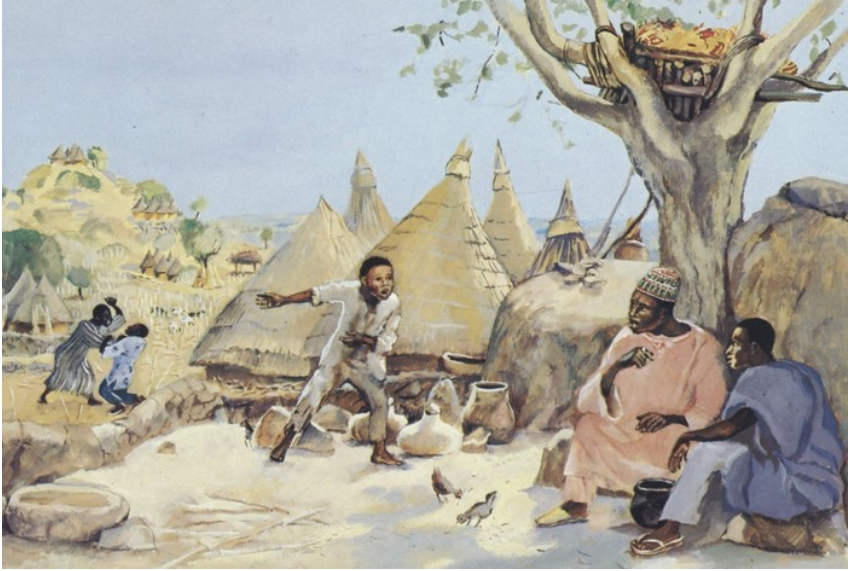


# St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church



**Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost  
September 17, 2023**

*In today's second reading Paul questions why we judge one another, since we all stand before the judgment of God. Yet we do sin against one another, and Jesus' challenge that we forgive seventy-seven times reveals God's boundless mercy. When we hear the words of forgiveness in worship and sign ourselves with the cross, we are renewed in baptism to be signs of reconciliation in the world.*

## Holy Communion

Evangelical Lutheran Worship

(ELW) Setting 3, Page 138

† *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: Most merciful God,

**C: we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves.**

**We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done**

**and by what we have left undone.**

**We have not loved you with our whole heart;**

**we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.**

**For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ,**

**have mercy on us.**

**Forgive us, renew us, and lead us,**

**so that we may delight in your will**

**and walk in your ways,**

**to the glory of your holy name. 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**

*"Praise, my soul, the God of heaven"*

**ELW #864**

Kyrie

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Hymn of Praise

"Glory to God in the Highest"

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Prayer of the Day:

P: Let us pray,

O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness.

Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

# PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

Children's Message

Rose Johnson

## First Reading

Genesis 50:15-21

<sup>15</sup>Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" <sup>16</sup>So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, <sup>17</sup>'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. <sup>18</sup>Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." <sup>19</sup>But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? <sup>20</sup>Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. <sup>21</sup>So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

L: The word of the Lord

C: **Thanks be to God.**

## Psalm 103:1-13

Tone 6

<sup>1</sup>Bless the LORD, | O my soul,  
and all that is within me, bless God's | holy name.  
<sup>2</sup>**Bless the LORD, | O my soul,**  
**and forget not | all God's benefits—**  
<sup>3</sup>who forgives | all your sins  
and heals all | your diseases;  
<sup>4</sup>**who redeems your life | from the grave**  
**and crowns you with steadfast | love and mercy;**  
<sup>5</sup>who satisfies your desires | with good things  
so that your youth is renewed | like an eagle's.  
<sup>6</sup>**O LORD, you provide | vindication**  
**and justice for all who | are oppressed.**  
<sup>7</sup>You made known your | ways to Moses  
and your works to the chil- | dren of Israel.  
<sup>8</sup>**LORD, you are full of compas- | sion and mercy,**  
**slow to anger and abounding in | steadfast love;**  
<sup>9</sup>you will not al- | ways accuse us,  
nor will you keep your an- | ger forever.  
<sup>10</sup>**You have not dealt with us according | to our sins,**  
**nor repaid us according to | our iniquities.**  
<sup>11</sup>For as the heavens are high a- | bove the earth,  
so great is your steadfast love for | those who fear you.  
<sup>12</sup>**As far as the east is | from the west,**  
**so far have you removed our transgres- | sions from us.**  
<sup>13</sup>As a father has compassion | for his children,  
so you have compassion for those who fear | you, O LORD.

## Second Reading

Romans 14:1-12

<sup>1</sup>Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. <sup>2</sup>Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. <sup>3</sup>Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. <sup>4</sup>Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand. <sup>5</sup>Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. <sup>6</sup>Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God. <sup>7</sup>We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. <sup>8</sup>If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. <sup>9</sup>For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. <sup>10</sup>Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. <sup>11</sup>For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." <sup>12</sup>So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

L: The word of the Lord

C: **Thanks be to God.**

† Gospel Acclamation

" Alleluia"

Page 142

## Gospel

Matthew 18:21-35

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 18th Chapter.

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

<sup>21</sup>Peter came and said to [Jesus], "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" <sup>22</sup>Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times. <sup>23</sup>For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. <sup>24</sup>When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; <sup>25</sup>and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. <sup>26</sup>So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' <sup>27</sup>And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. <sup>28</sup>But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' <sup>29</sup>Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' <sup>30</sup>But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. <sup>31</sup>When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. <sup>32</sup>Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. <sup>33</sup>Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?'

<sup>34</sup>And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. <sup>35</sup>So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

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

Sermon

"Praising for me"

Reverend Taylor Burton Edwards

† Hymn of the Day

*"Forgive our sins as we forgive"*

**ELW #605**

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**

*Choose to stand, kneel, or sit for prayers.*

### **Prayers of Intercession**

A: Remembering the caring and generous works of God, we pray for the church, creation, and the needs of our neighbors.

*A brief silence.*

A: We pray for the church. Bless the missions and ministries of diverse congregations, that they uplift the good news of salvation in ways that can be understood. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

A: We pray for creation. Send rain to lands experiencing drought and healing to rivers clogged with pollution. Enrich the soil for trees and plants. Protect the crops needed to feed those who hunger. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

A: We pray for all who govern. Encourage those in positions of power to lead with empathy, practice forgiveness, and care for those who struggle. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

A: We pray for our neighbors who face illness of any kind. For those strained financially; for all living with chronic pain, mental illness, the disease of addiction, or otherwise afraid or in harm's way. Protect all who cry out for mercy. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

A: We pray for this congregation. Open our hearts to practice intentional invitation. Help us to forgive each other, practice patience, and choose welcome over judgment. Move us to care for those in our community seeking refuge and safety. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

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

**C: receive our prayer.**

A: We give thanks for the saints who died in faith. Show us how to live faithfully, creatively, and lovingly in your church and world like Joyce Garver-Messenger, Anneliese Schwarting, Hans Salheiser, Bobby Wright, Joe Stewart, Christine Minor, and Rolene Stewart. May their trust in your promise be our protection and our hope. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

P: Remember us according to your steadfast love as we offer these and the prayers of our heart, trusting in your compassion made known through Jesus Christ.

**C: Amen**

## MEAL

Anthem

*"All things bright and beautiful"*

Choir  
Jordi Banitt, Flutist

*The gifts may be brought forward.*

## Offering Prayer

A: God of power, God of plenty, all things belong to you. We bring your gifts to the table, that all might be fed. Form us into the body of your Beloved, Jesus Christ, our Savior.

**C: Amen**

† Great Thanksgiving Page 144

Holy, Holy, Holy Page 144

Acclamation Page 145

Amen Page 145

Lord's Prayer "Our Father, who..." Page 145

Lamb of God Page 146

## Communion

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

*and 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: Blessed be your name, O God, for we have feasted on your Word, Christ Jesus, the joy and delight of our hearts. Strengthened by this food, send us to gather the world to your banquet, where none are left out and all are satisfied. In Jesus' name we pray.

**C: Amen**

## SENDING

### Blessing

**Sending Hymn** *"Praise the Lord, rise up rejoicing"* **ELW #544**

### Dismissal

A: Alleluia! Go in peace. Serve the Risen Christ.

**C: Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**The Memorial Book Is Open Today to the Glory of God**

**In Memory of:**

*Richard Davidson, 2022*

**READINGS AND PSALM**  
**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2023**

Jonah 3:10--4:11  
Psalm 145:1-8  
Philippians 1:21-30  
Matthew 20:1-16



*"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*

**September 10, 2023**  
**Fifteenth Sunday**  
**after Pentecost**

ATTENDANCE — 54  
(IN-PERSON — 49, ZOOM - 5)

*Thankfully offered*

**OFFERING**

Benevolence	\$ 1,135.15
Building	\$ 160.00
Memorial	\$ 100.00
Other	\$ 100.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1,495.15</b>

**Serving today, September 17, 2023**

Opener/Closer	Allena Sperry
Crucifer	Ian Jeffery
Worship Assistant	Lisa Pettit
Communion Assistant	Rachel Zarnke
Lector	Joyce Moore
Offering-bearer	Duncan Jeffery
Ushers	Amanda Jeffery Sean Jeffery
Altar Guild	Rose Johnson Catherine Sayers

**Servers for Sunday, September 24, 2023**

Opener/Closer	Carla Stickles
Crucifer	Ian Jeffery
Worship Assistant	Matt Bonaker
Communion Assistant	Rose Johnson
Lector	Dave Bonaker
Offering-bearer	Duncan Jeffery
Ushers	Katherine Kelly Jim Sperry
Altar Guild	Debby Ullman Geri Regnier



# 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  
Seminarian,  
Brandon Konnow  
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  
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  
  
Kamoree's Beauty Salon  
Broken Tarot Tattoo &  
Piercing  
Beaute` Matrix  
5 Fourteen  
Gold Teeth World  
Apparel King & More  
Hollywood Barber Shop

Deadline for bulletins is **Tuesday 10:00 a.m.** prior to the Sunday.  
Deadline for October newsletter is September 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:**

- 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.

**Athanasian Creed:** Join us on Tuesdays at 6:00 PM at Mr. Pizza to study the Athanasian Creed and its meaning.

**Remembrance Gathering:** A remembrance gathering will be held in the Church House, October 10th at 3:00 PM. We will be sharing your own or family stories related to World War II. Please feel free to invite others to attend! This gathering will happen the second Tuesday of every month. Questions or concerns, contact Zocia Barr at (706) 330-1001.

**Prayer Ministry:** We have begun a prayer ministry called "Praying for our Macon Road Neighbors". An informational card is being left with businesses on Macon Road letting them know that the people of St. Matthew want to pray for the success of their business and the needs of people who work for them. They can also go to our website and leave prayer requests using a QR code on their card.

## Save the Date

- **September 19th 6:00 PM:** Mr. Pizza to study the Athanasian Creed
- **September 28th 2:00 PM:** Macon Road Neighbors Prayer Team
- **September 24th 11:30 AM:** Congregational Meeting
- **September 30th:** Deadline for ordering Memorial Garden Bricks
- **October 10th 3:00 PM:** World War II remembrance gathering in the church house



Thank you to everyone who helped us celebrate the 10th anniversary of God's Work Our Hands. The food was delicious and several projects were accomplished for our community.

### REACHING OUT TO THE WORLD

The council has approved for St. Matthew to begin an outreach program called Reaching Out to the World based on Romans 10:18.

But I ask, have they not heard? Indeed they have:

“Their voice has gone out to all the earth and their words to the ends of the world.” -

Romans 10:18

This also aligns with part 3 of our Mission Statement

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

An congregational meeting for the members and friends of St. Matthew will be held on Sunday, September 24, 2023 after the worship service.

**St. Matthew Lutheran**  
**Glory To God**  
**Faithful Members**

Memorial Garden Bricks:  
Purchase a commemorative brick to celebrate a birthday, anniversary, or graduation. You can also purchase one in honor or memory of a loved

one. Each brick purchased will become part the St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church Memorial Garden. \$50 per brick. See Allena Sperry for more details! **DEADLINE TO ORDER IS SEPTEMBER 30, 2023**

**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](mailto:twbe@liturgyfolks.com)

Office email: [office@stmatthewcolumbusga.com](mailto:office@stmatthewcolumbusga.com)

*A member congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,*

*Southeastern Synod*

[www.stmatthewcolumbusga.com](http://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