



ST. MATTHEW

# Messenger

Celebrating

66  
years

The Newsletter of St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church - February 2023

## A Few Words of Introduction from Pastor Taylor

I am delighted to receive the call St. Matthew's Council has extended to me to become your pastor for (at least?) the next two years.

You are my "home" Lutheran congregation, the first congregation I served as a supply pastor, starting several years ago, the first Lutheran congregation I came to be an associate member of as I was transitioning from The United Methodist Church to joining the roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the second Lutheran congregation of which I became a full member (the first was Faith in Warner Robins, where I served for about two and a half years), and now the first church I have pastored in the same city where my spouse lives since we moved to Columbus in 2014.

Grace and I were married on Epiphany in 1991. We have two grown sons: Jacob (30) who is completing a degree in public health in Indianapolis, and Will (26) who is an organ builder and actor living in Charlotte, North Carolina. Each is unique, and both are doing well.

My spouse Grace and I share a history of denominational changes over time. We've both been Southern Baptist and American Baptist. Both of us were originally ordained in the American Baptist Church/USA. I then became and was ordained as an elder in The United Methodist Church (1997) and she, a few years later, became Episcopalian and was ordained a priest while we were living near Indianapolis in 2004. My transition to ELCA (I believe this to be my last!) was completed in September 2020, when I was received onto the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament by Bishop Kevin Strickland.

During my previous time with you, I've also been serving in two different roles in two different denominational agencies of The United Methodist Church. When I first started to serve as your occasional supply pastor, I was still the liturgical officer of the denomination, parallel to the role that now Bishop Kevin Strickland had at the time in the ELCA. In 2018, that position was discontinued, and I began working, first on contract and ultimately (and still) on the denomination's communication staff as full-time director of United Methodist Information Service, also known as Ask The UMC.

So, just what do I do there? I answer questions in English and French asked by United Methodists and others from around the world—about a thousand questions every month. I write articles about the denomination—its history, its worship, its polity, and its positions on all kinds of issues. And, most recently, I've been actively involved in combatting the misinformation campaigns those seeking to draw United Methodist congregations out of the denomination have been waging since spring of 2022.

Additionally, I continue to serve as Secretary of the North American Academy of Liturgy, Treasurer of The Liturgical Conference, at large member of the Consultation on Common Texts (after begin chair from 2014-2022), and as a consultant, developer, editor, and writer with the North American Association for the Catechumenate. Call me an "ecumaniac," and you'd be about right.

And I'm just coming off a five month supply ministry with Advent Lutheran Church and St. Mark's Episcopal Church, both in LaGrange. I conclude at St. Mark's on January 29, and I begin my work with you on February 1.

I love all things liturgy. I love teaching the Bible and the basic documents of our faith. (Yes, we're going to finish the 95 Theses study soon, and for Lent start a series in the Small Catechism!). I love congregational and choral singing. I enjoy administrative work. And I love serving as a pastor—not just leading worship, but especially listening to you, learning from you about your lives, and, where I can, offering support, challenge, comfort, and spiritual direction through visits, fellowship, and ministries of compassion and outreach.

I'm looking forward to our time together in this new way, as your "regular" rather than "supply" pastor.

Peace in Christ,  
The Rev. Taylor W Burton Edwards, Pastor  
Saint Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church



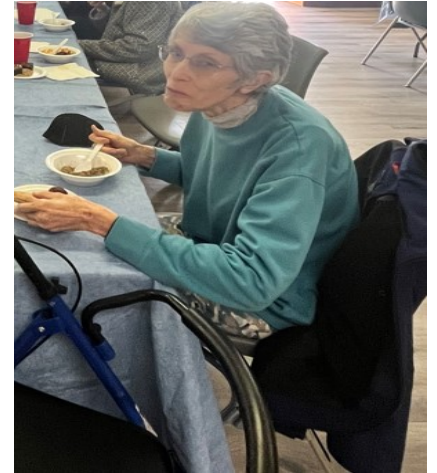
# St. Matthew is helping to Tackle Hunger!



# And...enjoyed some time together!

Lots of food and fellowship was enjoyed by everyone who attended the Tackle Hunger luncheon. Thanks to your generosity we have collected \$88 over 100 food items as well as toiletries and socks that will be donated to St Anne's Outreach.

We will be collecting thru Feb.26th.



## CHARITABLE GIVING TIP: ESTABLISH A DONOR ADVISED FUND

A donor advised fund is an easy, flexible and tax-efficient way to give to the ELCA, the Synod, your congregation, and/or the ministries you specify – with one donation. You create a charitable account that is professionally managed and administered by the ELCA Foundation while providing input on its distributions to ministries and organizations.

With a donor advised fund, you can:

- Take an immediate tax deduction, depending on the type of donation you make
    - Donations of cash are eligible for income tax deduction up to 60% of Adjusted Gross Income
    - Donations of securities and other appreciated assets are eligible for income tax deduction up to 30% of Adjusted Gross Income
    - Avoid capital-gains tax on gifts of appreciated assets, such as securities or real estate
- Invest and grow your donation, tax-free, making even more money available for charitable purposes

**Ready to take the next step?** Contact Rev. Ana L. Lugo, the ELCA Foundation Gift Planner serving our Synod for more information. She can be reached at [Ana.Lugo@elca.org](mailto:Ana.Lugo@elca.org).

*The examples and information provided are for illustrative and educational purposes only and should not be considered tax or legal advice. Please consult with your tax or legal adviser about proceeding with your gift plan.*

**amazon**smile

By the numbers...

Year to date donations received: \$85.38

Thank you for shopping Amazon Smile for St. Matthew!  
Visit [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) to sign up and shop. If you'd like help signing up, contact Sonja in the church office.

### Finance Committee Report

	December 2022	Year to Date
Income	\$25,206	\$156,281
Expenses	\$16,006	\$189,688
Difference	\$9,200	-\$33,407*

*\*We are not in debt - any shortfalls are being covered by our investments.*



Gracious and loving God, You call us to be stewards of Your abundance, the caretakers of all you have entrusted to us. Help us to always use Your gifts wisely and teach us to share them generously. Send the Holy Spirit to work through us, bringing Your message to those we serve.

## 2023 Council

Rose Johnson, President/Worship & Music

Carla Stickles, Vice-President/ Property

Katherine Kelly, Treasurer

Bill Wallace, Secretary/ Finance

Donna Doughty, Education

Lisa Pettit, Fellowship

Beth Hoag

Pastor Taylor Burton Edwards

*Gracious God, as you have called workers to varied tasks in the world and in our church, so you have called these servants to this ministry of congregational council. Grant them joy and a spirit of bold trust, that their work may stir up each of us to a life of fruitful service; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

(ELW, page 74)



Birthday Celebration will be on 2/5/2023 this month in the Fellowship Hall after the worship service.

We will also be welcoming Pastor Taylor Burton Edwards.

Please join us!



## Lent Worship Schedule

ASH WEDNESDAY

FEBRUARY 22

7:00 P.M.

LENT MIDWEEK WORSHIP

SERVICE OF THE WORD WITH  
HOLY COMMUNION

MARCH 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

APRIL 6

5:30 P.M.

MAUNDY THURSDAY

APRIL 6

7:00 P.M.

GOOD FRIDAY

APRIL 7

7:00 P.M.

## Prayer Requests

The Armed Forces, their families, and victims of war	Jean Clemmons
Persecuted Christians	Xavier Danguilan
The ministries of St. Matthew	Becky Goldsmith
Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton	Estrella Gonzales
Bishop Kevin Strickland	Doris Grier
Southeastern Synod Staff	Beverly Huckaby
Seminarian, Brandon Konnow	Norma Kilby
Laura Alexander	Ken Korn
Zocia Barr family	Michelle Matthias
Keandra Bashful	Tim Moore
Carol Bingemann	Gary Nearhoof
Dave Bonaker	Kimberly O'Malley
Pat Bonaker	Michael Owen
Eva Brown	Angela Paul
Betty Davidson	Vincent Powlowski
Ken Hoag	Dwight Redmond
Bennie Jackson	Tiffany Richardson
Mairetha Jackson	Dayna Ryan
Marga Miller	Yuliia Savitska
Christine Minor	Shirley Scott
Traudel Mosely	Ricky Skinner
Debby Owen	Betty Townsend
Dorothy Redden	Charlie VanHousen
Connie Sieg	Dawn VanHousen
Joan Smith	Martha Zimmerman
Jim Sperry	
Carla Stickles	
Albert VanHousen II	
Margarete Walsh	
Gary Anderson	
Judy Bultman	
Kyle Carter	
Jim Chappel	

## All Saints

Joyce Garver-Messenger  
Anneliese Schwarting

## *February Birthdays*

- 1 Shannon Gardner
- 3 Bennie Jackson, Jr
- 4 William Klein
- 10 Madelyn Peterson
- 11 Mairetha Jackson
- 12 Zocia Barr
- 12 Monika Harrison
- 15 Adam Schwarting
- 16 Katharina Burns
- 21 Sandra Craven
- 24 Charlotte Owen



## *Save the Date*

- **Birthday/Welcome Celebration:** February 5 (11:30 am)
- **Ash Wednesday Service:** February 22 (7:00 pm)
- **Congregation Council Meeting:** February 23 (4:00 pm)



# St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran

## February 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2AA 8:00 PM - LH	3	4
5 5th Sunday after Epiphany  Worship 10:30 AM Communion Sunday	6  AA 8:00 PM - LH	7  BIBLE STUDY 10:30AM CH	8	9  GERMAN CLUB 5:00 PM LH  AA 8:00 PM - LH	10	11
12 6th Sunday after Epiphany  Worship 10:30 AM Communion Sunday	13  AA 8:00 PM - LH	14  BIBLE STUDY 10:30AM CH	15	16  AA 8:00 PM - LH	17	18
19 Transfiguration of our Lord Sunday  Worship 10:30 AM Communion Sunday	20  AA 8:00 PM - LH	21  BIBLE STUDY 10:30AM CH	22  ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE - 7:00 PM	23  CONGREGATION COUNCIL 4:00PM CH  AA 8:00 PM - LH	24	25
26 1st Sunday of Lent  Worship 10:30 AM Communion Sunday	27  AA 8:00 PM - LH	28  BIBLE STUDY 10:30AM CH			<p>For God so loVed the world That He gAve His onLly Be gottEn SoN T hat whosoever Believeth In Him Should N ot perish, But have E verlasting life.</p>	

Contact Us . . .

## St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church

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Columbus, GA 31907

(706) 561-3406  
office@stmatthewcolumbusga.org

Visit us on the web at  
www.stmatthewcolumbusga.org

### St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church Mission Statement



*Reach in  
to grow in Christ  
Reach up  
to worship God  
Reach out  
to welcome and witness*

Inside in-person worship *with zoom* is at  
10:30 a.m.

#### OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday/Thursday 2:30 PM - 5:30 PM

Friday - 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

#### Staff . . .

Pastor  
Parish Administrator

Reverend Taylor Burton Edwards  
Sonja Metcalf  
*office@stmatthewcolumbusga.org*

Minister of Music  
Nursery Attendant  
Web Master

Sandra Nearhoof  
Penny Davis  
Laurence Mosely  
*webmaster@stmatthewcolumbusga.org*

Website  
Media Specialist

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Kelly Peterson  
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Sexton

Lisa Pettit

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED