



**ST. MATTHEW**

# **Messenger**

*Celebrating* **69** years

*The Newsletter of St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church - January 2026*

## **Getting our House in Order**

The readings for the Time after Epiphany are selected to support two distinct purposes. The Gospel and the reading from the Hebrew Scriptures are to prepare the congregation for its evangelistic work. The epistle reading is a semi-continuous reading from one of Paul's letters aimed at helping the church address matters that may be holding it back from fulfilling its mission.

For the past two years, I've focused on the evangelism track. This year, the focus will be on the getting our house in order track, following the first two chapters of I Corinthians.

This is not to suggest that I think we are broken or way out of line as a congregation! Rather, it is always good to take some time to examine our alignment with what the church can be and make it better if we can at least once every three years. Going through the beginning of Paul's first letter to the church he founded at Corinth will provide us some helpful reminders about who we are and what we are called to be—and not be.

Also, during January, we'll be starting some administrative work to get our local church constitution aligned with the constitution as amended and adopted by Churchwide Assembly last summer. It's also always good to remind ourselves of where we have gone out of line as well as what the lines actually are in the first place.

And, our synod has provided a document for churches to prepare themselves for transitions that we'll start working with as well. Don't worry! I'm not planning to go anywhere! The synod recommends that all congregations use this document so that they have in one place some critical records and statements and processes and procedures so that when a time for transition does come, they will have everything needed together in one place and have plans, as well, for other kinds of transitions—such as in church officers (also not changing this year!) and church staff.

All of these actions—in preaching and in administration—are about helping us assess where we are and pointing us toward ways we can be healthier. Think of them as the annual physical if you will, but, in this case, a “spiritual” and an “administrational” for our church. While not everything about a physical may be pleasant at the time (unless, perhaps, you really like having your blood drawn, X-rays taken, and various kinds of poking and prodding – I'm not a fan of any of these!) the net result is always helpful.

So, let's do this in this season ahead, knowing we can be the better for it!

Peace in Christ,  
Pastor Taylor

# SMALL GROUPS

## ***Bible Study***

Weekday Bible Study meets in the Fellowship Hall from 10:15 - 11:30 a.m. each Tuesday reading and discussing the scriptures for the coming Sunday.

**NEW STUDY:** Interfaith Bible Study on King David begins January 14th at 6 PM in Luther Hall

## **Chair Yoga**

Chair Yoga will resume meeting on January 5, 2026 at 11:00 AM in the Luther Hall.

## **CRAF-TEA**

The Craf-Tea group will meet on the 4th Sunday of the month. The first meeting in 2026 will be January 23rd, 2026 at 10:00 am. Contact Linnea Grosse at (706) 392-8697 for more information.

# Warming Tree & Holiday Decorations



## **2026 St Matthew Church Council**

Allena Sperry - President/Mission & Ministry  
Bill Wallace - Vice President & Property  
Nancy Gates - Secretary  
Katherine Kelly - Treasurer  
Rose Johnson - Worship & Music  
Lisa Pettit - Fellowship & Streaming  
Matt Pettit - Fellowship & Streaming  
Terri Niederhammer - Fellowship & Chair Yoga  
Dave Bonaker - Worship & Music/Finance

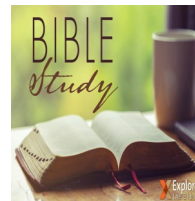
# UPCOMING EVENTS



**JANUARY**  
 Birthday Celebration  
 January 4, 2026  
 After worship service in  
 the Fellowship Hall.



January 6th - 11:30 AM -  
 Need help taking down all  
 the Christmas decorations!  
 Many hands make light  
 work!



"David through the eyes  
 of those who knew him"  
 led by Pastor Taylor and  
 Rabbi Beth Schwarz.  
 This study will begin  
 January 14th and  
 meeting each Wednesday thru  
 February 11th at 6:00 pm in Luther  
 Hall.

Care Bag Packing  
 January 29th, 9:00 AM  
 St Thomas Outreach  
 Center



February 1, 2026 - Tackle Hunger Potluck! Please sign up on the  
 list in the Narthex to bring your favorite tailgate food! Food and  
 monetary donations will go to Brown Bag of Columbus.



**AVAILABLE**

**DO YOU WANT TO KNOW?**

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

## Finance Committee Report

	November 2025	Year to Date
Income	\$15,971	\$142,973
Expenses	\$8,861	\$191,609
Difference	\$7,110	\$(48,636)



## 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  
Grigsby Family  
Laura Jett  
Norma Kilby  
Ken Korn  
Emma Kump  
Robert Lowe  
John & David Lucas  
Michelle Matthias

Brady Meeks  
Tim Moore  
Debi Nelson  
Vincent Pawlowski  
Beth Price  
Mark Purushotham  
Tiffany Richardson  
Dayna Ryan  
Shirley Scott  
Dou Shizhen  
Ricky Skinner  
Amanda Steinagel  
Sara Steinagel Sturgis  
Fred Turpin  
Charlie VanHousen  
Dawn VanHousen  
Martha Zimmerman

Gaza  
Palestinian People  
Israel  
Ukraine  
People of Russia  
Jamaica  
Philippines  
Hong Kong  
Thailand  
Indonesia  
Somali Refugees  
Flood victims in  
Washington  
Brown University  
Jewish community in  
Australia  
People of Cambodia



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 	2	3
4 - Second Sunday Of Christmas  Children's SS-9:30 Worship 10:30 AM Communion  Birthday Celebration	5  Chair Yoga 11:00-LH  Al-Anon/AA 8:00 pm - LH	6  Bible Study 10:15AM FH	7	8 German Klub 5:30 LH  Al-Anon/AA 8:00 pm - LH	9	10
11- Baptism of our Lord Sunday  Children's SS-9:30 Worship 10:30 AM Communion	12  Chair Yoga 11:00-LH  Al-Anon/AA 8:00 pm - LH	13  Bible Study 10:15AM FH	14  Interfaith Bible Study 6:00 - LH	15 Council Meeting 5:00 PM-FH  Al-Anon/AA 8:00 pm - LH	16	17
18- 2nd Sunday after Epiphany  Children's SS-9:30 Worship 10:30 AM Communion	19  Chair Yoga 11:00-LH  Al-Anon/AA 8:00 pm - LH	20  Bible Study 10:15AM FH	21  Interfaith Bible Study 6:00 - LH	22  Al-Anon/AA 8:00 pm - LH	23  Craf-Tea 10-12 - LH	24
25 - 3rd Sunday after Epiphany  Children's SS-9:30 Worship 10:30 AM Communion	26  Chair Yoga 11:00-LH  Al-Anon/AA 8:00 pm - LH	27  Bible Study 10:15AM FH	28  Interfaith Bible Study 6:00 - LH	29 Care bag packing 9 AM  Al-Anon/AA 8:00 pm - LH	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**  
**Nursery Attendant**  
**Sexton**

**Sandra Nearhoof**  
**Penny Davis**  
**Lisa Pettit**

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED