



ST. MATTHEW

Messenger

Celebrating

70
years

The Newsletter of St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church - July 2026

Seventy Years of St. Matthew Part 2

In 1973 we began an evangelism effort called Each One Visit One. Tuesday morning Bible study was begun. Mrs. McGrann began our Girl Scout program and Mrs. Fugate organized a Brownie troop.

In 1974 St. Matthew became self-supporting – no longer did we require funds from the Board of American Missions! In that year we decided to sell the parsonage and provide the pastor with a housing allowance. The Macmurphys purchased a home on Rockdale Drive. Pastor Mac was appointed Chaplain for the inmates at Muscogee Co. Jail. We organized a group called The Lively Ones for members over age 40, and another named Heimatland Klub for German-speaking folks. The former met monthly at members' homes, and the latter in Luther Hall.

In 1975 a sanctuary refurbishing was begun to prepare for new pews and carpeting. A drive to retire the \$6,000 second mortgage was begun. We decided to publish a member pictorial directory for the upcoming 20th anniversary of the congregation. In October a special monthly service of healing was begun to affirm our faith in the healing ministry of our Savior. We began the use of banners depicting the various seasons at the Reformation service.

In 1976 a 20th Anniversary Committee was formed. It included Pastor Mac, Ernest and Marie Scruggs, Herb and Myra Gross, Fred and Myrtle Pieper. They planned and carried out the June celebration, which included all our former pastors. Pastor Mac took over a Bible study class for Japanese-speaking Christians which was begun by Pastor Zender of Prince of Peace church. They met each Wednesday morning. The second mortgage was paid in full, as was our covenant with the Synod. A Road to Membership program was developed, led by Jack Lorms, to help people enter into the life of the church from their first visit through acceptance into membership. Our first pictorial directory was published.

In 1977 we started a group called Spares and Pairs for under-40 people. A square-dancing group was begun. A barbershop chorus chapter started meeting in Luther Hall. A used school bus was purchased for members' trips, which included a summer Day Camp program. Pr. Mac was most often the driver.

1978 saw the beginning of the process that would lead to the merger of the LCA with other Lutheran bodies. We began using the new Lutheran Book of Worship and having lay worship assistants. Patricia Bonaker organized a handbell choir, first with two octaves of bells, the gift of the Tilton family. A third octave was purchased with memorial gifts from other families. Pastor Mac was chosen as president of the Columbus Ministerial Alliance, and Dean of the Hope area of our synod. Many of us became volunteers for the Contact telephone ministry. One of the largest AA groups in town began meeting in our facilities. Dr. Hans Peters served on the board of Williams-Henson home for children. We began two Sunday worship services, 8:30am and 11:00am.

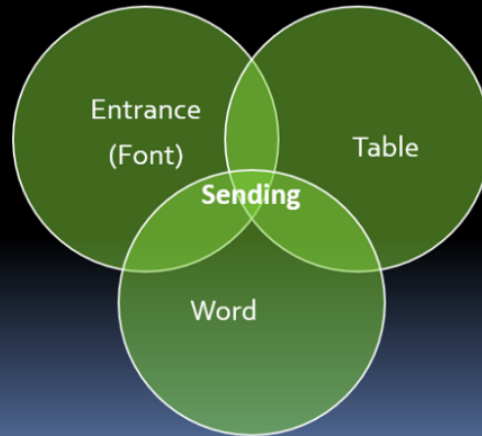
1979-80 – We were averaging over 200 people in attendance at our two Sunday services. The 11am service was usually crowded. We talked with David Opgrand, the Synod's building consultant, concerning a possible new sanctuary. His first recommendation was to try three services; an 8am service of the Word, and full worship services at 9:30 and 11:00. Sunday School would be held simultaneously with the 9:30 service. Mrs. Bonaker organized a second choir to sing the 9:30 service. The house and property on the east side of our property came up for sale, and we made the purchase, the current church house. We faced an expensive sewer line drainage problem from Luther Hall, which required extending the line to Elm Circle behind our property. Special gifts were solicited to cover these expenses.

More to come – Dave Bonaker

You're invited to **VBS!**



THE SHAPE OF WORSHIP



Get ready for an amazing adventure at **Vacation Bible School!** Join us for an unforgettable week of songs, games, and discovering God's love.

July 13th-15th
5:30-7:30 pm
St. Matthew Evangelical
Lutheran Church
4026 Macon Road
Columbus, GA 31907
706-561-3406

RSVP:
Register at

<https://www.stmatthewcolumbusga.com/comingevents>



Email:

office@stmatthewcolumbusga.com

July Birthdays

- 1 Shirley Ashley
- 3 Sandra Nearhoof
- 9 Allena Sperry
- 10 Jacob Vargas
- 16 Danny Alexander

- 16 Rev. Taylor Burton Edwards
- 19 Charlotte Moore
- 25 Katherine Pettit
- 27 Lane Brown
- 29 Anthony Hicks

HAPPY 70TH ANNIVERSARY TO ST MATTHEW



HAPPY 70TH ANNIVERSARY TO THE HOAGS!



AVAILABLE

DO YOU WANT TO KNOW?

If you want to review
Council Meeting minutes,
please contact the office!

Finance Committee Report

	May 2026	Year to Date
Income	\$12,664	\$64,144
Expenses	\$19,273	\$89,653
Difference	\$-6,609	\$-25,509
2026 Budget = \$185,981		



Prayer Requests

Business Prayer Requests

Mr. Pizza
Quality Inn
Smoke Buddy's
Days Inn
Enterprise
Master Kleen
Octapharma Plasma
Kamoree's Beauty Salon
Broken Tarot Tattoo & Piercing
Beaute' Matrix
5 Fourteen
DQ
Freedom Adult Day Center
Transformation Salon
Menzie Dance Company
Frankie's Hair Design
AMG Financial
Acceptance Auto
Phuong's Tailor Shop
Walgreen's
USPS
Peachtree Immediate Care
Hidden Lake Bottle Shop
Vance Brooks Funeral Service
Striffler Hamby Funeral Service
El Carrizo
M. Bland Salon
Chevron
Grace Apostolic Church
#1 Nails
Mario's Tire's
Mariner Finance
Diamond Kutz

Gold Teeth World
Apparel King & More
Hollywood Barber Shop
The Cell Plug
Title Max
JD Wings
Burger King
Animal General Hospital
Klose Kutz
Xpert Tax Service
Bi-City Driving School
Sunset Finance
Kee J's
Angel's Nails
Y & J Health
Hidden Lake Grocery
Beauty Queen
Brewster's
Waffle House
E & S Clothing
One Financial
Tasha's Dance & Prep
Bargain Furniture
Dollar General
Citgo
Landmark
McKibben Insurance
Rooster's Beer & Wine
Woodville Apartments
Beal Wellness

The Armed Forces, their
families, & 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
Lynn Funck
Brandy Garnett
Sandy Gibbs
Moses Glidden
Estrella Gonzales
Doris Grier
Laura Jett
Norma Kilby
Ken Korn
Emma Kump
Robert Lowe
John & David Lucas
Michelle Matthias
Brady Meeks
Lynne Meinhold

Tim Moore
Debi Nelson
Vincent Pawlowski
Beth Price
Mark Purushotham
Tiffany Richardson
Phyllis Roan
Dayna Ryan
Shirley Scott
Dou Shizhen
Ricky Skinner
Fred Turpin
Charlie VanHousen
Dawn VanHousen
Eric Young
Martha Zimmerman

Carlson Family
Gates Family
Sankey Family

People of Lebanon
People of Iran
Gaza
Palestinian People
Israel
Ukraine
People of Russia
Eastern Congo
People of Venezuela



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 Interfaith Bible Study 6:00 LN	2 Al-Anon/AA 8:00 pm - LH	3	4 
5- 6th Sunday after Pentecost Worship 10:30 AM Communion	6 Al-Anon/AA 8:00 pm - LH	7 Bible Study 10:15AM CH	8	9 German Klub 5:30 LH Al-Anon/AA 8:00 pm - LH	10	11
12- 7th Sunday after Pentecost Worship 10:30 AM Communion	13 Vacation Bible School 5:30-7:30 Al-Anon/AA 8:00 pm - LH	14 Bible Study 10:15AM CH Vacation Bible School 5:30-7:30	15 Vacation Bible School 5:30-7:30	16 WNN Care Packing 9:00 AM Council Meeting 5:00 PM-FH Al-Anon/AA 8:00 pm - LH	17 Craf-Tea 10-12 - LH	20
19 - 8th Sunday after Pentecost Father's Day Worship 10:30 AM Communion	20 Al-Anon/AA 8:00 pm - LH	21 Bible Study 10:15AM CH	22	23 Men's Group 5:00 at Deorio's Al-Anon/AA 8:00 pm - LH	24	25
26-9th Sunday after Pentecost Worship 10:30 AM Communion	27 Al-Anon/AA 8:00 pm - LH	29 Bible Study 10:15AM CH	29	30	31	

Contact Us . . .

St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church

4026 Macon Road
Columbus, GA 31907

(706) 561-3406
office@stmatthewcolumbusga.com

Visit us on the web at
www.stmatthewcolumbusga.com

Worship: Sundays at 10:30 am.
YouTube is also available

[https://www.youtube.com/
@st.matthewlutheranchurch4457](https://www.youtube.com/@st.matthewlutheranchurch4457)

OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday/Thursday 2:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Friday - 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church Mission Statement

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

Staff . . .

Pastor

Reverend Taylor Burton Edwards
twbe@liturgyfolks.com

Parish Administrator

Sonja Metcalf
office@stmatthewcolumbusga.com

Minister of Music

Sandra Nearhoof

Nursery Attendant

Penny Davis

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED