

# St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church



## Second Sunday of Advent December 7, 2025

At the heart of our Advent preparation stands John the Baptist, who calls us to repent and make a new beginning. As the darkness increases we turn toward the approaching light of Christ. For Christians he is like the root of Jesse, the righteous judge who welcomes all, especially the poor and meek of the earth. We wait with hope for that day when the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and there will be no more hurt or destruction. From the Lord's table we are sent in the spirit of John the Baptist to proclaim that in Christ the kingdom of God has come near.

## Holy Communion

Evangelical Lutheran Worship

(ELW Setting 5, page 156)

† Congregation stands as able

## GATHERING

Prelude

Sandra Nearhoof



P: In the name of the Father, and of the +Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

P: Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbors.

P: Most merciful God,

C: **we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

P: In the mercy of Almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you, the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

Gathering Hymn

*"Come Now, O Prince of Peace"*

**ELW #247**

Kyrie

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Prayer of the Day:

P. Let us pray,

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming nurture our growth as people of repentance and peace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C. **Amen.**

## PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

Children's Message

Katherine Kelly

### First Reading

**Isaiah 11:1-10**

<sup>1</sup>A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. <sup>2</sup>The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. <sup>3</sup>His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not

judge by what his eyes see or decide by what his ears hear, <sup>4</sup> but with righteousness he shall judge for the poor and decide with equity for the oppressed of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. <sup>5</sup> Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist and faithfulness the belt around his loins. <sup>6</sup> The wolf shall live with the lamb; the leopard shall lie down with the kid; the calf and the lion will feed together, and a little child shall lead them. <sup>7</sup> The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. <sup>8</sup> The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. <sup>9</sup> They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. <sup>10</sup> On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

L: The word of the Lord

C: **Thanks be to God.**

### **Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19**

**Tone 8**

<sup>1</sup> Give the king your jus-<sup>1</sup> tice, O God,  
and your righteousness to <sup>1</sup> the king's son;  
<sup>2</sup> **that he may rule your <sup>1</sup> people righteously**  
**and the <sup>1</sup> poor with justice;**  
<sup>3</sup> that the mountains may bring prosperity <sup>1</sup> to the people,  
and the <sup>1</sup> hills, in righteousness.  
<sup>4</sup> **Let him defend the needy a-<sup>1</sup> mong the people,**  
**rescue the poor, and crush <sup>1</sup> the oppressor.**  
<sup>5</sup> May he live as long as the sun and <sup>1</sup> moon endure,  
from one generation <sup>1</sup> to another.  
<sup>6</sup> **Let him come down like rain upon <sup>1</sup> the mown field,**  
**like showers that wa-<sup>1</sup> ter the earth.**  
<sup>7</sup> In his time may the <sup>1</sup> righteous flourish;  
and let there be an abundance of peace till the moon shall <sup>1</sup> be no more.  
<sup>18</sup> **Blessed are you, LORD God, the <sup>1</sup> God of Israel;**  
**you alone do <sup>1</sup> wondrous deeds!**  
<sup>19</sup> And blessed be your glorious <sup>1</sup> name forever,  
and may all the earth be filled with your glory. A-<sup>1</sup> men. Amen.

### **Second Reading**

**Romans 15:4-13**

<sup>4</sup> Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. <sup>5</sup> May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.  
<sup>7</sup> Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. <sup>8</sup> For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the ancestors <sup>9</sup> and that the gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written, "Therefore I will confess you among the gentiles and sing praises to your name"; <sup>10</sup> and again he says, "Rejoice, O gentiles, with his people"; <sup>11</sup> and again, "Praise the Lord, all you gentiles, and let all the peoples praise him";

<sup>12</sup> and again Isaiah says, "The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the gentiles; in him the gentiles shall hope." <sup>13</sup> May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

L: The word of the Lord

C: **Thanks be to God.**

✠ Gospel Acclamation

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**Gospel**

**Matthew 3:1-12**

P: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup> In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, <sup>2</sup> "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." <sup>3</sup> This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.' "

<sup>4</sup> Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. <sup>5</sup> Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region around the Jordan were going out to him, <sup>6</sup> and they were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins. <sup>7</sup> But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? <sup>8</sup> Therefore, bear fruit worthy of repentance, <sup>9</sup> and do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. <sup>10</sup> Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. <sup>11</sup> "I baptize you with water for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is more powerful than I, and I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>12</sup> His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon *"Ready for the Harvest"*

Reverend Taylor Burton Edwards

✠ Hymn of the Day *"On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry"*

**ELW #249**

**Nicene Creed**

**We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and unseen.  
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,**

eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father;  
through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation

he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary  
and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the  
dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father,  
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.**

**We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.**

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

*You may sit, stand or kneel for the prayers.*

### **Prayers of Intercession**

A: In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.

*A brief silence.*

A: With wisdom and understanding, inspire the faithful around the world. Unite hearts and minds in work to address poverty, access to housing, and equity among peoples. God of grace,

**C: hear our prayer.**

A: With counsel and might, move us to care for creation. As we dream of the day when all creatures will flourish alongside one another, guide us in ways humanity and all creation will mutually thrive. God of grace,

**C: hear our prayer.**

A: With righteousness and faithfulness, encourage nations to live in harmony with one another. We pray for international student and teacher exchanges,

for our partner churches, and for the shared mission of Lutheran World Relief and Lutheran Disaster Response. God of grace,

**C: hear our prayer.**

**A:** With steadfastness and encouragement, strengthen those who have lost hope in the face of grief, depression, or disease. Renew the spirits of those recovering from surgery and medical procedures. God of grace,

**C: hear our prayer.**

**A:** With welcome and hospitality, embolden us in our shared ministry to overcome all that divides. In acts of repentance, reconciliation, and reparation, may we serve in the way of Christ. God of grace,

**C: hear our prayer.**

**A:** For all those who have asked us to pray for them....God of grace,

**C: hear our prayer.**

**A:** With joy and peace, we remember our ancestors in the faith. Fill us with the hope of the Holy Spirit now and into the ages of ages. God of grace,

**C: hear our prayer.**

**P:** Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.

**C: Amen.**

## MEAL

Solo      *"Prepare the Royal Highway"*      Reverend Taylor Burton Edwards

*The gifts may be brought forward.*

Offering Prayer

**A:** Nourishing God, you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert. Thought this meal, satisfy our parched places that we may rejoice and be for the world signs of your kingdom come.

**C: Amen.**

✠ Great Thanksgiving	Page 161
Holy, Holy, Holy	Page 162
Lord's Prayer                      "Our Father, who..."	Page 163
Lamb of God	Page 164

## Communion

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

*Each person may respond, Amen.*

## ✝ Table Blessing

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C: **Amen.**

Prayer after Communion

A: God our host, at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness. Send us forth, eager to share the feast, welcome the stranger, and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus.

C: **Amen.**

## SENDING

Blessing

**Sending Hymn**

*"Hark, the Glad Sound!"*

**ELW #239**

**Dismissal**

A: Go in peace. Keep awake.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

**The Memorial Book is open today to the Glory of God**

**In Memory of:**

*Margaret Fox, 2009*



The Advent Wreath for the Second Sunday of Advent is lit by the Gates family.

# **READINGS AND PSALM** **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2025**

Isaiah 35:1-10  
 Psalm 146:1-10  
 James 5:7-10  
 Matthew 11:2-11



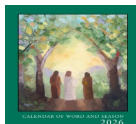
*"The Bible is alive, it speaks to me; it has feet, it runs after me; it has hands, it lays hold of me." —Martin Luther*

# **November 30, 2025** **First Sunday of Advent**

ATTENDANCE — 80  
 (IN-PERSON — 62, YOUTUBE - 18)  
 2025 BUDGET-\$177,962

## **OFFERING**

Benevolence	\$ 3,365.00
Building	\$ 200.00
Memorial	\$ 100.00
Other	\$ 250.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 3,915.00</b>



2026 Calendar of Word and Season is now on sale thru the end of the year. Please see Allena Sperry if you want to purchase a calendar for \$13. Please make checks payable to St. Matthew.

## **Serving December 7, 2025**

Opener/Closer	Bill Wallace
Worship Assistant	Shannon Gardner
Communion Assistant	Liz McGouirk
Lector	Terri Niederhammer
Ushers	Jim Sperry
	Bill Wallace
Altar Guild	Lane Brown
	Rose Johnson
	Catherine Sayers-Clean-up
Live Streaming	Jaxson Gardner

## **Serving December 14, 2025**

Opener/Closer	Terri Niederhammer
Worship Assistant	Rose Johnson
Communion Assistant	Terri Niederhammer
Lector	Raymond Lawton
Ushers	Katherine Kelly
	Jim Sperry
Altar Guild	Nancy Gates
	Terri Niederhammer
	Catherine Sayers-Clean-up
Live Streaming	Paul Hicks

*St. Matthew Lutheran Church (ELCA) will not engage in any act or public statements to endorse or oppose any candidate for public office.*



# ***Pray Without Ceasing***



*“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”*

5:16-18

—1 Thessalonians

The Armed Forces,  
their families,  
and victims of war

The ministries of  
St. Matthew

Bishop Yehiel Curry

Bishop Kevin  
Strickland

Southeastern Synod  
Staff

Pastor Taylor Burton  
Edwards

Pastor Rachel Zarnke  
St Matthew

Congregational  
Council

Laura Alexander

Carol Bingemann

Isabelle Clark

Randy Craven

Myrna & Ken Hoag

Marga Miller

Charlotte Moore

Traudel Mosely

Debby Owen

Dorothy Redden

Gary Anderson

Eric & Tinisha Bryant

Jean Clemmons

Nancy Edmundson

Lynne Funck

Brandy Garnett

Sandy Gibbs

Moses Glidden

Estrella Gonzales

Doris Grier

Grigsby Family

Laura Jett

Norma Kilby

Ken Korn

Emma Kump

Robert Lowe

David & John Lucas

Michelle Matthias

Brady Meeks

Tim Moore

Debi Nelson

Vincent Pawlowski

Terry Pendergraff

Beth Price

Mark Purushotham

Tiffany Richardson

Dayna Ryan

Shirley Scott

Dou Shizhen

Ricky Skinner

Amanda Steinagel

Sara Steinagel Sturgis

Fred Turpin

Charlie VanHousen

Dawn VanHousen

Martha Zimmerman

Gaza

Palestinian People

Israel

Ukraine

People of Russia

Jamaica

Philippines

Hong Kong

Thailand

Indonesia

Philippines

Sumali Refugees

Grace Apostolic Church

#1 Nails

Landmark

McKibben Insurance

Rooster's Beer & Wine

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Welcome to St. Matthew:** Jesus Christ offers himself to all. All baptized Christians are invited to feast with us at the Lord's Table.

**We invite you to join our congregation if you have not yet found a church home.** We are people of God that share a living, daring, confidence in God's grace. Liberated by our faith, we embrace you as a whole person, questions, complexities and all. Join us, as we do God's work in Christ's name for the life of the world.

**Nursery:** St. Matthew provides nursery service for children ages 6 and younger. All children are welcome to attend worship with their families. If a child needs a break during the service, they may sit with a parent/guardian in the Narthex.

## **Mission Outreach Opportunities:**

- |                              |                                                                    |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b><u>Mission Focus:</u></b> | Operation Christmas Child                                          |
| • Lion's Club:               | Glasses, sunglasses and old cell phones                            |
| • Family House of West GA:   | Pop tabs                                                           |
| • Flags to Retire:           | Used flags to dispose of properly                                  |
| • St. Anne's:                | Feminine hygiene products, Personal hygiene products (travel size) |
| • SafeHouse/St. Benedict's   | Sealed plastic utensils (take-out meals)                           |
- Leave donations in the labeled containers in the Narthex.

**Bible Study:** Please join us on Tuesdays at 10:15 in the Church House to review and discuss the scripture readings for the upcoming Sunday.

**Craf-Tea:** This group will meet December 19th at 10:00AM-12:00 PM in Luther Hall. If you enjoy crafts and tea, this group is for you! Please see Linnea Grosse for more information.

**Chair Yoga:** We will resume meeting on Monday at 11:00 AM in Luther Hall in the new year. Wear comfortable clothing and sneakers.

## ***Save the Date***

- December 8th - 12:00-1:00 - Advent lunch at St. Thomas
- December 9th-10:15 - Bible Study - Church House
- December 10th - 5:30 Midweek Advent Service
- December 11th - 5:30-Choir Rehearsal
- December 18th - 5:00-Council Meeting - Fellowship Hall

## December Mission Focus



Our Warming Tree stands in the Narthex awaiting us to decorate it with our gifts of new warm clothing such as socks, mittens, gloves, hats, and scarves for adults and children. We will take donations thru December 14th. We will deliver our gifts of love to Freedom House, Trinity House, Faith House, and Brown Bag of Columbus. You can make a monetary donation if you do not want to shop.

## ADVENT & CHRISTMAS SERVICES

### Midweek Worship

Wednesday 5:30 PM  
December 10, 17



### Weihnacht Service

Sunday, December 14  
3:00 PM

### Christmas Eve

Holy Communion Service  
Wednesday, December 24  
7:00 PM



## HAPPY DECEMBER BIRTHDAY

1 RANDALL CRAVEN	23 PATTY CHAPPEL
4 JONATHAN THIES	26 ZAIGA MION
20 CONNOR GLAU	27 KATHY SKELLY
21 LINDSAY BROWN RATLIFF	29 DAVID ALLEN

# **St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church Mission Statement**



Reach in to grow in Christ

Reach up to worship God

Reach out to welcome and witness



To give online, please scan the QR code to the left to be taken to the [give.tithe.ly](https://give.tithe.ly) website form. You can just fill out the form and click the Give button. You can also go to our website and click on the ONLINE GIVING button.

## **ST. MATTHEW EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH**

4026 Macon Road, Columbus, Georgia 31907

(706) 561-3406 - Office Hours - Tues & Thurs 2:00-5:00 PM, Friday 9:00-1:00 PM

Pastor Taylor Burton Edwards Email: [twbe@liturgyfolks.com](mailto:twbe@liturgyfolks.com)

Phone: (765) 602-1426

Office email : [office@stmatthewcolumbusga.com](mailto:office@stmatthewcolumbusga.com)

*A member congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,*

*Southeastern Synod*

[www.stmatthewcolumbusga.com](http://www.stmatthewcolumbusga.com)

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@st.matthewlutheranchurch4457/streams>

The Rev. Taylor Burton Edwards, Pastor

Sonja Metcalf, Parish Administrator

Lisa Pettit, Sexton

Sandra Nearhoof, Minister of Music

Penny Davis, Nursery Director