

St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church



Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 7, 2025

Called to contemplate the cost of discipleship, we might be helped by translating Paul's request to Philemon into our prayer of the day: Refresh my heart in Christ. Strengthened by the company and forgiveness of Christ in holy communion and recalling God's grace in remembrance of baptism, we can be strengthened in this hour to "choose life"—to choose life in God as our own.

Holy Communion

Evangelical Lutheran Worship

(ELW Setting 8, page 184)

† Congregation stands as able

GATHERING

Prelude

Sandra Nearhoof



P: In the name of the Holy and Undivided Trinity, Three-in-One+ and One-in-Three.

C: **Amen.**

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: Even when we are faithless, God remains faithful. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. You who were lost have been found. In the name of +Jesus, your sins are forgiven!

C: **Amen.**

Gathering Hymn *“Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing”*

ELW #807

Kyrie

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Gloria

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Prayer of the Day:

P. Let us pray,

Direct us, O Lord God, in all our doings with your continual help, that in all our works, begun, continued, and ended in you, we may glorify your holy name; and finally, by your mercy, bring us to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C. **Amen.**

PROCLAMATION OF GOD’S WORD

Children’s Message

Katherine Kelly

First Reading

Jeremiah 18:1-11

¹The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD: ²Come, go down to the potter’s house, and there I will let you hear my words. ³So I went down to the potter’s house, and there he was working at his wheel. ⁴The vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter’s hand, and he reworked it into another

vessel, as seemed good to him.

⁵Then the word of the LORD came to me: ⁶Can I not do with you, O house of Israel, just as this potter has done? says the LORD. Just like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel. ⁷At one moment I may declare concerning a nation or a kingdom, that I will pluck up and break down and destroy it, ⁸but if that nation, concerning which I have spoken, turns from its evil, I will change my mind about the disaster that I intended to bring on it. ⁹And at another moment I may declare concerning a nation or a kingdom that I will build and plant it, ¹⁰but if it does evil in my sight, not listening to my voice, then I will change my mind about the good that I had intended to do to it. ¹¹Now, therefore, say to the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: Thus says the LORD: Look, I am a potter shaping evil against you and devising a plan against you. Turn now, all of you from your evil way, and amend your ways and your doings.

L: The word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18

Tone 6

¹LORD, you have | searched me out;

O LORD, | you have known me.

²**You know my sitting down and my | rising up;
you discern my thoughts | from afar.**

³You trace my journeys and my | resting-places
and are acquainted with | all my ways.

⁴**Indeed, there is not a word | on my lips,
but you, O LORD, know it | altogether.**

⁵You encompass me, behind | and before,
and lay your | hand upon me.

⁶**Such knowledge is too wonder- | ful for me;
it is so high that I cannot at- | tain to it.**

¹³For you yourself created my | inmost parts;
you knit me together in my | mother's womb.

¹⁴**I will thank you because I am mar- | velously made;
your works are wonderful, and I | know it well.**

¹⁵My body was not hid- | den from you,
while I was being made in secret and woven in the depths | of the earth.

¹⁶**Your eyes beheld my limbs, yet unfinished in the womb;
all of them were written | in your book;
my days were fashioned before they | came to be.**

¹⁷How deep I find your | thoughts, O God!
How great is the | sum of them!

¹⁸**If I were to count them, they would be more in number | than the sand;
to count them all, my life span would need to | be like yours.**

Second Reading

Philemon 1-21

¹Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother,
To Philemon our dear friend and co-worker, ²to Apphia our sister, to Archippus
our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house:

³Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴When I remember you in my prayers, I always thank my God ⁵because I hear of your love for all the saints and your faith toward the Lord Jesus. ⁶I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective when you perceive all the good that we may do for Christ. ⁷I have indeed received much joy and encouragement from your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, my brother. ⁸For this reason, though I am bold enough in Christ to command you to do your duty, ⁹yet I would rather appeal to you on the basis of love—and I, Paul, do this as an old man, and now also as a prisoner of Christ Jesus. ¹⁰I am appealing to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I have become during my imprisonment. ¹¹Formerly he was useless to you, but now he is indeed useful both to you and to me. ¹²I am sending him, that is, my own heart, back to you. ¹³I wanted to keep him with me, so that he might be of service to me in your place during my imprisonment for the gospel; ¹⁴but I preferred to do nothing without your consent, in order that your good deed might be voluntary and not something forced. ¹⁵Perhaps this is the reason he was separated from you for a while, so that you might have him back forever, ¹⁶no longer as a slave but more than a slave, a beloved brother—especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord. ¹⁷So if you consider me your partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. ¹⁸If he has wronged you in any way, or owes you anything, charge that to my account. ¹⁹I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand: I will repay it. I say nothing about your owing me even your own self. ²⁰Yes, brother, let me have this benefit from you in the Lord! Refresh my heart in Christ. ²¹Confident of your obedience, I am writing to you, knowing that you will do even more than I say.

L: The word of the Lord

C: **Thanks be to God.**



Gospel Acclamation

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Gospel

Luke 14:25-33

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 14th Chapter.

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

²⁵Now large crowds were traveling with [Jesus;] and he turned and said to them, ²⁶"Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple. ²⁷Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. ²⁸For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it? ²⁹Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to ridicule him, ³⁰saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.' ³¹Or what king, going out to wage war against another king, will not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one who comes against him with twenty thousand? ³²If he cannot, then, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for the terms of peace. ³³So therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions."

P: The Gospel of the Lord.
C: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

"Fate We Decide"

Reverend Taylor Burton Edwards

✠ Hymn of the Day *"Change My Heart , O God"* **ELW #801**

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,
resurrection of flesh,
and the life everlasting. Amen**

You may sit, stand or kneel for the prayers.

Prayers of Intercession

A: Gracious God, we come to you in prayer for the church, the world, and all in need..

A brief silence.

A: We pray for the church to follow in your ways, that it may be a witness to your love for all people. Help us choose all that is life-giving and confront the forces of death. God of grace,

C: receive our prayer.

A: We pray for creation, that it may be cherished and nurtured. Sustain farmlands, animals, and waters; restore places affected by calamities; and shield coastlands from rising seas. God of grace,

C: receive our prayer.

A: We pray for those in authority. Grant them wisdom to govern justly and compassion to care for the marginalized. Equip them for actions that further the common good. God of grace,

C: receive our prayer.

A: We pray for those who are sick, hungry, unhoused, immigrants, or alone.
May your love and the care of those around them sustain them.
God of grace,
C: **receive our prayer.**

A: We pray for this congregation, that we may be united in love and faith.
Refresh our hearts in Christ, and deepen our support of one another. We
pray that our sharing of faith may transform lives. God of grace,
C: **receive our prayer.**

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

A: We thank you for those who have died and now dwell with the saints ,
especially Margarete Walsh, Patricia Bonaker, Betty Davidson, Mike
Regnier and Boyd Lester, we give thanks. Surround them with your divine
mercy, that they find peace and rest in your loving embrace. God of grace,
C: **receive our prayer.**

P: We entrust these prayers to you, O God, in the name of Jesus Christ, our
redeemer and friend.
C: **Amen.**

MEAL

Offertory *"Come, My Way, My Truth, My Life"* **ELW #816**

The gifts may be brought forward.

Offering Prayer

A: Lord of the harvest, we return to you a portion of what you have given to us.
Turn us to set our hope not on the uncertainty of riches, but on you, who
richly provides for us. Multiply what we have gathered to bless all who are
suffering and in need, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
C: **Amen.**

✠ Great Thanksgiving Page 190

Holy, Holy, Holy Page 190

Lord's Prayer "Our Father, who..." Page 191

Lamb of God Page 191

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: O God, through this meal you have strengthened us and appointed us to be your servants. Send us to do good and to share our possessions with all in need. We ask this in Jesus' name.

C: Amen.

SENDING

Blessing

Sending Hymn

"In Thee is Gladness"

ELW #867

Dismissal

A: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

The Memorial Book is open today to the Glory of God

In Memory of:

Sandra Hanson Gibbon, 2009

READINGS AND PSALM
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2025

Jeremiah 4:11-12, 22-28
 Psalm 14
 1 Timothy 1:12-17
 Luke 15:1-10



*"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*

August 31, 2025
Twelfth Sunday of Pentecost

ATTENDANCE — 58

(IN-PERSON— 43, YOUTUBE - 15

2025 BUDGET-\$177,962

OFFERING

Benevolence	\$	3,280.00
Building	\$	200.00
Memorial	\$	150.00
Other	\$	0.00
Total	\$	3,630.00

Serving September 7, 2025

Opener/Closer	Katherine Kelly
Worship Assistant	Shannon Gardner
Communion Assistant	Raymond Lawton
Lector	Dave Bonaker
Ushers	Jim Sperry Bill Wallace
Altar Guild	Rose Johnson Catherine Sayers
Live Streaming	Jaxson Gardner

Serving September 14, 2025

Opener/Closer	Bill Wallace
Worship Assistant	Rose Johnson
Communion Assistant	Shannon Gardner
Lector	Toni Mion
Ushers	Jim Sperry Bill Wallace
Altar Guild	Nancy Gates Lisa Pettit
Live Streaming	Cecil McGouirk

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
Persecuted Christians
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
Dave Bonaker
Matt Bonaker
Sandy Craven
Davidson Family
Myrna & Ken Hoag
Mairetha & Bennie
Jackson
Sean Jeffery
Marga Miller
Charlotte Moore
Traudel Mosely
Debby Owen
Dorothy Redden

Regnier Family
Connie Sieg
Carla Stickles
Harold Vinson
Eric & Tinisha Bryant
George Capps
Chappel Family
Jean Clemmons
Xavier Danguilan
Penny Davis & Family
Nancy Edmundson
Lynne Funck
Brandy Garnett
Mike Gewin
Sandy Gibbs
Moses Glidden
Becky Goldsmith
Estrella Gonzales
Sarah Goodman
Doris Grier
Petra & Franklin
Henderson
Norma Kilby
Ken Korn
Emma Kump
Laura Lester
Robert Lowe
Michelle Matthias
Sandra McPeters
Brady Meeks
Lynn Meinhold
Tim Moore

Moser Family
Nearhoof Family
Debi Nelson
Angela Paul
Vincent Pawlowski
Beth Price
Mark Purushotham
Bill Rahm
Tiffany Richardson
Dayna Ryan
Shirley Scott
Dou Shizhen
Ricky Skinner
Amanda Steinagel
Sara Steinagel Sturgis
Fred Turpin
Charlie VanHousen
Dawn VanHousen
Molly Wright
Martha Zimmerman
Gaza
Israel
Ukraine
Western North Carolina
Southeastern Kentucky
Kerr County, Texas
Wynnton Neighborhood
Network
Church of the Anunciation
One Financial
Tasha's Dance & Prep
M. Bland Salon
Chevron
Bargain Furniture
Dollar General

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 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 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:

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

Craf-Tea: This group will meet Fridays 10:00-12:00 PM in Luther Hall. If you enjoy crafts and tea, this group is for you! Please see Beth Hoag for more information.

Chair Yoga: We are meeting every Monday at 11:00 AM in Luther Hall. Wear comfortable clothing and sneakers.

Save the Date

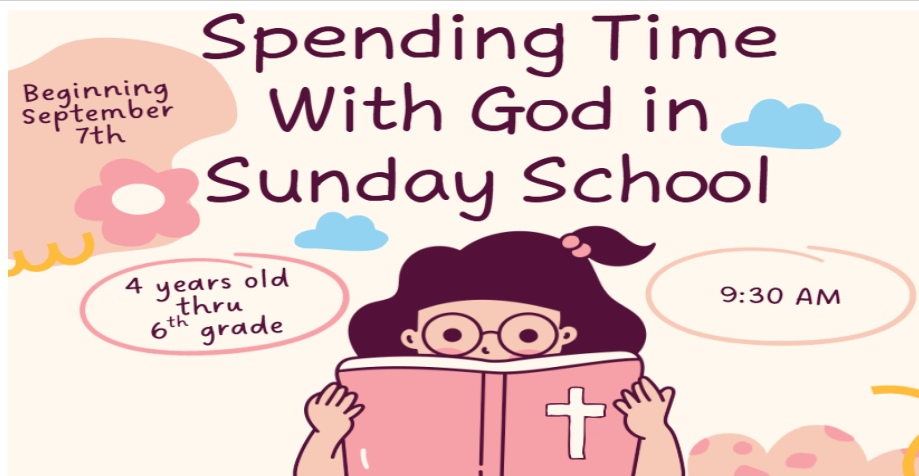
- September 8th - 11:00 - Chair Yoga - Luther Hall
- September 9th - 10:15 - Bible Study (bring lunch) - Fellowship Hall
- September 12th - 10:00 - Craf-Tea
- September 14th - 9:30 - Sunday School for Children
- September 14th - God's Work, Our Hands
- September 18th - 5:00 - Council Meeting - Fellowship Hall
- September 23rd - 3:00 - Finance Meeting - Fellowship Hall
- September 25th - 5:00 - Men's Group at Mr. Pizza



**WE NEED PAPERBACK BOOKS FOR
GOD'S WORK OUR HANDS,
SEPTEMBER 14TH. PLEASE PLACE IN
BASKET IN THE NARTHEX! THANK YOU!**

HOLIDAY CHRISTMAS LIST FOR WNN: Holiday items needed

Cranberry Sauce	Yams	Jelly
Brownie Mix	Evaporated Milk	Cornbread mix
Green Beans	Cream of Mushroom Soup	Pumpkin pie mix
Corn	Chicken Broth (cans or boxes)	Mac and cheese
Stuffing	Peanut Butter	



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

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(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

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.matthewlutheranchurch4457/streams>

The Rev. Taylor Burton Edwards, Pastor

Sonja Metcalf, Parish Administrator

Lisa Pettit, Sexton

Sandra Nearhoof, Minister of Music

Penny Davis, Nursery Director