



ST. MATTHEW

Celebrating

67
years

Messenger

The Newsletter of St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church - January 2024

Happy New Year!



Some of you may have decorations placed about your home, yard décor such as reindeer, angels or a tree still on your lawn and Christmas trees up with all the special ornaments and lights even though we celebrated Christmas over a week ago. I must admit that I love to keep my Christmas tree and decorations up long after gifts have been opened, gift wrap thrown away, gifts that don't fit returned to Amazon for a replacement and family returned home. This year is no exception.

It all began with when members came to church on Saturday to put our Christmas trees in the Sanctuary and Chrismons delicately added to each branch. I knew the tradition, but what did the children know? As I prepared for the Children's Message for my week in December, I wanted the children of our congregation to learn more about this Christmas tradition here at St. Matthew. As the children marveled as Chrismons were added after the message that Sunday, I did too. I couldn't help but look at the Chrismon tree closest to me in the choir pew. The Chrismons and lights were overwhelming each week even though nothing changed. These symbols of Jesus hanging on the Chrismon trees, the lights, special music, readings and sermons during Advent really touched me this year.

I did have one more experience concerning light. I watched The Chosen Christmas Special and the great light sent to the shepherds from the angels to announce the birth of Jesus was nothing I had ever seen before. To see the extreme darkness the shepherds experience at night and to have the brightness of the light illuminate the night was unbelievable. This experience also led me to stare at the Chrismon trees, the lights and candles in the Advent wreath. I will miss the lights of the Chrismon trees and my own tree, but the true light comes from Jesus.

My prayer for each of you this New Year is that you continue to follow the Light of Jesus in all areas of your life. It won't be easy and know that the members of St. Matthew are here to help you navigate those uncertain troubling times.

Rose Johnson
Council President



HAVING FUN SETTING UP THE CHRISMON TREES!!



REACHING OUT!

Thank you for all your donations to the Stewart Home! The donations were delivered to the Home on December 19th.



Our “Warming Tree” introduced in November and blessed to life as members of our congregation brought donations through December 17th of gloves, mittens, hats, scarves and socks for men, women and children to adorn the tree. The colorful donations, many were handmade, quickly covered the “Warming Tree” in the Narthex becoming a symbol of love and generosity to both member and visitor alike during the Advent season. The donations were gathered into colorful holiday bags along with a handwritten note and distributed to the Men’s Shelter and Women’s and Children’s Shelter through Valley Rescue Mission. The remaining donations will be taken to the Sara Spano Clothing Bank through Muscogee County School District. As we warmed our tree, our donations will warm over one hundred of our neighbors in Columbus, Georgia. To see the outward expressions of generosity displayed on the “Warming Tree” was overwhelming. We would like to continue this outreach ministry as an annual tradition here at St. Matthew to bless our neighbors as we have been blessed. We thank the entire membership for your support and benevolence, Zocia Barr, for the concept of the tree, Rose Johnson, finding the perfect tree, Allena Sperry for the name of the tree and Catherine Sayers for her beautiful calligraphy appointed tree topper. Thank you everyone and Happy Healthy New Year!

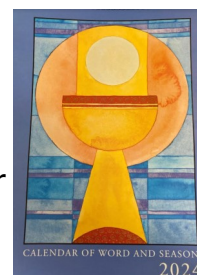


REMEMBRANCE GATHERING

The Remembrance Gathering which started in July 2023 will continue to meet in the New Year. The group will meet on the second Tuesday at 3 PM in the Church House each month. The Gathering is not a committee, but an open invitation to members of our congregation to come together and share personal stories or recollections of someone else’s life. We began with stories of World War II and our goal for 2024 is to expand our sharing to include all wars and conflicts. Would a movie, book, or an invited speaker sharing our subject matter enhance your participation? Please come share your ideas or just support those of others this coming **January 9th at 3:00 PM.**

Calendars

The 2024 Calendars are now available for \$10 each from Altar Guild members. Proceeds from the calendar sales will support purchases of worship supplies, including everything from communion wafers to palms for Palm Sunday.



St Matthew's Lutheran Church Invites You To

Reach In

A Lenten Discipleship Retreat

You are wholeheartedly invited to attend a two-day retreat of education, introspection and conversation. Together, we'll explore seven aspects of discipleship, reflecting on our own growth as disciples, and prayerfully reflect on how we can grow in these dimensions of our lives.

