

St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church



Second Sunday of Advent
December 10, 2023

John calls people to repent, to clear the decks, to completely reorder their lives so that nothing gets in the way of the Lord's coming. The reading from Isaiah gives the context for this radical call: the assurance of forgiveness that encourages us to repent; the promise that the coming one will be gentle with the little ones. Isaiah calls us all to be heralds with John, to lift up our voices fearlessly and say, "See, your God is coming!" We say it to one another in worship, in order to say it with our lives in a world in need of justice and peace.

Holy Communion

Evangelical Lutheran Worship

(ELW) Setting 2, Page 116

† 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: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: **Amen.**

P: Gracious God,

C: **have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. 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 your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection awaken us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and keep us blameless until the coming of your new day, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

Children's Message

Geri Regnier

First Reading

- ¹Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.
- ²Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her
that she has served her term,
that her penalty is paid,
that she has received from the LORD's hand
double for all her sins.
- ³A voice cries out:
"In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
- ⁴Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.
- ⁵Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."
- ⁶A voice says, "Cry out!"
And I said, "What shall I cry?"
All people are grass,
their constancy is like the flower of the field.
- ⁷The grass withers, the flower fades,
when the breath of the LORD blows upon it;
surely the people are grass.
- ⁸The grass withers, the flower fades;
but the word of our God will stand forever.
- ⁹Get you up to a high mountain,
O Zion, herald of good tidings;
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,
lift it up, do not fear;
say to the cities of Judah,
"Here is your God!"
- ¹⁰See, the Lord GOD comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.
- ¹¹He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms,
and carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead the mother sheep.

L: The word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13**Tone 4**

- ¹You have been gracious to your | land, O LORD;
you have restored the good for- | tune of Jacob.

2You have forgiven the iniquity ¹ of your people
and blotted out ¹ all their sins.

⁸I will listen to what the LORD ¹ God is saying;
for you speak peace to your faithful people
and to those who turn their ¹ hearts to you.

9Truly, your salvation is very near to ¹ those who fear you,
that your glory may dwell ¹ in our land.

¹⁰Steadfast love and faithfulness have ¹ met together;
righteousness and peace have ¹ kissed each other.

11Faithfulness shall spring up ¹ from the earth,
and righteousness shall look ¹ down from heaven.

¹²The LORD will indeed ¹ grant prosperity,
and our land will ¹ yield its increase.

13Righteousness shall go be- ¹ fore the LORD
and shall prepare for ¹ God a pathway.

Second Reading

2 Peter 3:8-15a

⁸But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. ⁹The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. ¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed. ¹¹Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, ¹²waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? ¹³But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home. ¹⁴Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; ¹⁵and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

L: The word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God.

† Gospel Acclamation

“ Alleluia ”

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Gospel

Mark 1:1-8

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the 1st Chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

¹The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

²As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

"See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way;

³the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

'Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight,"

⁴John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of

repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

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

Sermon

Apocalypse as Comfort

Reverend Taylor Burton Edwards

† Hymn of the Day

"All earth is hopeful"

ELW #266

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 and the Son,*
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**

Choose to stand, kneel, or sit for prayers.

Prayers of Intercession

A: With hope and expectation, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all who await God's day of restoration.

A brief silence.

A: Send forth your faithful people with words of promise and forgiveness. Teach your church to be bold in revealing your good news in word and in deed. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Reveal your majesty in mountain peaks, flowing rivers, and blossoming wilderness roads. Heal the earth where it longs for renewal. Bring wholeness to the earth and all its creatures. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Turn the hearts of the nations toward righteousness and peace. Increase cooperation for justice between countries, commonwealths, political parties, and diplomatic leaders. In times of prosperity, direct leaders to be generous for the sake of all. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Comfort your people with tender words of love and healing. Surround all who are grieving, all who know depression or anxiety, or all who feel lonely or forgotten. Be a steadfast presence when all else feels uncertain. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Grant holy patience to all who are waiting this season. Give hope to those seeking employment. Bring reassurance to people awaiting new diagnoses or treatments. Protect expectant parents. Watch with those who keep bedside vigil. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: For all those who have asked us to pray for them...

C: receive our prayer.

A: With you a thousand years is like a day. Bless the memory of the saints from ages past and the anticipation of saints yet to be born. Inspire us to live with faith as we await your new heaven and new earth. Merciful God,

SENDING

Blessing

Sending Hymn *"On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry"*

ELW #249

Dismissal

A: Go in peace. Remember the poor.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

READINGS AND PSALM SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2023

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
Psalm 126
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
John 1:6-8, 19-28



"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

December 3, 2023

First Sunday of Advent

ATTENDANCE — 45

(IN-PERSON— 43 , ZOOM - 2)

Thankfully offered

OFFERING

Benevolence	\$ 2,985.15
Building	\$ 36.00
Memorial	\$ 0.00
Other	\$ 330.00
Total	\$ 3,352.15

Serving today, December 10, 2023

Opener/Closer	Carla Stickles
Crucifer	Ian Jeffery
Worship Assistant	Liz McGouirk/Raymond Lawton
Communion Assistant	Raymond Lawton
Lector	Cecil McGouirk
Offering-bearer	Duncan Jeffery
Ushers	Bill Wallace Jim Sperry
Altar Guild	Geri Regnier Lisa Pettit

Servers for Sunday, December 17, 2023

Opener/Closer	Rose Johnson
Crucifer	Ian Jeffery
Worship Assistant	Lisa Pettit
Communion Assistant	Geri Regnier
Lector	Amy Hoag
Offering-bearer	Duncan Jeffery
Ushers	Connie Sieg Jim Sperry
Altar Guild	Allena Sperry Donna Doughty

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.”
—1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

The Armed Forces,
their families,
and victims of war
Persecuted Christians
The ministries of
St. Matthew
Presiding Bishop
Elizabeth Eaton
Bishop Kevin
Strickland
Southeastern Synod
Staff
Pastor Taylor Burton
Edwards
Laura Alexander
Zocia Barr family
Keandra Bashful
Carol Bingemann
Dave Bonaker
Pat Bonaker
Eva Brown
Betty Davidson
Ken Hoag
Myrna Hoag
Bennie Jackson
Mairetha Jackson
Marga Miller
Traudel Mosely

Debby Owen
Dorothy Redden
Connie Sieg
Joan Smith
Jim Sperry
Carla Stickles
Albert VanHousen II
Margarete Walsh
Monika Wright
Gary Anderson
Judy Bultman
Kyle Carter
Jim Chappel
Jean Clemmons
Xavier Danguilan
Brandy Garnett
Becky Goldsmith
Estrella Gonzales
Doris Grier
Petra Henderson
Beverly Huckaby
Norma Kilby
Ken Korn
Laura Lester
Robert Lowe
Michelle Matthias
Tim Moore
Gary Nearhoof

Kimberly O'Malley
Michael Owen
Angela Paul
Vincent Pawlowski
Dwight Redmond
Tiffany Richardson
Dayna Ryan
Yuliia Savitska
Shirley Scott
Ricky Skinner
Betty Townsend
Charlie VanHousen
Dawn VanHousen
Martha Zimmerman

Libya
Maui
Morrocco
Israel
Ukraine
Gaza
Vance Brooks Funeral
Service
Striffler Hamby Funeral
Service
E&S Clothing
One Financial
El Carrizo
Tasha's Dance & Prep
M. Bland Salon

Deadline for bulletins is **Tuesday 10:00 a.m.** prior to the Sunday.
Deadline for January newsletter is December 20.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to St. Matthew: Jesus Christ offers himself to all. May you be blessed as we celebrate God's love for us. All the baptized are invited to feast with us at the Lord's Table. The wearing of a mask is optional during worship and social distancing is recommended. The Sacrament of Holy Communion is celebrated every Sunday.

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 4 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.

The Tuesday morning Bible Study meets in the Church House from 10:30 - 11:30 a.m. This class reads and talks about the scriptures for the coming Sunday.

Mission Outreach Opportunities:

- **FOCUS:** Stewart Community Home
11/19-12/10 - Socks, full size shower gels, shampoos for men & women
- Lion's Club: Glasses, sunglasses and old cell phones
- Ronald McDonald house: Pop tabs
- Flags to Retire: Bring used American flags that you no longer want or need.
- St. Anne's: Personal hygiene products (travel size), toilet paper, and non-perishable food items

Leave donations in the labeled containers in the Narthex between bathrooms.

Remembrance Gathering: Please come to a special Remembrance Gathering Tuesday, December 12th at 3:00 PM in the Church House. Come share your favorite Christmas memory and tradition.

Offering Envelopes: If you currently do NOT receive an offering envelope booklet and would like one for 2024 OR you DO receive one and would NOT like one for 2024, please notify either Katherine Kelly or the church office via email at office@stmatthewcolumbusga.com.

Christmas Poinsettias: It is that time of the year! If you would like to order Christmas Poinsettias in honor or memory of a loved one, please pick up, fill out and turn in a form (located in the Narthex) by TODAY!

Save the Date

- December 10th - Turn in Poinsettia order
- December 11th 12:00 PM - Advent lunch study - St. Thomas
- December 12th 3:00 PM - Remembrance Gathering
- December 13th 5:30 PM - Midweek Advent Worship Service
- December 17th 10:30 - Children's "The Christmas Story Through the Chrismon Tree" performance
- December 17th 2:00 PM - Weihnachts (German) Service
- December 21st 5:00 PM - Council Meeting - New council members should attend. Church House.

The Memorial Book Is Open Today to the Glory of God

In Memory of:

Charles Davidson, Jr., 1998

Introducing our "Warming Tree"! Please bring the following new items to decorate our "Warming Tree" for men, women and children: gloves/mittens, scarves and hats to warm up our community. You may decorate our "Warming Tree" using clothespins in basket or lay under the tree. The tree will be up through Sunday, December 17th. Your donations will help these local organizations: Valley Rescue, Women & Childrens Center and Sara Spano Clothing Bank.

Advent & Christmas Services



Midweek Worship

Wednesday, 5:30 p.m.
December 6, 13, 20



Weihnachts Service

Sunday, December 17
2:00 p.m.

Christmas Eve

Holy Communion Service
Sunday, December 24
Special Music at 7:00
Service at 7:30 p.m.



*New Years
Eve
Winter Wonderland
Party*

December 31st
12:00 PM, following church in Fellowship Hall

*Heavy hors d'oeuvres
and finger foods*

*Sign up sheet in Narthex for food,
decorating, serving, and clean up.
Decorating on Saturday, December
30th at 10:00.*

Dear Heavenly Father, you will not leave us without a blessing. Wrestle with your church and renew it for the sake of the world. Preserve our life in you, so that we faithfully name you before the world, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen**

St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church Mission Statement



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

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

Office email: office@stmatthewcolumbusga.com

A member congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,

Southeastern Synod

www.stmatthewcolumbusga.com

The Rev. Taylor Burton Edwards, Pastor

Kelly Peterson, Media Specialist

Lisa Pettit, Sexton

Sandra Nearhoof, Minister of Music

Sonja Metcalf, Parish Administrator

Penny Davis, Nursery Director