



ST. MATTHEW

# Messenger

Celebrating

67  
years

The Newsletter of St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church - December 2023

## Blessed Advent and joyous Christmas!

First things first—thanks. Thank you for your prayers and support for me through my recent health crisis and ongoing follow-up appointments with a variety of specialists to deal with that. Those continue into December, at least. Your prayers and concern for me are deeply appreciated.

Throughout this season of Advent my preaching will focus on apocalypse. This may seem a strange thing to focus on, but in reality Advent, from its beginnings, and in the texts we read, is all about apocalypse. Apocalypse matters because it makes clear how things really are—even more than it declares how things will be. It's important for us to be clear about that, and respond accordingly. More on that as the sermon series unfolds.

We'll also have the opportunity to gather weekly on Wednesdays at 5:30 for Evening Prayer, using a new (to us) musical setting, "Joyous Light" by Ray Makeever. For a preview, you can watch [service from Community Lutheran Church](#) in Rancho Santa Margarita California.



Speaking of Advent happenings, there is a "Warming Tree" in our narthex to collect scarves, socks and other items to help keep people warm during these days of increasing cold. We will have a blessing on that tree on Advent 2 (December 10). The Chrismon Tree in our worship space will be decorated on December 9th. On Advent 3 (December 17), we will enjoy a performance of "The Story of Christmas Through the Chrismon Tree" during our Children's message time. Also on December 17th, we will have a German Weihnachts Service at 2:00 in the sanctuary.

St. Thomas Episcopal Church is also hosting a series of lunchtime studies at noon on Mondays during Advent and invites those of us who are available to come.



We're planning a wonderful Christmas Eve service with handbells, strings, and choir to accompany our congregational worship. The service will begin at 7:00 with special music and worship will start at 7:30 on Christmas Eve. Sunday morning worship that day will observe Advent 4.

On December 31st, we will have a Winter Wonderland Party after the church service.

On January 17, we begin the first series (of two series) of studies in the Ten Commandments with Rabbi Beth Schwartz, Wednesday evening at 6 in Luther Hall.

And in early Lent (date to be finalized), we will have an opportunity for a "slightly off-site" retreat with the church council and any others who wish to join us on the campus of St. Thomas Episcopal Church here in Columbus, co-led by Pastor Rachel Zarnke. This retreat will help our church leaders and others focus on our baptismal calling and growth in discipleship to Jesus Christ during this holy season.

Continue to invite folks you know to be part of worship or to participate in any of these events during this season and in the months to come. Evangelical is part of our name! So, share the good news of great joy we are experiencing together at St. Matthew, especially with those who may not have a church home.

Peace in Christ,  
Pastor Taylor

# CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

We will be decorating our Sanctuary with poinsettias for the Christmas Eve services, Sunday, December 24, 2023. You may purchase the poinsettias through the Altar Guild.

Remembrances will be noted in our worship bulletin on Christmas Eve. If you wish to offer a plant(s) for Christmas, please complete the form and return to the Church or place in the offering plate. The cost of the plants is \$15.00 each. Make checks payable to St. Matthew and write 'poinsettias' on your check. Payment must be received at the time of the order.



**Orders are due by SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2023.**

Poinsettias are given to the Glory of God by (Please Print Clearly)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor of \_\_\_\_\_

Total Number of Plants \_\_\_\_\_ Amount Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (\$15 per plant)



**Introducing our “Warming Tree”!** Please bring the following new items to decorate our “Warming Tree” for men, women and children: gloves/mittens, scarves and hats to warm up our community. You may decorate our “Warming Tree” using clothespins in basket or lay under the tree. The tree will be up through Sunday, December 17th. Your donations will help these local organizations: Valley Rescue, Women & Childrens Center and Sara Spano Clothing Bank.



Thank you so much for all your generous donations for Operation Christmas Child!



## Advent & Christmas Services



### Midweek Worship

Wednesday, 5:30 p.m.

December 6, 13, 20



### Weihnachts Service

Sunday, December 17  
2:00 p.m.

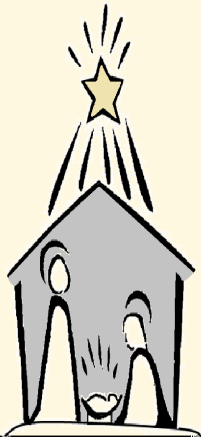
### Christmas Eve

Holy Communion Service

Sunday, December 24

Special Music at 7:00

Service at 7:30 p.m.



## New Years Eve Winter Wonderland Party

December 31st

12:00 PM, following church in Luther Hall

### Heavy hors d'oeuvres and finger foods

Sign up sheet in Narthex for food,  
decorating, serving, and clean up.

Decorating on Saturday, December  
30th at 10:00.

**Come help us decorate the Chrismon trees!**

**We will be in the Sanctuary on December 9th  
from 10AM - Noon!**

**Immediately following the decorating, we will  
have practice for "The Christmas Story Through  
the Chrismon Tree" that we will be performing  
on Sunday, December 17th during the worship service.**



## 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.





## *December Birthdays*

- |                          |                   |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 Randall Craven         | 24 Brandon Konnow |
| 4 Jonathan Thies         | 25 Ian Jeffery    |
| 12 Erik Peterson         | 26 Zaiga Mion     |
| 20 Connor Glau           | 27 Kathy Skelly   |
| 21 Lindsay Brown Ratliff | 29 David Allen    |
| 23 Patty Chappel         |                   |

Birthday Celebration will be on 12/3/2023 this month in the Fellowship Hall after the worship

	October 2023	Year to Date
Income	\$18,225	\$133,235
Expenses	\$10,935	\$118,585
Difference	\$ 7,290	\$ 14,650

## REMEMBRANCE GATHERING

Thank you to those who have participated in the remembrance gatherings we have had so far. This is such a meaningful experience . Please come to a special Remembrance Gathering Tuesday, December 12th at 3:00 PM in the Church House Come share your favorite Christmas memory and tradition.

### Prayer Requests

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







### Business Prayer Requests

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Mr. Pizza<br/>Quality Inn<br/>Smoke Buddy's<br/>Days Inn<br/>Enterprise<br/>Comfort Inn<br/>Octapharma Plasma<br/>Kamoree's Beauty Salon<br/>Broken Tarot Tattoo &amp; Piercing<br/>Beaute' Matrix<br/>5 Fourteen<br/>DQ<br/>Freedom Adult Day Center<br/>Transformation Salon<br/>Pathway Worship Center<br/>Menzie Dance Company<br/>Frankie's Hair Design<br/>AMG Financial<br/>Acceptance Auto<br/>Phuong's Tailor Shop<br/>Walgreen's<br/>USPS<br/>Peachtree Immediate Care<br/>Hidden Lake Bottle Shop</p> | <p>Gold Teeth World<br/>Apparel King &amp; More<br/>Hollywood Barber Shop<br/>The Cell Plug<br/>Plaza Furniture<br/>Guthrie's<br/>Master-Kleen<br/>Title Max<br/>JD Wings<br/>Burger King<br/>Animal General Hospital<br/>Klose Kutz<br/>Xpert Tax Service<br/>Gateway Church<br/>Bi-City Driving School<br/>Sunset Finance<br/>Diamond Kutz<br/>Kee J's<br/>Angel's Nails<br/>Y &amp; J Health<br/>Hidden Lake Grocery<br/>Beauty Queen<br/>Brewster's<br/>Waffle House</p> |  |
|---|--|--|

# St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church

## December 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
<p>3 1st Sunday in Advent</p> <p>Worship 10:30 AM Communion</p> <p>Birthday Celebration after service</p>	<p>4</p> <p>ADVENT LUNCHTIME STUDY 12:00 - ST. THOMAS</p> <p>AA 8:00 PM - LH</p>	<p>5</p> <p>BIBLE STUDY 10:30AM CH</p> <p>Tuesday Night Supper Club 6:00 PM</p>	<p>6</p> <p>ADVENT SERVICE 5:30</p> 	<p>7</p> <p>AA 8:00 PM - LH</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Decorate Chrismon Trees</p> <p>Practice for Children's Play following decorating time</p>
<p>10 2nd Sunday in Advent</p> <p>Worship 10:30 AM Communion</p> <p>Turn in poinsettia order</p>	<p>11</p> <p>ADVENT LUNCHTIME STUDY 12:00 - ST. THOMAS</p> <p>AA 8:00 PM - LH</p>	<p>12</p> <p>BIBLE STUDY 10:30AM CH</p> <p>Remembrance Gathering 2:00 CH</p>	<p>13</p> <p>ADVENT SERVICE 5:30</p> 	<p>14</p> <p>GERMAN CLUB 5:00 PM LH</p> <p>AA 8:00 PM - FH</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>16</p>
<p>17 3rd Sunday in Advent</p> <p>Worship 10:30 AM Communion</p> <p>German (Weihnachts) Service 2:00</p>	<p>18</p> <p>ADVENT LUNCHTIME STUDY 12:00 - ST. THOMAS</p> <p>AA 8:00 PM - LH</p>	<p>19</p> <p>BIBLE STUDY 10:30AM CH</p>	<p>20</p> <p>ADVENT SERVICE 5:30</p> 	<p>21</p> <p>COUNCIL MEETING 5:00</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p>
<p>24 Nativity of our Lord Sunday</p> <p>Worship 10:30 AM Communion</p> <p>Special Music 7:00 Christmas Eve Service at 7:30</p>	<p>25</p> <p>OFFICE CLOSED</p>	<p>26</p> <p>OFFICE CLOSED</p>	<p>27</p> <p>OFFICE CLOSED</p>	<p>28</p> <p>OFFICE CLOSED</p>	<p>29</p> <p>OFFICE CLOSED</p>	<p>30</p>
<p>31 First Sunday of Christmas</p> <p>Worship 10:30 AM</p> <p>Winter Wonderland Party at 11:30</p>						

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

**\*OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED THE WEEK OF  
DECEMBER 25TH FOR CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS**

### 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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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED