



Saint Matthew
LUTHERAN CHURCH

St. Matthew's Messenger

St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church

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Volume 64

JANUARY 2024

Number 1

Happy New Year, People of God!

Considering our calendar year is not tied to the lunar cycle, doesn't match up with our (or other religions') liturgical seasons, and isn't based on the winter solstice, January 1 can seem like an arbitrary time to mark a new year. Yet culturally we are encouraged to take stock of what has come before and look ahead with expectation to something new and different.

I'm not a big resolution person, but I did purchase a 2024 cloth calendar with a tree on it: each "leaf" is a tiny calendar date over which I'll cross-stitch a certain color thread based on the high temperature of the day. I'm not a big meteorology person either, but I'm going to see if I can stick to the discipline. Since I'll be out of town at least a few times this year and don't expect to travel with it, I know that realistically I'll have to play catch-up on some of the days...or possibly some of the months...

One of the reasons I resist New Year's resolutions (or honestly, Lenten disciplines) is that I get too caught up in the perfectionism of sticking to a plan. I have a hard time seeing that six days of doing something good is still six good days, even if I don't make it a whole week. Fortunately, God gives us a lot more grace than we give ourselves. Lamentations assures us that God's mercies are new every morning—a great reminder that when we miss at whatever we're aiming to do, we get to try again tomorrow. What a bold way to begin this new year—giving ourselves as much freedom to try as God gives us forgiveness when we fall.

+Peace & Blessings for 2024

Pastor Traci

Mitten Tree Thank You!

Many thanks to everyone who contributed generously to the "Mitten Tree" by bringing colorful home-made, bought items, and financial gifts for needy elementary school children! Because of your kindness, these children will have a Warmer Winter!



These items were distributed to Martinsburg and Spring Cove Elementary Schools. The total items received were: 11 pairs mittens, 17 hats/mittens or gloves sets, 8 pairs socks for a total of 36 items.

Goal Setting

All committees should hold a meeting in January to set their "Goals" for 2024. Please inform the church office of the date and time of your meeting.

Snow Camp 2024

"Sabbath in the Snow"

Friday-Sunday, February 2-4
Camp Sequanota, Jennerstown PA
6th - 12th Grade

Games, Crafts, Food, Sledding, Worship, & Learning
Accommodations in Sequanota's Winterized Cabins
Register from December 15 to January 20 at www.sequanota.com

Families are asked to pay \$10; St. Matthew will cover the rest.

Please contact Pastor Traci with any questions.
Adult Helper(s) Welcome!



6th-12th Grade Youth are invited to join Pastor Traci for Snow Camp at Sequanota, February 2-4. This year's theme is "Sabbath in the Snow" and will focus on God's command to balance our busy lives with time of intentional rest and care. Registration is open through January 20th on Camp's website: www.sequanota.com. [Select pay by check; please pay \$10 each to St. Matthew and St. Matthew will cover the rest).

20 + C + M + B + 24

This is not a secret code but the traditional house blessing that we write in chalk over our doorways at Epiphany. C+M+B stands for "Christ's Mansionem Benedicat" meaning "May Christ Bless this Dwelling" and is inscribed within the numbers of the new year. If you would like Pastor Traci to visit to bless your house for the new year, give her a call.

(Writing on your house in chalk is optional.)

Thank you!

I'd like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the Council, committee members, and people of St. Matthew who made this Christmas season special. Your generosity and support are true gifts and so much appreciated. I'm looking forward to the ministry we do together in 2024.



*Thank you,
Pastor Traci*

Thank you to everyone for being so kind and welcoming with cards, gifts and well-wishes during my first Christmas season here at St. Matthew. Also, thank you to the Congregation and Council for the thoughtful Christmas bonus.

Jen Ripka

Thanks to all who prepared the delicious Christmas treats. Larry and I are blessed to be a part of St. Matthew LC.

Ann Irvin

Thank you so much to the Social Ministry/Fellowship Committees for the Christmas cookies and treats delivered by Connie Lamborn and Kaye Burket. It was so much appreciated.

Mary Creps



On behalf of the Social Ministry Committee and the Fellowship Committee, thank you to everyone who donated cookies, snacks, and candy for the treat boxes that were prepared for the shut-ins. There was a nice variety and plenty to go share. Also, thank you to everyone who helped to prepare the boxes and make the deliveries. I am sure the folks who are unable to get out much were appreciative of the treats and the visits.

Jane Fagans



A Stewardship Minute JANUARY 2024

“Stewardship is how we manage what God has given us in this life.” We are each meant to consider whatever we have as gifts from God and to be good managers of those gifts. We each have bodies, brains and talents and time to use all of those gifts to glorify God. Good stewardship involves good management of the totality of God’s gifts to us.

An elderly pastor tells the story of a parishioner in a church he was serving. The man took giving and serving the Lord seriously. If anyone asked him why he was so dedicated to using his talents, time, and money for the Lord’s work, he would smile and answer by saying: “The Lord has allowed me to have time, talent, energy, and a good income. If I don’t use my assets in the right way, God may stick out his foot and trip me. Then I might lose it all.”

He meant his answer to be funny, of course. But it does show that the fellow knew where his time, talent, and financial resources ultimately came from. They came from our loving Creator whose blessings are showered daily upon each of us.

Remember that Jesus said to his followers: “You are the light of the world.” He continued by saying “Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.” (Matthew 5: 3-16) Should we not let our lights shine to glorify our loving Creator?

Prayer: *Almighty and loving God, every good gift we have has come from you. Keep us mindful of your care for us and your desire for us to use our minds, bodies, energy and resources to bring light and truth to this often suffering world. Through Christ our Lord, we pray. Amen*

A **Stewardship Minute** is available to subscribers of **Stewardship** at www.parishpublishing.org.

The *Stewardship* January newsletter is now available attached to the January Messenger email and at the usher station.

Ways to Support St. Matthew

Offering Envelopes: These are mailed to our contributors at their homes monthly.

Person Bank Drafts if you would like to use this method contact your bank and have the donation taken from your bank account and sent to St. Matthew (usually monthly automatic bank drafts from your checking account. **(There is no fee to the church or to you for this convenient donation.)**)

“Simply Giving” by Vanco. If you would like to use the on-line program of automatic bank drafts/debit card from your checking account. **(Forms are in the church office. Please see Jen. The church gets billed a monthly fee for this service.)**

Giving Online: Giving online is easy and allows you to set up automatic recurring contributions 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.

Mobile Giving: Giving online is easy and allows you to set up automatic recurring contributions. Electronic giving offers convenience for individuals and provides much-needed donation consistency for our congregation. Simply follow these easy steps:

- 1) Visit **“Play Store on your mobile device”**
- 2) Find the **“Vanco Payment”** app (this is free)
- 3) Click on the **“Install”** button
- 4) Open the app on your device
- 5) Follow the onscreen instructions to schedule your one time contribution or recurring contributions. **(There is a processing fee at the time of the transaction. You have the choice to pay the fee for the church or have the fee taken from your donation.)**



SERVING GOD AND US January 2024

Date	January 7 <i>Baptism of Our Lord</i>	January 14	January 21	January 28
Acolytes	Gabby Decker Lily Lightner Lucy Lightner	Gavin Kuster	Ben Decker	Norah Kuster
Lectors	Jane Hoenstine	Ben and Gabby Decker	Jean Sinal	Steve Oswalt
Assisting Minister	Melissa Fetzer	Lottie Ebersole	Amanda Decker	Tina Harclerode
Ushers	Steve Oswalt	Ed Kreider	Randy McGraw	Dennis Smith
Audio/Video	Camden Kuster	Camden Kuster	Camden Kuster	Camden Kuster
Altar Guild	Jane Fagans	Jane Fagans	Jane Fagans	Jane Fagans
Offering Counters	Jim Barley Beth Garner	Jim Barley Beth Garner	Jim Barley Beth Garner	Jim Barley Beth Garner



Birthdays for January

01 Anna Weaver	11 E. Kaye Burket		28 Dottie Daniel
02 Stacy Kuster	13 Janelle R. Dennis		28 Ryan Frederick
Margie J. Smith	15 Michele M. Smith		Jackie Lightner
04 Jenna Metzler	16 Thomas Beyer		Kim Oswalt
05 Peggy Freyer	Gavin Kuster		Michele L. Smith
06 Laurie S. Smith	20 Jean L. Stonerook	29	Dwight Kensinger
07 Dr. Murray S. Smith	21 Ginny A. Sell		
09 B. Ann Baker	24 Doris L. Waddick		
10 Catherine Corcoran	26 Rev. Carl Alexy		

Announcing the 2024 Council

On Sunday, December 3rd during our Annual Congregational Meeting new Council members were elected:

Council Secretary	Carla Brumbaugh
Worship & Music	Tina Harclerode
Treasurer	Beth Garner

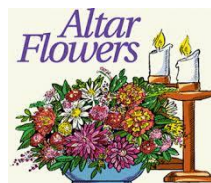
2024 Nominating

Elaine Smith
Jane Fagans

Installation of New Council Members will be Sunday, January 7, 2024 during the 10:30 a.m. worship service.

Anniversaries for January

06 Michael B. & Kathryn A. Panek
28 Paul L. & Rosie Johnson



The 2024 Altar Flower chart is posted on the Narthex bulletin board. Altar Flowers are a perfect way to remember loved ones or to honor loved ones. There are plenty of dates available. Please sign up now for the Sunday you wish to place flowers on the Altar. Price-\$40.00.

Pastor Ed's Memorial Service

A Memorial Service will be held for Pastor Ed Harshbarger here at St. Matthew Lutheran Church, on January 13, 2024 at 11AM. Family will receive visitors starting at 10AM. In lieu of flowers, a monetary donation may be made to Camp Sequanota, PO Box 245, Jennerstown, PA 15547.

Martinsburg Food Pantry



Volunteers from St. Matthew will be helping and assisting in the distribution of food on Thursdays, January 4 and January 18 from 9:00 until 11:00 a.m. If you would like to help, please let Elaine Buchart know for any of these dates.

January items most needed are: Sunny D—40 Oz Drink, Ravioli, Pasta Sides, Personal Items (Toothpaste), Cleaning Supplies (Detergent)

Our thanks to all who have contributed food, supplies, or monetary donations during this past year! We ask for your continued support and prayers in serving needy families in 2024.

Linda K. Smith

2024 COUNCIL DIRECTORY AND MINISTRY STAFF

All phone numbers start with (814) unless otherwise noted.

Pastor	Rev. Traci Marriott	935-9267	Christian Ed.	Jean Sinal	793-9507
Admin. Assistant	Jen Ripka	935-3801	Evangelism	Vacant	
Assistant Admin. Assist	Laura Orczeck	224-1208	Stewardship	Vacant	
President	Martie Gilbert	793-4461	Finance	Jim Barley	793-4623
Vice President	Greg Haffling	793-9827	Social Ministry	Vacant	
Secretary	Carla Brumbaugh		Worship & Music	Tina Harclerode	317-5312
Treasurer	Beth Garner	793-3966	Staff Support	Vacant	
Financial Secretary	Vacant		Sexton	Phil Claar	215-0885
Property	Ed Kreider	793-4302			

HIGHLIGHTS BY COUNCIL IN DECEMBER 2023

1. The Christian education committee reported 12 youth and adults prepared and filled orders for 93 boxes of peppermint bark candy as a fundraiser for the national youth gathering. The youth will participate in leading the service on Sunday, December 17, 2023 with a Christmas message.
2. Starting on December 17 and continuing during flu season, pre-portioned communion elements will be offered in the pews as a precaution against the spread of colds, flu, RSV, and covid.
3. Approved monetary Christmas gifts for St. Matthew employees and contractors.
4. Appointed Jane Fagans to the nominating committee as the outgoing Council member.
5. Approved the list of organizations and donation amounts to receive from the Ventures in Faith- first quarter offerings.
6. Approved a donation to Camp Sequanota in memory of Pastor Ed Harshbarger.
7. The social ministry committee led an effort to solicit donations of cookies, candy, and snacks for goodie boxes. Committee members assembled the boxes and visited with homebound and other members and friends of St. Matthew to deliver them.



Sequanota

Conference Center & Camp

2024 Events Calendar

phone: (814) 629 - 6627

email: contact@sequanota.com

web: www.sequanota.com

January

1 New Year's Day Hike

Meet at the Dining Hall at 10:00 AM for the annual first day hike. Enjoy some hot chocolate to warm up after returning.

27-28 IGNITE - Winter Retreat (Grades: 2nd — 8th)

Snow, fun, faith, & friends are the major themes for an overnight retreat at camp! Invite a friend along for the weekend. Scholarships available.

February

2-4 Snow Camp Retreat (Grades: 6th — 12th)

Youth from across the region gather for a weekend of faith forming fun. Come enjoy the winter season, learn about God's love for you, and hang out together at camp.

9-11 Sustain: An Adult Retreat

The church we grew up in is shrinking. This raises our anxiety and causes us to question "What is happening and where is God?" We all need to be sustained in our love and trust in God. Join us for study, rest and friendship on the book "When the Church Stops Working" by Root & Bertrand.

20 Lenten Bible Study on Zoom

February 20, 27, March 5, 12, 19, 26

Join Pr. Nathan & Pr. Kevin Shock for an online study of the book, *Manna & Mercy* by Daniel Erlander. We will be exploring God's story intertwining in our story.

March

22-24 Belong: A Young Adult Retreat

A time to gather with peers and discuss living life as young adults with a focus on technology and life. Our phones never seem to rest, it is always beeping and dinging. Our devices pull us into the "always on" world. How can we live with technology and have a life for ourselves? Join us as we seek ways forward together with faith discussion, food, board games, and plenty of laughter.

April

19-21 Love Your Mother (*Earth*) Retreat (All ages)

We all need to be outside more. Whether it is a five minute walk, resting by a stream, or a new year's goal to hike more - nature tells us who we are and whose we are. Join us this weekend for a 5K walk through nature as it springs to life, some Bible study, tree planting and an engaging session on being a steward as we care for our home.

20 Happy Camper Fun Run - 5K Benefit

Run or walk at home or join us at Sequanota. Watch the website and Facebook page for more information.

April

25 Adult Day: Faith & Art Series

9:00 AM - 2:00 PM @ Bowersox Center
Join us for a day of Bible study, art, and lunch.

May

3 Spring Benefit Dinner

Tour starts at 4:45 PM; Appetizers at 5:30 PM
Dinner at 6:00 PM; Annual report at 6:30 PM

11 Spring Work Day starts at 9:00 AM

Help get camp ready for summer!
Cost: Free and includes lunch

12 Mother's Day Buffet

Two seatings: 11:30 AM & 1:30 PM. Call for a reservation. Cost: Freewill donation

June

20-23 Tend Festival (formerly the Well Festival)

As the church begins to shift to live in our new post-Christian culture, God's people still need a place to be inspired and grow in our faith. Come share in intentional time of faith discussions, good music, art, worship, ecology and fellowship. This event will have an open schedule allowing participants the freedom to pick what is right for them. It will include options for multiple workshops, open recreation & hiking, food and time to refresh yourself and the family.

August

19 Golf Benefit Tournament 10:00 AM start

Summit Country Club, Cresson, PA
Cost: \$125 donation/person. Please RSVP.

21-28 Canoeing NY Adirondacks

An adult retreat adventure! Renew in a guided canoe trip through the mountains in New York.

September

14 Trail Clean Up Weekend

Come and help maintain camp's 20+ hiking trails. Make a weekend of it to rest and renew. Nothing is planned, but cabins are available.

28-29 IGNITE - Fall Retreat (Grades: 2nd — 8th)

Reconnect with camp friends for an overnight retreat at camp. Camp looks different in the fall. Come check it out! Scholarships available.

October

10 Adult Day: Faith & Art Series

9:00 AM - 2:00 PM @ Bowersox Center
Join us for a day of Bible study, art, and lunch.

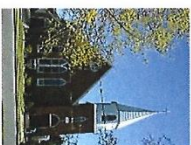
December

7 Breakfast with Santa 9 AM — 11 AM

Eat breakfast, get a picture with Santa, and make some holiday crafts. Cost: Freewill Donation



January 2024
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 Email: stmathewmartinsburg@gmail.com
 814-793-2413



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 <i>Office Closed</i>	2	3 <i>1-4 pm Pastor in Office</i>	4 <i>9-11 am Food Pantry, Allegheny St.</i>	5 <i>Pastor's Sabbath</i>	6 <i>Memorial Service for Pastor Ed Harsbarger 10:00 am Visitation 11:00 am Service</i>
7 <u>Baptism of Our Lord</u> 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship in Sanctuary	8 <i>6:00 pm Worship & Music Mfg., via Zoom</i>	9 <i>6:30 pm Council Mfg., WR/Zoom</i>	10 <i>1-4 pm Pastor in Office</i>	11	12 <i>Pastor's Sabbath</i>	
14 <u>2nd Sun. after Epiphany</u> 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship in Sanctuary	15	16	17 <i>1-4 pm Pastor in Office</i>	18 <i>9-11 am Food Pantry, Allegheny St.</i>	19 <i>Pastor's Sabbath</i>	20
21 <u>3rd Sun. after Epiphany</u> 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship in Sanctuary	22 <div style="border: 2px solid black; padding: 5px;"><i>Pastor Traci continuing ed. May be reached at 814-935-9237</i></div>	23 <i>12:30-3:00 pm Knotty Ladies, QR</i>	24 <i>10:00 am Employee Mfg., FH 1-4 pm Pastor in Office</i>	25	26 <i>Pastor's Sabbath</i>	27
28 <u>4th Sun. after Epiphany</u> 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship in Sanctuary	29 <i>6:30 pm Social Ministry Mfg., via Zoom</i>	30 <i>12:30-3:00 pm Knotty Ladies, QR</i>	31 <i>1-4 pm Pastor in Office</i>	FH—Fellowship Hall CE—Christian Ed Office CL—Church Lounge QR—Quilt Room WR—Window Room K—Kitchen <i>In case of emergency, Pastor Traci maybe reached at 814-935-9267</i> <i>Jen will be in the Office Mon.-Fri. from 9:00 am-12:00 pm</i>		