

St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church



Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

February 1, 2026

Who are the blessed ones of God? For Micah, they are those who do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. For Paul, they are the ones who find wisdom in the weakness of the cross. For Jesus, they are the poor, the meek, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, those who mourn, and those who hunger for righteousness. In baptism we find our blessed identity and calling in this countercultural way of living and serving.

Holy Communion

Evangelical Lutheran Worship

(ELW Setting 10, page 203)

† Congregation stands as able

GATHERING

Prelude

Sandra Nearhoof



P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: **And also with you.**

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

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: God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of +Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God, strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

C: **Amen.**

Gathering Hymn

"Lift High the Cross"

ELW #660

Kyrie

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Gloria

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Prayer of the Day:

P. Let us pray,

Holy God, you confound the world's wisdom in giving your kingdom to the lowly and the pure in heart. Give us such a hunger and thirst for justice, and perseverance in striving for peace, that in our words and deeds the world may see the life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C. **Amen.**

PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

Children's Message

Katherine Kelly

First Reading

Micah 6:1-8

¹ Hear what the LORD says: Rise, plead your case before the mountains, and let the hills hear your voice. ² Hear, you mountains, the case of the LORD,

and you enduring foundations of the earth, for the LORD has a case against his people, and he will contend with Israel.³ “O my people, what have I done to you? In what have I wearied you? Answer me!⁴ For I brought you up from the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of slavery, and I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.⁵ O my people, remember now what King Balak of Moab devised, what Balaam son of Beor answered him, and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal, that you may know the saving acts of the LORD.”⁶ “With what shall I come before the LORD and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old?⁷ Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?”⁸ He has told you, O mortal, what is good, and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God?

L: The word of the Lord

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 15

Tone 9

¹ LORD, who may dwell in your ¹ tabernacle?
Who may abide upon your ¹ holy hill?
² **Those who lead a blameless life and do ¹ what is right,
who speak the truth ¹ from their heart;**
³ they do not slander with the tongue, they do no evil ¹ to their friends;
they do not cast discredit up- ¹ on a neighbor.
⁴ **In their sight the wicked are rejected, but they honor those who ¹ fear
the LORD.**
They have sworn upon their health and do not take ¹ back their word.
⁵ They do not give their money in hope of gain, nor do they take bribes a-
gainst the innocent.
Those who do these things shall never be ¹ overthrown.

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 1:19-31

¹⁹ For it is written, “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.”²⁰ Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scholar? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?²¹ For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of the proclamation, to save those who believe.²² For Jews ask for signs and Greeks desire wisdom,
²³ but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to gentiles,²⁴ but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.²⁵ For God’s foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God’s weakness is stronger than human strength.

²⁶ Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth.²⁷ But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong;²⁸ God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to abolish things that are,²⁹ so that no one might boast about themselves in the presence of God.³⁰ It is because of God that you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and

righteousness and sanctification and redemption,³¹ in order that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

L: The word of the Lord

C: **Thanks be to God.**

+ Gospel Acclamation

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Gospel

Matthew 5:1-12

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

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

¹ When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. ² And he began to speak and taught them, saying:

³ “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴ “Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

⁵ “Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

⁶ “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

⁷ “Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

⁸ “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

⁹ “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

¹⁰ “Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹ “Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

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

Sermon *“Calling Out Classist Pride”* Reverend Taylor Burton Edwards

+ Hymn of the Day *“In the Cross of Christ I Glory”*

ELW #324

Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen**

Installation of Officers

You may sit, stand or kneel for the prayers.

Prayers of Intercession

A: As God's beloved children united in Christ, let us pray for the church, the whole human community, and the well-being of the earth, our home.

A brief silence.

A: God our wisdom, renew the church in the power of the Spirit, that it may do justice, love kindness, live humbly, and boldly proclaim Christ crucified. We pray for social justice and humanitarian aid ministries. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: God our source, we honor you by caring wisely for your creation. We pray for the health of old growth forests, ice caps, and ocean currents. Preserve the diversity of life on earth. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: God our righteousness, raise up visionary leaders who serve with integrity and respect human rights. Increase freedom in every nation. Protect educators, journalists, artists, and religious activists who are reviled for speaking truth. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: God our advocate, you give hope to all who suffer because of persecution, poverty, or war. Reunite separated families and bring orphaned children to safety. Comfort any who grieve or suffer in any way. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: God our blessing, we pray for the children and youth of this congregation, and for parents, grandparents, mentors, teachers, and youth ministers who model love for their neighbor and care for others. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

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

C: receive our prayer.

A: God our joy, we give thanks for the lives of those before us who journeyed humbly with you. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

P: Confident that the Holy Spirit receives our prayers and answers us, we commend all for whom we pray to God's loving-kindness made known to us in Christ Jesus our Savior.

C: **Amen.**

MEAL

Offertory Hymn *"Beneath the Cross of Jesus"*

ELW #338

The gifts may be brought forward.

Offering Prayer

A: God of majesty, no eye has seen, no ear has heard what you have prepared for those who love you, yet in this meal you reveal the wideness of your mercy. Use what we have gathered to feed us with the reign of God come near, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: **Amen.**

 Great Thanksgiving	Page 206
Holy, Holy, Holy	Page 207
Lord's Prayer "Our Father, who..."	Page 208
Lamb of God	Page 208

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: Radiant God, we have seen your glory in the face of Jesus Christ. In the sacrament of his body and blood you have drawn us to your heart. Send us from this table with delight, that our lives may reflect the beauty of your love, and bear witness to all we have seen and heard, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: **Amen.**

SENDING

Blessing

Sending Hymn

"When the Poor Ones"

ELW #725

Dismissal

A: Go forth to love and serve God and every neighbor.
C: **Thanks be to God.**

The Memorial Book is open today to the Glory of God

In Memory of:

Edith Klein, 2020

READINGS AND PSALM
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2026

Isaiah 58:1-12

Psalm 112:1-10

1 Corinthians 2:1-12, 16

Matthew 5:13-20

“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



January 25, 2026
Third Sunday after Epiphany

ATTENDANCE — 60

(IN-PERSON — 39, YOUTUBE - 21

2026 BUDGET-\$185,981

OFFERING

Benevolence	\$	1,570.00
Building	\$	200.00
Memorial	\$	200.00
Other	\$	150.00
Total	\$	2,120.00

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

Serving February 1, 2026

Opener/Closer	Bill Wallace
Worship Assistant	Dave Bonaker/Raymond Lawton
Communion Assistant	Amy Hoag
Lector	Shannon Gardner
Ushers	James Sperry
Altar Guild	Bill Wallace
	Lane Brown
	Rose Johnson
	Catherine Sayers
Live Streaming	Cecil McGouirk

Serving February 8, 2026

Opener/Closer	Rose Johnson
Worship Assistant	Shannon Gardner
Communion Assistant	Terri Niederhammer
Lector	Dave Bonaker
Ushers	Katherine Kelly
Altar Guild	James Sperry
	Nancy Gates
	Terri Niederhammer
	Catherine Sayers
Live Streaming	Paul Hicks

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	Sandy Gibbs	Venezuela
The ministries of St. Matthew	Moses Glidden	Gaza
Bishop Yehiel Curry	Estrella Gonzales	Palestinian People
Bishop Kevin Strickland	Renee Good Family	Israel
Southeastern Synod Staff	Doris Grier	Ukraine
Pastor Taylor Burton Edwards	Grigsby Family	People of Russia
Pastor Rachel Zarnke	Laura Jett	Somali Refugees
St Matthew Congregational Council	Norma Kilby	Jewish community in Australia
Laura Alexander	Ken Korn	People of Minneapolis
Carol Bingemann	Emma Kump	Beth Israel Congregation in Jackson, Mississippi
Isabelle Clark	Robert Lowe	Family of Renee Good
Randy Craven	David & John Lucas	Family of Alex Pretti
Myrna & Ken Hoag	Michelle Matthias	Eastern Congo
Marga Miller	Brady Meeks	People of Nigeria
Charlotte Moore	Lynne Meinhold	
Traudel Moseley	Tim Moore	
Debby Owen	Debi Nelson	Angel's Nails
Dorothy Redden	Vincent Pawlowski	Y & J Health
Gary Anderson	Beth Price	Hidden Lake Grocery
Eric & Tinisha Bryant	Mark Purushotham	USPS
Jean Clemons	Tiffany Richardson	Peachtree Immediate Care
Nancy Edmundson	Dayna Ryan	Hidden Lake Bottle Shop
Lynne Funck	Shirley Scott	
Brandy Garnett	Dou Shizhen	
	Ricky Skinner	
	Amanda Steinagel	
	Sara Steinagel Sturgis	
	Fred Turpin	
	Charlie VanHousen	
	Dawn VanHousen	
	Martha Zimmerman	

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:

- All unused all occasion and holiday cards
- 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
- Brown Bag: Travel size toiletries
- SafeHouse/St. Benedict's Sealed plastic utensils (take-out meals)

Leave donations in the labeled containers in the Narthex.

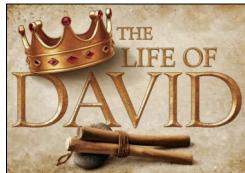
Bible Study: Please join us on Tuesdays at 10:15 in the Church House to review and discuss the scripture readings for the upcoming Sunday.

Craf-Tea: This group will meet on the 4th Friday of each month 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: Meets every Monday at 11:00 AM in Luther Hall. Wear comfortable clothing and sneakers.

Save the Date

- February 2nd - 11:00 am - Chair Yoga - Luther Hall
- February 3rd -10:15 - Bible Study - Church House
- February 4th - 6:00 - Interfaith Bible Study - Luther Hall
- February 8th - 12:00-Memorial Committee Meeting
- February 10th - 4:00-Finance Committee Meeting - Fellowship Hall
- February 14th - 6:00 - Interfaith Bible Study- Luther Hall
- February 17th - 5:30 - Shrove Tuesday at St Thomas
- February 18th - 5:30 - Ash Wednesday Service
- February 19th - 5:00 - Council Meeting
- February 22nd - 5:00 - Contemplative Service @ St. Thomas
- February 25th - 5:30 - Midweek Lenten Service
- February 26th - 5:30 - Choir Practice
- February 27th - 10:00 - Craf-Tea - Luther Hall



Interfaith Bible Study on King David continues each Wednesday at 6 PM in Luther Hall led by Rabbi Beth Schwartz and Reverend Taylor Burton Edwards.



Thanks to your generosity, Wynnton Neighborhood Network was able to assist 5950 families with food and 682 families with utility payment assistance in 2025!



February 1, 2026 - Tackle Hunger Potluck!
JOIN US TODAY AFTER THE SERVICE in Luther Hall. We will also be celebrating February birthdays!



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 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 2:30-5:00 PM, Friday 9:00-1:00 PM

Pastor Taylor Burton Edwards Email: twbe@liturgyfolks.com
Phone: (765) 602-1426

Office email : office@stmatthewcolumbusga.com

A member congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,

Southeastern Synod

www.stmatthewcolumbusga.com

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@st.matthewlutheranchurch4457streams>

The Rev. Taylor Burton Edwards, Pastor
Sonja Metcalf, Parish Administrator
Lisa Pettit, Sexton

Sandra Nearhoof, Minister of Music
Penny Davis, Nursery Director