

*St. Matthew Lutheran Church
of Westfield*

Messenger

November
2023

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Pastor
Rev. Dr. Ronald Bogs



Associate Pastor
Rev. Arturo Mendez



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We begin November celebrating All Saints' Day and probably having to explain to our non-Lutheran friends that we celebrate All Saints' Day not to worship nor to pray to the saints, or ask the saints to pray for us, but we put their lives before us as an example of living God-leasing lives.

Indeed, the saints were sinners like you and me, and by God's grace through faith given to us by the Holy Spirit working through the means of grace (Holy Baptism and His Holy Word), we are saints while at the same time continue to be sinners while living in this world.

As we reach the end of November, we celebrate the social holiday of Thanksgiving. As I have said many times in the Thanksgiving sermon, we, as Christians, should be on the front lines of giving thanks to God who is the One who gives all and does all for us. Indeed, what does God need from us as He is the One who created us, gives us life, gives us faith through Holy Baptism, forgives our sins through Holy Absolutions, gives us His body and blood to eat and drink through His Holy Supper, and strengthens and keeps us in faith through His Holy Word. He also gives us gifts, talents and abilities as well as a vocation, job and/or career in which to have a way to support ourselves, our families, our congregation and the like.

Right around the corner after Thanksgiving is Advent which does not begin this year until December 3. Our Advent Season is the beginning of our new Church Year and the time we use to prepare ourselves for our celebration of the birth of the Messiah, God in flesh, Jesus. And as I do every year, I will remind you that we do not skip this preparation part and go straight to the celebration. We use the time to prepare our hearts and minds much like we would do in preparation for any other event or celebration in our lives.

I believe it is unfortunate that our society has so commercialized what is often referred to as the "holiday season" of Thanksgiving to New Year's Day, even misunderstanding and misrepresenting the twelve days of Christmas as if the twelve days are a countdown to Christmas instead of the twelve days following Christmas. And as you hear me encourage you every year, we do not begin celebrating the birth of Christ until Christmas, and then we celebrate for a full twelve days until we celebrate Epiphany and the visit of the Magi, the first Gentiles to visit the boy Jesus.

So, let me encourage you once again this year, do not jump ahead. Enjoy

November as a time to remember that you are a saint. Prepare to give thanks and be in Divine Service to give thanks. Wait until Advent begins and use the time to prepare your hearts and minds to celebrate. As the Psalmist says, “Be still” (Ps. 37:7, 46:10).

God’s richest blessings.
In His Service,

Pastor Bogs

1 Cor. 15:3-5

Don’t forget, if you miss a Sunday, you can read the sermon on my blog: <http://rabswritings.blogspot.com>.

The Lutheran Way - I Makes A Difference?

(Practical Application)

How does all this “Lutheran Way” work in the “real” world? How does this help me in my vocation, always being ready to give a defense or answer for my faith, including what do I do when inviting someone to our church for Divine Service?

Evangelism takes place, not in the Divine Service which is for Christians to have a place to go every week to be strengthened in our faith, but in our daily lives as we live in our various vocations. Evangelism takes place as we are asked and as we give an answer for the hope we have especially in explaining why we do what we do.

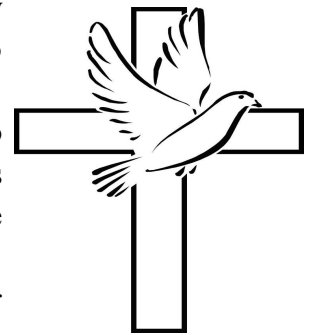
So when we have someone ask us about our faith and hope, we most certainly express our faith and hope to them, but also we will most certainly do as Andrew did when approached by the Greeks. He invited them to come and see Jesus, and we would do the same, inviting them to come to the Divine Service. Now as we invite them to come to Divine Service, it is especially important we give them instructions in the Divine Service so they will know what to expect. And if they know what to expect, why we do what we do, just think about how much more they will get out of being in the Divine Service. Yes, sometimes it is a lot about the preparation and the teaching which we do.

When we invite someone to see Jesus, to come to Divine Service, we explain what we have been learning in these articles, that the Divine Service is God’s Service to us. We explain that our Divine Service follows what we believe. We explain the Means of Grace. We explain the way our building is set up and laid out, i.e., the cross, the font, the altar, the pulpit, the communion rail. We explain each part of the Divine Service and how they point us to Jesus.

Finally, we explain our care and concern about their spiritual well being is why we cannot at this time invite them to come to the Lord’s Table, but we would rejoice in their taking an instruction class to learn so that they may join us.

After we have explained the Divine Service, our building, and closed communion, then we can rest assured the Holy Spirit will do His part. And we can rest assured that when they do attend a Divine Service, they will also rejoice in the depth of their worship and the gifts which they are given by God through the very means He has given to give us His gifts. And they will rejoice in the lack of distractions which might point them to something other than the Means of Grace and the gifts of God instead of pointing them to their selves.

One of the great things about being a Lutheran Christian is the fact we are a teaching church. Much of our history has been of building churches and schools at the same time. And much of our understanding and passing on of the teachings is the heart of carrying on the faith of the Lutheran Church. It is hoped that these articles have helped you get a better understanding of why we do what we do and how we do what we do not only reflect what we believe, teach and confess but are also the teaching tools we use to teach what we believe, teach and confess. And above all it is the hope that these articles will prepare you, not only to give an answer for your hope, but words of instruction, comfort and joy in speaking not only about your faith, but about your church as well. To God be the glory!



125th Anniversary of St. Matthew Lutheran Church

Four years ago an attempt was started to get ready to celebrate our congregation's 120th anniversary. That attempt was thwarted by COVID. In one year an eight months we will be celebrating the 125th anniversary of St. Matthew Lutheran Church of Westfield. In order to assure a proper celebration the congregation has authorized an Anniversary Celebration fund. Because a committee has not yet been set for this celebration there is not yet a goal as for how much we would like to collect, but please do not let that stop you from beginning the giving so that we might indeed have a grand celebration.



St. Matthew Lutheran Church ~ 2024 Picnic Committee/Volunteers

We at St. Matthew are looking forward to our 125th Anniversary Celebration in 2025. We want to re-launch our Annual May BBQ starting in May 2024 to ensure that it is up & running smoothly for that big celebration we would like to start planning now.

With that in mind we will be needing lots of volunteers. What we are needing right now is a volunteer to be "Kitchen Chairperson." This person will be available to supervise both on Saturday and Sunday of Picnic Weekend for setup, supervision of all aspects of the serving on that Sunday, to just generally make sure everything runs smoothly and clean-up.



We are also getting our Picnic Planning Committee together to plan, set-up & get everything ready to go. If you would like to serve as we plan for the re-launch of this iconic event see Lester Sentesi.

Church Re-pipe Fund

At the August 27 Congregational meeting of St. Matthew Lutheran Church of Westfield, the voters voted to begin a fund to re-pipe all our facilities. The cost estimated at around \$40,000. This fund is to be funded by any member wishing to make a contribution above their normal tithe. At the same time we will pursue financing the amount over what is contributed. However, if the contributions amount to more than the cost all extra monies will then be put in the general fund.

Church Telephone Information

Just a quick note that if you are trying to call the church during office hours (8am - 1pm) you will receive a message stating that "the person that you are trying to reach is unavailable to reach another extension press *8 or press 0 for the receptionist." If you press 0 it will direct you back to the secretary. The voicemail is currently not working so you are unable to leave a message outside of office hours. You can also communicate with the church office by email office.smlcw@gmail.com. Thank you for your patience while we work to get the phones back up and running.



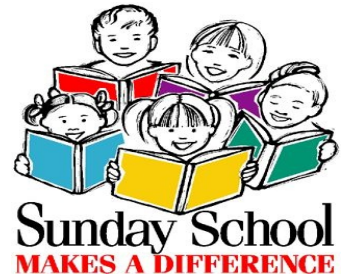
November 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
Those Serving the Lord this Month: Elders ~ Jarod Christy & Jason Christy Greeters ~ Sonny & Joyce French Ushers ~ Luke Tusing & Jordan Christy Counter ~ Nancy Baeza Altar Guild ~ Tiffany Cowger & Becky Reyes Acolytes ~ Alex Vaz, AJ Parsalaw, Aaron Montemayor, Heston Reed & Isabella Vaz						
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
8:30am Fellowship 8:45am Sunday School 10am Divine Service ESL Service	Happy Birthday Kenneth Lilley!	7pm ESL Classes	10am Bible Class 6:30pm Bible Study w/Larry Harvey 7pm Bible Study w/Pastor Bogs	10am Bulletin Deadline 7pm ESL Classes	Office Closed Happy Birthday Kate McIlhany!	8am Men's Breakfast & Bible Study 10am Board of Elders Meeting Happy Birthday Don Cornman, Paul Guinn, Carine Pierce & Nadine Reed!
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
8:30am Fellowship 8:45am Sunday School 10am Divine Service ESL Service	Happy Birthday Shawn Honerkamp & Claire O'Garro!	7pm ESL Classes	10am Bible Class 6:30pm Bible Study w/Larry Harvey 7pm Bible Study w/Pastor Bogs Happy Birthday Holly Williamson!	10am Bulletin Deadline 7pm ESL Classes	Office Closed	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
8:30am Fellowship 8:45am Sunday School 10am Divine Service ESL Service Happy Birthday Patsy Hodges!	GET YOUR NEWSLETTER ARTICLES IN!!!	7pm ESL Classes Happy Birthday Rose Jackson!	10am Bible Class 12pm Service 5:30pm Confirmation Class 7:30pm Service w/Lord's Supper	Happy Thanksgiving! Happy Birthday Nathan Cross!	Office Closed	
26	27	28	29	30	December 1	2
8:30am Fellowship 8:45am Sunday School 10am Divine Service ESL Service Happy Birthday Chad Lilley!	7pm ESL Classes Happy Birthday John Lisius!	7pm ESL Classes	10am Bible Class 12pm Service 5:30pm Confirmation Class 6:30pm Bible Study w/Larry Harvey 7:15pm Hymn Sing 7:30pm Service	10am Bulletin Deadline 7pm ESL Classes Happy Birthday Jane McElroy!	Office Closed	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
8:30am Fellowship 8:45am Sunday School 10am Divine Service ESL Service		7pm ESL Classes	10am Bible Class 5:30pm Confirmation Class 6:30pm Bible Study w/Larry Harvey 7:15pm Hymn Sing 7:30pm Service	10am Bulletin Deadline 7pm ESL Classes	Office Closed	

Opportunities to Study God's Word

Sunday School for All Ages

Preschool - Elementary Classes begin at 8:45 am in Room #5. The children are learning Biblical accounts from the Growing in Christ series.



Sunday Adult Bible Classes

All members and friends of St. Matthew Lutheran Church are invited for coffee and donuts at 8:30 am each Sunday at 8:30 am. Then our Bible Classes begin at 8:45 am. *The Pentetuch* led by Pastor Bogs meets in the **Room #2**. And *Galatians* led by Larry Harvey meets in **Room #4**. Please join us. Bring a friend!



Wednesday Mornings

The Wednesday Morning Bible Study Group will be meeting at **10:00 am** in **Room #2**. We invite everyone who is available to join us to study God's Word. We are studying the Minor Prophets.



Wednesday Evenings

There are two Wednesday evening Bible Classes. The study of Baptism led by Larry Harvey meets at **6:30 pm** in **Room #4**. The study on *Matthew* led by Pastor meets at **7:00 pm** in **Room #2**.

Men's Breakfast Bible Study

Join us for the Men's Breakfast and Bible study on the 2nd Saturday of the month, November ^{11th} at 8:00 am in the Fellowship Hall. The Board of Elders will meet following study at 10:00am.



Holy Days & Holidays in November

November 1st All Saints' Day
November 5th Daylight Saving Time Ends
November 7th Election Day
November 11th Veterans Day
November 23rd Thanksgiving Day
November 29th Last Sunday of the Church Year

Wishing You A Very Happy Birthday

November 6th Kenneth Lilley
November 10th Kate McIlhany
November 11th Don Cornman
November 11th Paul Guinn
November 11th Carine Pierce
November 11th Nadine Reed
November 13th Shawn Honerkamp
November 13th Claire O'Garro
November 15th Holly Williamson
November 19th Patsy Hodges
November 21st Rose Jackson
November 23rd Nathan Cross
November 26th Chad Lilley
November 27th John Lisius
November 30th Jane McElroy



Confirmation Anniversaries

November 21st Scott Christy
November 21st Sylvia Christy
November 21st Ashley Massuda
November 23rd Bob Langley
November 23rd Jeanne Langley



Wedding Anniversaries

November 1st Michael & Jeanne Held ~54 Yrs.
November 13th Don & Jennifer Cornman ~30 Yrs.
November 29th Werner & Karen Hartl ~36 Yrs.