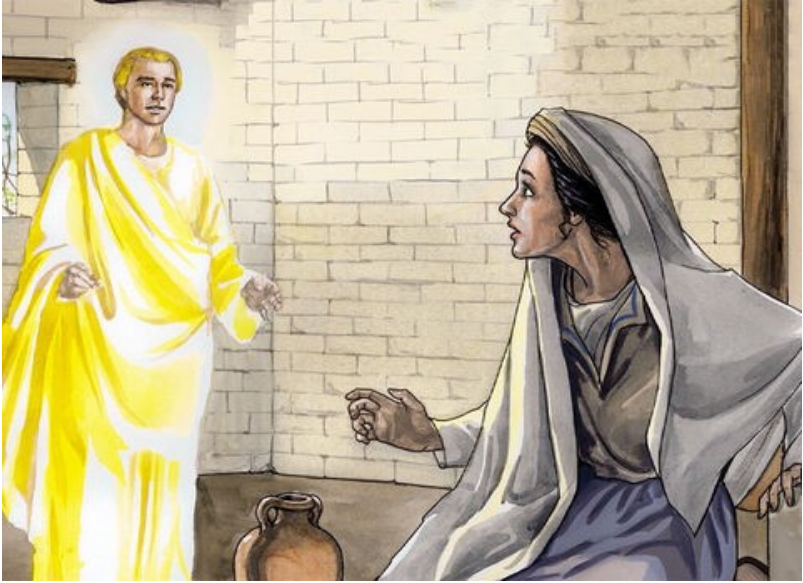


St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church



Nativity of our Lord, Christmas Eve December 24, 2023

God keeps the promise made to David to give him an everlasting throne. The angel tells Mary that God will give David's throne to her son Jesus. She is perplexed by Gabriel's greeting and by the news of her coming pregnancy, but she is able still to say, "Count me in." We who know that Jesus is called king only as he is executed still find it a mystery hard to fathom, but with Mary today we hear the news of what God is up to and say, "Count us in."

Holy Communion

Evangelical Lutheran Worship

(ELW) Setting 2, Page 116

† Congregation stands as able

GATHERING

Prelude

Sandra Nearhoof



P: In the name of the Father, and of the +Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

P: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: **Amen.**

P: Gracious God,

C: **have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

P: In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father and of the +Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

Gathering Hymn *The angel Gabriel from heaven came"*

ELW #265

Kyrie

Page 120

Prayer of the Day:

P: Let us pray,

Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

Children's Message

Donna Doughty

First Reading

2 Samuel 7:1-11,16

¹Now when David the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, ²the king said to the prophet Nathan,

"See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent."
³Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you." ⁴But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: ⁵Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? ⁶I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. ⁷Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" ⁸Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; ⁹and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. ¹⁰And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, ¹¹from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. ¹⁶Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

L: The word of the Lord
C: Thanks be to God.

Luke 1:46b-55

Tone 9

^{46b}My soul proclaims the greatness ^l of the Lord,
⁴⁷my spirit rejoices in ^l God my Savior,
⁴⁸**for you, Lord, have looked with favor on your ^l lowly servant.**
From this day all generations will ^l call me blessed;
⁴⁹you, the Almighty, have done great ^l things for me,
and holy ^l is your name.
⁵⁰**You have mercy on ^l those who fear you,**
from generation to ^l generation.
⁵¹You have shown strength ^l with your arm;
and scattered the proud in ^l their conceit,
⁵²**casting down the mighty ^l from their thrones**
and lifting ^l up the lowly.
⁵³You have filled the hungry ^l with good things,
and sent the rich ^l away empty.
⁵⁴**You have come to the aid of your ^l servant Israel,**
to remember the prom- ^l ise of mercy,
⁵⁵the promise made ^l to our forebears,
to Abraham and his chil- ^l dren forever.

Second Reading

Romans 16:25-27

²⁵Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages ²⁶but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith— ²⁷to the only wise God,

through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

L: The word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God.

† Gospel Acclamation

“ Alleluia”

Page 124

Gospel

Luke 1:26-38

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 1st Chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." ³⁴Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" ³⁵The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Apocalypse as Judgment

Reverend Taylor Burton Edwards

† Hymn of the Day

"My soul proclaims your greatness"

ELW #251

Nicene Creed

We believe in one God,

**the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,

**the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;**

through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation

he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the
dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,*
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen

Choose to stand, kneel, or sit for prayers.

Prayers of Intercession

A: With hope and expectation, we offer our prayers for the church, the world,
and all who await God's day of restoration.

A brief silence.

A: You promise mercy to Abraham and Sarah and their descendants forever.
Bring your church into thoughtful, caring, and collaborative relationship with
those of other faiths. Strengthen our shared values, that we work together
in caring for our world. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: As fields and crops lie dormant, bless them with holy rest. Prepare them to
thrive, that they provide abundant food in due season. Protect animals who
hibernate and provide for all who scavenge for food in the lean season.
Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: You raise up the lowly and cast down the arrogant. Teach humility to all in
positions of authority. Break down systems of oppression, especially
systems that perpetuate inequity and exclusion. Do not allow wealth, power,
or pride to become idols that obscure your call to justice. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Look with favor upon all who cry out to you. Accompany with tenderness all who are afraid or ill. Rescue all who experience abuse or who live under threat of violence, especially refugees, immigrants, and asylum-seekers in search of a safe and stable home. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: You are pleased to make your home among us. Make our homecomings joyful as we gather with friends, families, and chosen families in celebration. Grant safety to all who travel. Sustain the work of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services and other ministries that assist in setting up new homes. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

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

C: receive our prayer.

A: Blessed are you for Mary and all your servants in every generation who lived according to your promise of mercy. Strengthen us by their example until the revelation of your glory is made known. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Listen to these and all our prayers, O God of hosts, and restore us with your great and everlasting mercy.

C: Amen

MEAL

Anthem *Come Thou Long Expected Jesus* Choir

The gifts may be brought forward.

Offering Prayer

A: God our provider, by your merciful hand abundance springs up from the earth. Receive and bless these gifts of your own bounty. Let them be a sign of your steadfast love and faithfulness for all people, through Jesus Christ our Savior.

C: Amen

† Great Thanksgiving	Page 129
Holy, Holy, Holy	Page 130
Advent-Epiphany of our Lord	Page 132
Lord's Prayer "Our Father, who..."	Page 134
Lamb of God	Page 135

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: Generous God, in bread and cup you have revealed your glory for all
people to see together. Nourished by this meal, send us out to proclaim
your good news of liberation and release, brought to birth in Jesus Christ
our Savior.

C: **Amen**

SENDING

Blessing

Sending Hymn

"Savior of the nations, come"

ELW #263

Dismissal

A: Go in peace. Remember the poor.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Servers for Sunday, December 24, 2023

	<u>AM Service</u>	<u>IPM Service</u>
Opener/Closer	Bill Wallace	Lisa Pettit
Worship Assistant	Rose Johnson	Matt Bonaker
Communion Assistant	Shannon Gardner	Rose Johnson
Lector	Rachel Zarnke	Dave Bonaker
Ushers	Sean Jeffery	Bill Wallace
	Amanda Jeffery	Jim Sperry
Altar Guild	Debby Ullman	Debby Ullman
	Catherine Sayers	Catherine Sayers

Serving December 31, 2023

Opener/Closer	Donna Doughty
Worship Assistant	Rose Johnson
Communion Assistant	Liz McGouirk
Lector	Randy Craven
Ushers	Katherine Kelly
	Jim Sperry
Altar Guild	Allena Sperry
	Donna Doughty

CHRISTMAS REMEMBRANCES - 2023

IN MEMORY OF:

Louis and Viola Reichwold, and Melvin and Inez Craven given by Randall & Sandra Craven

Richard, Charles, Steve and Ryan Davidson given by Betty Davidson

Clarence & Jean Gates and Joseph & Myrle Shediack given by Jeff & Nancy Gates

Rodger “Dean” Johnson and Margaret Carlson given by Rose Johnson and family

Robert & Elsie McGouirk, Herman & Dorothy Hoffman, and Brooks & Ruth Griffin given by Cecil & Liz McGouirk

Andrew McEwen, Bob Meinhold, Patricia Pettit, Herbert & Evelyn Bernhardt, and Willie & Elise Meinhold given by the Pettit family

Delbert and Lisa Paul given by Geri Regnier

Diana Sperry, and Walter & Allena Gardner given by Jim and Allena Sperry

Gary Stickle given by Carla Stickle

Ralph & Ella Wallace, and Hazel Dixon given by Bill and Maxine Wallace

Wayne Wiley given by Renate Wiley



IN HONOR OF:

Ian & Duncan Jeffery and Sean & Amanda Jeffery given by John & Karen Jeffery

Our Loving Children given by Mario & Zaiga Mion

Thomas Pettit and Lynne Meinhold given by the Pettit family

Ron Dixon given by Bill & Maxine Wallace



The Memorial Book Is Open Today to the Glory of God

In Memory of:

Marie Scruggs, 1997

READINGS AND PSALM SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2023

Isaiah 61:10--62:3

Psalm 148

Galatians 4:4-7

Luke 2:22-40



*"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*

December 17, 2023

Third Sunday of Advent

ATTENDANCE — 62
(IN-PERSON— 62 , ZOOM - 0)

Thankfully offered

OFFERING

Benevolence	\$ 1,805.00
Building	\$ 30.00
Memorial	\$ 0.00
Other	\$ 220.00
Total	\$ 2,055.00

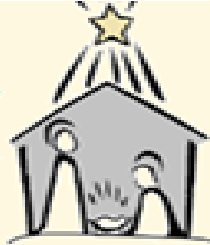
Christmas Eve

Holy Communion Service

Sunday, December 24

Special Music at 7:00

Service at 7:30 p.m.



Save the Date

- **December 24 7:00 PM** - Christmas Eve Service - special music at 7:00 PM and service at 7:30 PM
- **December 30 10:00 AM** - Decorate for Winter Wonderland Party
- **December 31 11:30 AM** - New Year's Eve Winter Wonderland Party in the Fellowship Hall - immediately following the service

Our Warming Tree's donations of new mittens, scarves, hats and socks were delivered to Valley Rescue Women & Children and Sara Spano Clothing Bank. Thank you everyone for your generosity in making this small, yet meaningful, ministry so successful. We would like to make our warming tree an annual tradition serving to stand for Peace, Love, Giving and Sharing of blessings not only for us but thru us, to our neighbors.

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.

Remembrance Gathering: Please come to the Remembrance Gathering Tuesday, January 9th at 3:00 PM in the Church House. This will be your last opportunity to share your favorite Christmas memory and/or tradition.



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
Pastor Taylor Burton
Edwards
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
Monika Wright
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

Libya
Maui
Morrocco
Israel
Ukraine
Gaza

#1 Nails
McKibben Insurance
Mariner Finance
Valley Rescue Donation
Rooster's Beer & Wine
Mario's Tire
Woodville Apartments

Deadline for bulletins is **Tuesday 10:00 a.m.** prior to the Sunday.
Deadline for February newsletter is January 20.

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 - **The office will be closed the week of 12/25**

Pastor Taylor Burton Edwards Email: twbe@liturgyfolks.com

Office email: office@stmatthewcolumbusga.com

A member congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,

Southeastern Synod

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