Who: All interested participants, from St Matthew's and beyond!

What: Lenten retreat focusing on individual discipleship and growth

Where: St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Columbus GA

When: 6:00-9:30 PM on Friday, 9 February and
8:00 am-4:30 pm on Saturday, 10 February

Why: To begin our Lenten journey in introspection and prayer

What to bring: Tasty dish to pass for Saturday's lunch

To register, e-mail office@stmatthewcolumbusga.com

Questions? Please feel free to reach out to Rachel Zarnke:
rzarnke@gmail.com or 815-708-4039

Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind ... Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. — Ephesians 4: 14-15



WE ARE ALMOST READY TO LIVESTREAM!

Thank you for making this dream become a reality! We are so excited that on January 4th, the equipment for the livestream technology was installed! Training will begin soon! What a praise!



It's a New Year and you may be wondering how you can be involved in church activities?

Fill out a Time and Talent sheet and return it to the church via hardcopy or email at office@stmatthewcolumbusga.com.

There is no age requirement or limit for being involved!

Time and Talent for 2024

Please check the areas in which you would like to use your time talents to help St. Matthew Lutheran Church this coming year.

"He will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you helped his people and continue to help them." Hebrews 6:10

Name _____ Phone # _____

Email Address _____

Please place a check in front of the ministry area you would like to help with in 2024. You may check more than one activity.

- _____ 1. Lector- read lessons on Sundays, during Lent and Advent
- _____ 2. Communion Assistant- help with communion
- _____ 3. Usher/ Greeter- hand out bulletins, greet members and help with communion.
- _____ 4. Children's Message (only 1 Sunday a month)
- _____ 5. Altar Guild- prepares sanctuary on Sunday mornings for worship and communion.
- _____ 6. Crucifier or Acolyte _____ Bring up Offering to altar.
- _____ 7. A/V support- set up and live stream worship service(s).
- _____ 8. Coffee Cart- set up cart and make coffee before church _____, donate items for cart _____, clean up cart after church _____.
- _____ 9. Receptions (Birthday Sunday, Confirmation, Funeral). - make food _____, help serve food _____, clean up _____.
- _____ 10. Yard /Clean Up Crew- spruce up our grounds at different times of the year/ and - clean and organize different areas in our church buildings as needed.
- _____ 11. Teacher for Sunday School or VBS

Other suggestions to enhance to your worship experience and participation:



January Birthdays



- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 2 David Gardner | 13 Duncan Jeffery |
| 3 Connie Newman | 16 Dorothy Redden |
| 4 Pastor Shirley Redmond | 17 Bruce Clemens |
| 5 Abigayle Ratliff | 17 Valerie Stickles |
| 6 Jason Allen | 18 Kirsten Schwarting |
| 8 Kenneth Hoag | 27 Evelyn Pettit |
| 10 Nancy Gates | 28 W. J. Barrs |
| 11 Alexander Clevers | 28 Rachel Zarnke |

Birthday Celebration will be on 1/7/2024 this month in the Fellowship Hall after the worship service. Please join us!

Finance Committee Report

	November 2023	Year to Date
Income	\$ 8,596	\$141,831
Expenses	\$11,137	\$129,722
Difference	\$- 2,541	\$ 12,109

All Saints

WJ Barrs



Prayer Requests

- | | |
|--|--------------------|
| The Armed Forces, their families, & victims of war | Jean Clemmons |
| Persecuted Christians | Xavier Danguilan |
| The ministries of St. Matthew | Brandy Garnett |
| Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton | Becky Goldsmith |
| Bishop Kevin Strickland | Estrella Gonzales |
| Southeastern Synod Staff | Doris Grier |
| Seminarian, Brandon Konnow | Petra Henderson |
| Laura Alexander | Beverly Huckaby |
| Zocia Barr family | Norma Kilby |
| Keandra Bashful | Ken Korn |
| Carol Bingemann | Boyd Lester |
| Dave Bonaker | Laura Lester |
| Pat Bonaker | Robert Lowe |
| Eva Brown | Michelle Matthias |
| Betty Davidson | Tim Moore |
| Ken Hoag | Gary Nearhoof |
| Myrna Hoag | Kimberly O'Malley |
| Bennie Jackson | Michael Owen |
| Mairetha Jackson | Angela Paul |
| Marga Miller | Vincent Pawlowski |
| Traudel Mosely | Dwight Redmond |
| Debby Owen | Tiffany Richardson |
| Dorothy Redden | Dayna Ryan |
| Connie Sieg | Yuliia Savitska |
| Joan Smith | Shirley Scott |
| Jim Sperry | Ricky Skinner |
| Carla Stickles | Betty Townsend |
| Albert VanHousen II | Charlie VanHousen |
| Margarete Walsh | Dawn VanHousen |
| Monika Wright | Martha Zimmerman |
| Gary Anderson | |
| Judy Bultman | |
| Kyle Carter | |
| Jim Chappel | |



Business Prayer Requests

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Mr. Pizza | Gold Teeth World |
| Quality Inn | Apparel King & More |
| Smoke Buddy's | Hollywood Barber Shop |
| Days Inn | The Cell Plug |
| Enterprise | Plaza Furniture |
| Comfort Inn | Guthrie's |
| Octapharma Plasma | Master-Kleen |
| Kamoree's Beauty Salon | Title Max |
| Broken Tarot Tattoo & Piercing | JD Wings |
| Beaute' Matrix | Burger King |
| 5 Fourteen | Animal General Hospital |
| DQ | Klose Kutz |
| Freedom Adult Day Center | Xpert Tax Service |
| Transformation Salon | Gateway Church |
| Pathway Worship Center | Bi-City Driving School |
| Menzie Dance Company | Sunset Finance |
| Frankie's Hair Design | Diamond Kutz |
| AMG Financial | Kee J's |
| Acceptance Auto | Angel's Nails |
| Phuong's Tailor Shop | Y & J Health |
| Walgreen's | Hidden Lake Grocery |
| USPS | Beauty Queen |
| Peachtree Immediate Care | Brewster's |
| Hidden Lake Bottle Shop | Waffle House |
| Vance Brooks Funeral Service | E&S Clothing |
| Striffler Hamby Funeral Service | One Financial |
| El Carrizo | Tasha's Dance & Prep |
| M. Bland Salon | Bargain Furniture |
| The Ellands Event Center | Dollar General |
| Chevron | Citgo |
| Grace Apostolic Church | Landmark |
| #1 Nails | McKibben Insurance |
| Valley Rescue Donation Center | Rooster's Beer & Wine |
| Mario's Tire | Woodville Apartments |
| Mariner Finance | |

St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church

January 2024



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 <i>HAPPY NEW YEAR!!</i>	2	3	4	5	6
7 Epiphany of our Lord Sunday <i>Worship 10:30 AM Communion</i> <i>Birthday Celebration after service</i>	8 <i>AA 8:00 PM - LH</i>	9 <i>BIBLE STUDY 10:30AM CH</i> <i>Remembrance Gathering 3:00 CH</i>	10	11 <i>GERMAN CLUB 5:00 PM LH</i> <i>AA 8:00 PM - FH</i>	12	13
14 2nd Sunday of Epiphany <i>Worship 10:30 AM Communion</i>	15 <i>MLK HOLIDAY</i> <i>AA 8:00 PM - LH</i>	16 <i>BIBLE STUDY 10:30AM CH</i>	17	18 <i>AA 8:00 PM - FH</i>	19 <i>GROW WITH GRACE 9:00-11:00</i>	20
21 3rd Sunday of Epiphany <i>Worship 10:30 AM Communion</i>	22 <i>AA 8:00 PM - FH</i>	23 <i>BIBLE STUDY 10:30AM CH</i>	24	25 <i>COUNCIL MEETING 5:00</i> <i>AA 8:00 PM - FH</i>	26 <i>GROW WITH GRACE 9:00-11:00</i>	27
28 4th Sunday of Epiphany <i>Worship 10:30 AM</i>	29 <i>AA 8:00 PM - FH</i>	30 <i>BIBLE STUDY 10:30AM CH</i>	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.
Zoom is also available

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
Parish Administrator

Reverend Taylor Burton Edwards
Sonja Metcalf
office@stmatthewcolumbusga.com

Minister of Music
Nursery Attendant
Sexton

Sandra Nearhoof
Penny Davis
Lisa Pettit

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Lutheran Church
4026 Macon Road
Columbus, GA 31907

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED