

St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church



Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost
August 23, 2026

Faithful living requires faithful giving. We give ourselves to God, to each other, and to our neighbors. In all we seek to honor Christ and receive and use the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

† *Congregation stands as able*

GATHERING

Prelude

Sandra Nearhoof



P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, +one God, who forgives
us all our sins, whose mercy endures forever.

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: 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 *“How Great Thou Art”*

ELW #856

Kyrie

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Prayer of the Day:

P. Let us pray,

O God, with all your faithful followers of every age, we praise you, the rock of our life. Be our strong foundation and form us into the body of your Son, that we may gladly minister to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C. Amen.

PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

Children's Message

Wanda Ebright

First Reading

Isaiah 51:1-6

¹ Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness, you who seek the LORD. Look to the rock from which you were hewn and to the quarry from which you were dug.

² Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah, who bore you, for he was but one when I called him, but I blessed him and made him many. ³ For the LORD will comfort Zion; he will comfort all her waste places and will make her wilderness like Eden, her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the voice of song. ⁴ Listen to me, my people, and give heed to me, my nation, for a teaching will go out from me and my justice for a light to the peoples. ⁵ I will bring near my deliverance swiftly; my salvation has gone out, and my arms will rule the peoples; the coastlands wait for me, and for my arm they hope. ⁶ Lift up your eyes to the heavens and look at the earth beneath, for the heavens will vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment, and those who live on it will die like gnats, but my salvation will be forever, and my deliverance will never be ended.

L: The word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 138

Tone 1

¹ I will give thanks to you, O LORD, with ¹ my whole heart;
before the gods I will ¹ sing your praise.

² **I will bow down toward your holy temple and praise
your name, because of your steadfast ¹ love
and faithfulness;**

**for you have glorified your name and your word a
- ¹ bove all things.**

³ When I called, you ¹ answered me;
you increased my ¹ strength within me.

⁴ **All the rulers of the earth will praise ¹ you, O LORD,
when they have heard the words ¹ of your mouth.**

⁵ They will sing of the ways ¹ of the LORD,
that great is the glory ¹ of the LORD.

⁶ **The LORD is high, yet cares ¹ for the lowly,
perceiving the haughty ¹ from afar.**

⁷ Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you ¹ keep me
safe;

you stretch forth your hand against the fury of my
enemies; your right ¹ hand shall save me.

⁸ **You will make good your pur- ¹ pose for me;
O LORD, your steadfast love endures forever; do
not abandon the works ¹ of your hands.**

Second Reading

Romans 12:1-8

¹ I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, on the
basis of God's mercy, to present your bodies as a living
sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your
reasonable act of worship. ² Do not be conformed to this
age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind, so
that you may discern what is the will of God—what is
good and acceptable and perfect.

³ For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. ⁴ For as in one body we have many members and not all the members have the same function, ⁵ so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. ⁶ We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ⁷ ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; ⁸ the encourager, in encouragement; the giver, in sincerity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

L: The word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God.

† Gospel Acclamation

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Gospel

Matthew 16:13-20

P: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

¹³ Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" ¹⁴ And they said, "Some say John the Baptist but others Elijah and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." ¹⁵ He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷ And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you but my Father in heaven. ¹⁸ And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades

will not prevail against it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” ²⁰ Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon *“Faithful Living”*

Reverend Taylor Burton Edwards

† Hymn of the Day *“Gather Us In”*

ELW #532

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**

You may sit, stand or kneel for the prayers.

Prayers of Intercession

A: With bold trust in God's unfailing provision, we pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

A brief silence.

A: God, our rock, you are the foundation on which the church is built. Strengthen and encourage your faithful people everywhere they gather, that they may boldly proclaim your word of life to all the world.
Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: You spoke and all creation came into being. Field and forest, wetland and wilderness—all reveal your glory. Sustain and nourish your creation. Teach us to be wise stewards of all you have made. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: You bring deliverance to nations and peoples. Come to the aid of nations experiencing war, conflict, disease, famine, and disaster. Guide the work of relief agencies and peacemaking organizations.
Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: You regard the lowly and hear us when we cry out to you. Be present among all who struggle with addiction, housing insecurity, incarceration, and mental illness, that they may know they are not alone. Hear our prayers for all in need this day.
Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

A: You draw together people with differing gifts. Lift up the many and varied gifts and talents of this congregation and strengthen the bonds of fellowship that all may be united as the body of Christ.
Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

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

C: receive our prayer.

A: Your steadfast love endures forever. We give thanks for all who are embraced by the hope of this promise, especially Mario Mion. Strengthen us in faith until the day we gather at your eternal banquet. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

P: Receive our prayers and answer, O God, as you have promised. All this we ask in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

The Peace

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MEAL

Anthem

"We All Are One in Mission"

Choir

The gifts may be brought forward.

Offering Prayer

A: God of mercy and grace, the eyes of all wait upon you, and you opened your hand in blessing. Fill us with good things at your table, that we may come to the help of all in need; through Jesus Christ our Redeemer and Lord.

C: Amen.

† Great Thanksgiving Page 152

Holy, Holy, Holy Page 153

Lord's Prayer "Our Father, who..." Page 154

Lamb of God Page 154

Communion

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

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: O God, our life, our strength, our food, we give you thanks for sustaining us with the body and blood of your Son. By your Holy Spirit, enliven us to be His body in the world that we may give you praise and serve your earth and its many peoples; through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

SENDING

Blessing

Sending Hymn

"The Spirit Sends Us Forth to Serve"

ELW #551

Dismissal

A: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

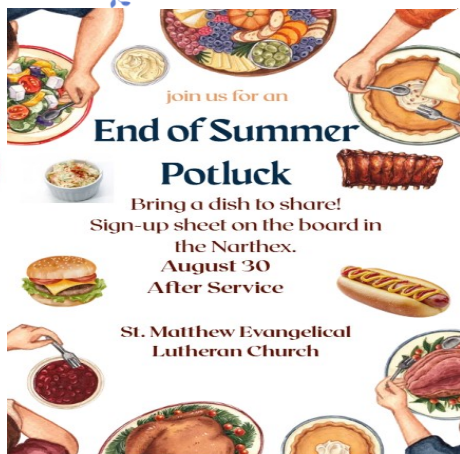
C: Thanks be to God.

The Memorial Book is open today to the Glory of God

In Memory of:

Gary Stickles, 2022

On August 30th!



Use the QR code above to register for the Southeastern Synod Congregational Leaders Zoom with Bishop Strickland on September 14, at 7:00 PM.

READINGS AND PSALM
SUNDAY, AUGUST 30, 2026



Jermiah 15:15-21
 Psalm 26:1-8
 Romans 12:9-21
 Matthew 16:21-28

*"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*

August 16, 2026
Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

ATTENDANCE — 66
 (IN-PERSON — 50, YOUTUBE - 16
 2026 BUDGET-\$185,981

OFFERING

Benevolence	\$ 5,320.00
Building	\$ 100.00
Memorial*	\$ 50.00
Other	\$ 100.00
Total	\$ 5,570.00

**Memorial gifts will be acknowledged quarterly.*

Serving August 23, 2026

Opener/Closer	Allena Sperry
Worship Assistant	Rose Johnson
Communion Assistant	Shannon Gardner
Lector	Terri Niederhammer
Ushers	Jim Sperry
	Ron Ullman
Altar Guild	Debby Ullman/Martha Vargas,
	Jaxson Gardner
Live Streaming	Matt Pettit

Serving August 30, 2026

Opener/Closer	Rose Johnson
Worship Assistant	Dave Bonaker/Raymond Lawton
Communion Assistant	Toni Mion
Lector	Katherine Kelly
Ushers	Randy Craven
	Sandy Craven
Altar Guild	Debby Ullman/Martha Vargas,
	Jaxson Gardner
Live Streaming	Jaxson Gardner

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."

5:16-18

—1 Thessalonians

The Armed Forces,
their families,
and 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

Eric & Tinisha Bryant

Jean Clemmons

Nancy Edmundson

Lynne Funck

Brandy Garnett

Sandy Gibbs

Moses Glidden

Estrella Gonzales

Doris Grier

Frank Henderson

Petra Henderson

Laura Jett

Norma Kilby

Ken Korn

Emma Kump

Robert Lowe

David & John Lucas

Michelle Matthias

Brady Meeks

Lynne Meinhold

Tim Moore

Debi Nelson

Vincent Pawlowski

Beth Price

Mark Purushotham

Tiffany Richardson

Phyllis Roan

Dayna Ryan

Shirley Scott

Dou Shizhen

Ricky Skinner

Fred Turpin

Charlie VanHousen

Dawn VanHousen

Eric Young

Martha Zimmerman

Mion Family

Wandersee/Mackenzie
Families

People of Lebanon

People of Iran

Gaza

Palestinian People

Israel

Ukraine

People of Russia

Eastern Congo

People of Venezuela

Mr. Pizza

Quality Inn

Smoke Buddy's

Gold Teeth World

Apparel King & More

Hollywood Barber Shop

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to St. Matthew: Jesus Christ offers himself to all. All baptized Christians are invited to feast with us at the Lord's Table.

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 6 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. Changing table available there if needed.

Mission Outreach Opportunities:

- All unused all occasion and holiday cards
 - Lion's Club: Glasses, sunglasses and old cell phones
 - Family House of West GA: Pop tabs
 - Flags to Retire: Used flags to dispose of properly
 - MCSD Hygiene Closet: Any size toiletries
 - SafeHouse/St. Benedict's Sealed plastic utensils (take-out meals)
- Leave donations in the labeled containers in the Narthex.

Bible Study: Please join us on Tuesdays at 10:15 in the Back Room of the Church House to review & discuss scripture readings for the upcoming Sunday.

Craf-Tea: This group will meet on the 3rd Friday of each month at 10:00AM-12:00 PM in Luther Hall. If you enjoy crafts and tea, this group is for you! Please see Linnea Grosse for more information.



If you have any photos you have taken from events that have happened at the church, please email those to the church office at office@stmatthewcolumbusga.com. We need these for our archives and our newsletter!

Save the Date

- August 23rd - Memorial Committee Meeting - FH after service
- August 25th - 10:15 AM - Bible Study - Church House-Back Room
- August 27th - Men's Group - 5:30 - Deorio's
- August 30th - Sunday School - 9:15 am
- August 30th - Bishop Strickland Visit/End of Summer Potluck/God's Work, Our Hands/September Birthday Celebration



YARD SALE 2027

If you have donations, please contact Allena Sperry at 706-563-3107 or asperry@bellsouth.net to coordinate drop off at your earliest convenience.



St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church Mission Statement



Reach in to grow in Christ

Reach up to worship God

Reach out to welcome and witness



To give online, please scan the QR code to the left to be taken to the give.tithe.ly website form. You can just fill out the form and click the Give button. You can also go to our website and click on the ONLINE GIVING button.

ST. MATTHEW EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

4026 Macon Road, Columbus, Georgia 31907

(706) 561-3406 - Office Hours - Tues & Thurs 2:30-5:00 PM, Friday 9:00-1:00 PM

Pastor Taylor Burton Edwards Email: twbe@liturgyfolks.com

Phone: (765) 602-1426

Office email : office@stmatthewcolumbusga.com

A member congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,

Southeastern Synod

www.stmatthewcolumbusga.com

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@st.matthewlutheranchurch4457/streams>

The Rev. Taylor Burton Edwards, Pastor

Sonja Metcalf, Parish Administrator

Obra Williams, Sexton

Sandra Nearhoof, Minister of Music

Penny Davis, Nursery Director