out on our own, for not trusting that you are more than able and powerful to work on our behalf. Forgive us for picking back up what we already determined to lay down at your feet. Give us the ability to trust you more, give us a heart that finds rest in your presence, give us the wisdom to seek peace and pursue it, remembering it's only to be found in you alone.

Thank you that your yoke is easy and your burden is light. Thank you that you care for us. Thank you that the peace of your loving and strong presence guards and protects our hearts and minds in you. Thank you that we do not have to walk in fear or live in overwhelmed cycles of worry and stress. Thank you for your voice that breaks through the greatest wind and storm swirling around us, and whispers "Peace, be still." Thank you that you sent your One and Only Son to set us free.

In the Name of Jesus, Amen.

Please join us in daily prayer as we lift these concerns to the Lord.

New Phone Number



Audrey Hite has a new phone number: 814-935 4493. Please do not use the old 793 number.



July 2020

Have you ever been in a quandary about how much to give to your church? Of course you have. Each of us has had to struggle with how much we will or can give to our church.

Ted Knutson was a farmer dealing with just this problem. He and his wife gave their time and talent to God, but while considering giving resources to his church he was perplexed by the issues of a typical farmer ... income comes at once after the harvest, but the church has monthly needs. Sometimes it is a struggle to come up with a plan we can live with.

Ted wondered what he could do about it personally. He and his wife took the situation to the Lord. As the two prayed and thought about it, they came to the conclusion that just as they paid regularly for the necessities of life: food, clothing, gasoline, and utilities, they too could give weekly to the church. They also concluded that if they had a bountiful harvest and their income swelled, they would be able to give a full tithe or more.

The full story is in this month's issue of *Stewardship*, but with that plan, they were able to find inner peace regarding their stewardship. The trouble was that when only small amounts were given weekly to the church, the church sometimes had to borrow from the bank to meet current expenses. As others learned of the Knutson's new approach to financial giving, perhaps they would follow suit.

What does the Knutson story say to us? Surely it says that every Christian family must work out their own stewardship plan. And it says that praying seriously about it will enable each family to find guidance as to what they should do about their own stewardship.

Prayer: *Almighty God, you open your hands and all of our needs are met. Guide us in the use of all your gifts to us that we may please you completely in our stewardship. Amen.*



Sequanota e-notes

We hope and pray that you and your loved ones have found ways to cherish extra family time while remaining safe during the pandemic. As we continue with the newly envisioned summer season, we wanted to make you aware of opportunities that will help you to rest and renew. Please share this information with everyone that could benefit from some time away.

Campground

Sequanota has a limited number of cabins available to be reserved for family (or people you who you choose to shelter with) camping getaways. Each cabin includes a private bathroom, sleeping bunks, electricity and drinkable water, picnic table, private fire circle, pass to the swimming pool, use of hiking trails and recreation areas. More information on pricing, policies, and reservations is available on the website.

For families located close to Sequanota, we have summer recreation passes available. This pass will allow your family access to hiking trails, large athletic field, gaga ball, tetherball, volleyball, basketball, and pool during open swim times (Thursdays - Mondays). The pool will be open from July 1 - August 16. Only pass holders and campground guests will have access to the pool, it will not be open to the public this summer. You will be required to sign-in each day you come to camp. We are requesting a donation be made to camp for this pass:

- Tier 1: \$100
- Tier 2: \$150
- Tier 3: \$200

Scholarships are available for families unable to make one of the tier donations. All participants receive the same camp experience no matter what they pay. Please fill out the [online form](#), reply to this email, or call the office, (814) 629-6627 to obtain your Sequanota Summer Recreation Pass.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call or email the camp office.

**Summer blessings to you,
Rev. Nathan Pile**

Anniversaries for July

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 Jim & Jane Fagans | 15 Mike & Christine Panek 20 th |
| Keith & Andrea McGraw 25 th | 16 Paul & Marjorie Helsel |
| 3 William & Cheryl Gigante | Dr. Murray & Sharon Smith |
| 10 Zane & M. Jane Staily | 26 Shawn & Wendy McCauley 40 th |
| 14 Casey & Jessica Hoover | 26 Greg & Julie Russell |
| 15 Mark & Lori Johnson | 29 A J & Jane Hoenstine 20 th |

Birthdays for July

- | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| 3 Glenn Baker | 9 Jeremy Smith | 24 Audrey Hite |
| 4 Nan Grove | Janet Stewart | 25 Julie Dick |
| 5 Sharon Hicks | 11 Scott Paul | 26 Douglas Bush |
| William Stahl | Barb Wilt | Amy Haffling |
| 8 Marjorie Helsel | 15 Martie Gilbert | Dr. Shawn Orczeck |
| Shaffer Johnson | Janet A. Miller | Carol Rugh |
| Cora Sweinhart | 18 Jordan Smith | 27 Arnold Moore |
| 9 Jeffrey Hoenstine | 19 Melissa Fetzer | Calleigh Wright |
| Brandi Ross | 21 Dan Tremmel | 28 Kylee Frederick |
| | 22 Tripp Crilly | Larry Frederick |
| | Brandon Oswalt | 30 Beth Rager |



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Red for the blood shed in the name of Freedom, for which we fought, united
Blue for the oceans of time we have crossed, remaining the land of the free
White for the peace we wish to share, all men created equal
Stars to remember those who fought throughout the night, bravely for our land
Stripes to remind us of the lashings taken by the Prisoners of War
With a seal, in God we trust
We each are one of many, in which we stand united in Brotherhood
A symbol of Pride
A salute to those who died in the fight
A blanket to cover us in times of need
Waving high to show we are still here, undefeated
With honor you are presented to the world

2020 COUNCIL DIRECTORY AND MINISTRY STAFF

Pastor	Rev. Traci Marriott	935-9267	Property	Warren Daniel	935-9249
Admin. Assist.	Lori Tremmel	696-3802	Christian Ed.	Bonnie Casey	285-1610
Assist. Admin. Assist.	Laura Orczeck	224-1208	Evangelism	Les Loomis	(570) 885-0572
President	Melissa Fetzer	793-2735	Stewardship	Greg Haffling	793-9827
Vice President	Sheena Tremmel	515-2962	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 JUNE

1. Council agreed to reinvest \$45,000 that is designated for youth with the Thrivent Income Fund and \$18,000 undesignated funds with the Thrivent Diversified Income Plus Fund. These monies were from the Rosamond Smith Bequest funds St. Matthew received last year.
2. Finance, Staff Support and Worship and Music recommended paying a stipend of \$50.00 to the audio/video tech each Sunday until we start to meet regularly in the Sanctuary. Council approved..

Giving

2020 May		Year to Date as of 5/31/2020	
Current	\$21,346.60	Current	\$82,122.60
Benevolence (Synod)	\$2,040.00	Benevolence (Synod)	\$9,228.00
Youth & Camping	\$1,401.00	2nd Qrt. Youth & Camping	\$2,585.50

2019 May		Year to Date as of 5/31/19	
Current	\$14,499.33	Current	\$81,117.33
Benevolence (Synod)	\$1,372.50	Benevolence (Synod)	\$7,523.05
Youth and Camping	\$1,063.00	2nd Qrt. Youth & Camping	\$2,784.00

2020 Income vs Expenses		
Current	May	Year to Date as of 5/31/2020
Actual	\$7,286.46	\$1,118.83
Per Budget	\$2,715.52	(\$11,032.82))
<u>Benevolence</u>		
Per Commitment to Synod	(\$126.67)	(\$1,605.33)

Ways to Make Donations to St. Matthew

Giving Online: Giving online is easy and allows you to set up automatic recurring contributions and view your complete online giving history from anywhere you have access to the Internet. Simply follow these easy steps:

- 1) Visit the church website at "www.stmatthewlc.com"
- 2) Click on the "**Give**" button, (on the top white banner)
- 3) Follow the onscreen instructions to create an online profile and to schedule your recurring contributions.

Barcode Offerings:

- 1) Visit "**Play Store on your mobile device**"
- 2) Find QR Code (this app is free)
- 3) Click on the "**Install**" the app
- 4) Open the app on your device
- 5) Scan the Barcode: (follow the prompts)





Social Security and Medicare Face Financial Challenges

Most Americans will eventually receive Social Security and Medicare benefits. Each year, the Trustees of the Social Security and Medicare Trust Funds release lengthy reports to Congress that assess the health of these important programs. The newest reports, released on April 22, 2020, discuss the current financial condition and ongoing financial challenges that both programs face, and project a Social Security cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for 2021.

How Social Security and Medicare will be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic is still uncertain; the Trustees acknowledge that the estimates and analysis included in the reports do not reflect the potential effects.

Social Security Trust Funds

The Social Security program consists of two parts, each with its own financial account (trust fund) that holds the Social Security payroll taxes that are collected to pay Social Security benefits. Retired workers, their families, and survivors of workers receive monthly benefits under the Old-Age and Survivors Insurance (OASI) program; disabled workers and their families receive monthly benefits under the Disability Insurance (DI) program. The combined programs are referred to as OASDI. Other income (reimbursements from the General Fund of the U.S. Treasury and income tax revenue from benefit taxation) is also deposited in these accounts. Money that is not needed in the current year to pay benefits and administrative costs is invested (by law) in special Treasury bonds that are guaranteed by the U.S. government and earn interest. As a result, the Social Security Trust Funds have built up reserves that can be used to cover benefit obligations if payroll tax income is insufficient to pay full benefits.

Note that the Trustees provide certain projections based on the combined OASI and DI (OASDI) Trust Funds. However, these projections are hypothetical, because the trusts are separate, and generally one program's taxes and reserves cannot be used to fund the other program.

Highlights of Social Security Trustees Report

- Social Security's total cost is projected to be less than its total income in 2020 and higher than its total income (including interest) in 2021 and all later years. The U.S. Treasury will need to withdraw from trust fund reserves to help pay benefits. The Trustees project that the hypothetical combined trust fund reserves (OASDI) will be depleted in 2035, the same as projected in last year's report, unless Congress acts.
- Once the hypothetical combined trust fund reserves are depleted in 2035, payroll tax revenue alone should still be sufficient to pay about 79% of scheduled benefits initially, with the percentage falling gradually to 73% by 2094.
- The OASI Trust Fund, when considered separately, is projected to be depleted in 2034, the same as projected in last year's report. Payroll tax revenue alone would then be sufficient to pay 76% of scheduled benefits.
- The DI Trust Fund is expected to be depleted in 2065, 13 years later than projected in last year's report. For a second year in a row, the depletion date has changed significantly, reflecting the fact that both benefit applications and the total number of disabled workers currently receiving benefits have been declining over the past few years. Once the DI Trust Fund is depleted, payroll tax revenue alone would be sufficient to pay 92% of scheduled benefits.
- Based on the "intermediate" assumptions in this year's report, the Social Security Administration is projecting that the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA), which will be announced in the fall of 2020, will be 2.3% (last year's report projected a COLA of 1.8% and the actual COLA was 1.6%). This COLA would apply to benefits starting in January 2021.

(continued)

Medicare Trust Funds

There are two Medicare trust funds. The Hospital Insurance (HI) Trust Fund helps pay for hospital care (Medicare Part A costs). The Supplementary Medical Insurance (SMI) Trust Fund comprises two separate accounts, one covering Medicare Part B (which helps pay for physician and outpatient costs) and one covering Medicare Part D (which helps cover the prescription drug benefit).

Highlights of Medicare Trustees Report

- Annual costs for the Medicare HI Trust Fund exceeded tax income each year from 2008 to 2015. There were small fund surpluses in 2016 and 2017. In 2018 and 2019, expenditures exceeded income, and deficits are expected for all later years.
- The HI Trust Fund is projected to be depleted in 2026, the same year as projected in last year's report. Once the HI Trust Fund is depleted, tax and premium income would still cover 90% of estimated program costs, declining to 78% by 2044 and then gradually increasing to 90% by 2094. The Trustees note that long-range projections of Medicare costs are highly uncertain because the health-care landscape is shifting and the effects are unknown.

Why are Social Security and Medicare Facing Financial Challenges?

Social Security and Medicare are funded primarily through the collection of payroll taxes. Because of demographic and economic factors, including higher retirement rates and lower birth rates, there will be fewer workers per beneficiary over the long term, worsening the strain on the trust funds.

What is Being Done to Address These Challenges?

Both reports continue to urge Congress to address the financial challenges facing these programs soon, so that solutions will be less drastic and may be implemented gradually, lessening the impact on the public. Combining some of the following solutions may also lessen the impact of any one solution.

- Raising the current Social Security payroll tax rate (currently 12.40%). According to this year's report, an immediate and permanent payroll tax increase of 3.14 percentage points to 15.54% would be necessary to address the long-range revenue shortfall (4.13 percentage points to 16.53% if the increase started in 2035).
- Raising or eliminating the ceiling on wages currently subject to Social Security payroll taxes (\$137,700 in 2020).
- Raising the full retirement age beyond the currently scheduled age of 67 (for anyone born in 1960 or later).
- Reducing future benefits. According to this year's report, to address the long-term revenue shortfall, scheduled benefits would have to be immediately and permanently reduced by about 19% for all current and future beneficiaries, or by about 23% if reductions were applied only to those who initially become eligible for benefits in 2020 or later.
- Changing the benefit formula that is used to calculate benefits.
- Calculating the annual cost-of-living adjustment for benefits differently.