

# St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church

# FREEDOM

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany  
January 28, 2024

*In Deuteronomy God promises to raise up a prophet like Moses, who will speak for God; in Psalm 111 God shows the people the power of God's works. For the church these are ways of pointing to the unique authority people sensed in Jesus' actions and words. We encounter that authority in God's word, around which we gather, the word that prevails over any lesser spirit that would claim power over us, freeing us to follow Jesus.*

## Holy Communion

Evangelical Lutheran Worship

(ELW) Setting 10, Page 203

† 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: **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**

*"O Christ, the healer, we have come"*

**ELW #610**

Kyrie

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Gloria in Excelsis

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Prayer of the Day:

P: Let us pray,

Compassionate God, you gather the whole universe into your radiant presence and continually reveal your Son as our Savior. Bring wholeness to all that is broken and speak truth to us in our confusion, that all creation will see and know your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

## PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

Children's Message

Donna Doughty

**First Reading**

**Deuteronomy 18:15-20**

[Moses said:] <sup>15</sup>The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet. <sup>16</sup>This is what you requested of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said: "If I hear the voice of the LORD my God any more, or ever again see this great fire, I will die." <sup>17</sup>Then the LORD replied to me: "They are right in what

they have said. <sup>18</sup>I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their own people; I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet, who shall speak to them everything that I command. <sup>19</sup>Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable. <sup>20</sup>But any prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, or who presumes to speak in my name a word that I have not commanded the prophet to speak—that prophet shall die."

L: The word of the Lord

C: **Thanks be to God.**

## Psalm 111

Tone 6

<sup>1</sup>Hallelujah! I will give thanks to the LORD with <sup>1</sup> my whole heart,  
in the assembly of the upright, in the <sup>1</sup> congregation.

<sup>2</sup>**Great are your <sup>1</sup> works, O LORD, pondered by all who de- <sup>1</sup> light in them.**

<sup>3</sup>Majesty and splendor <sup>1</sup> mark your deeds,  
and your righteousness en- <sup>1</sup> dures forever.

<sup>4</sup>**You cause your wonders to <sup>1</sup> be remembered;  
you are gracious and full <sup>1</sup> of compassion.**

<sup>5</sup>You give food to <sup>1</sup> those who fear you,  
remembering forev- <sup>1</sup> er your covenant.

<sup>6</sup>**You have shown your people the power <sup>1</sup> of your works  
in giving them the lands <sup>1</sup> of the nations.**

<sup>7</sup>The works of your hands are faithful- <sup>1</sup> ness and justice;  
all of your pre- <sup>1</sup> cepts are sure.

<sup>8</sup>**They stand fast forev- <sup>1</sup> er and ever,  
because they are done in <sup>1</sup> truth and equity.**

<sup>9</sup>You sent redemption to your people  
and commanded your cove- <sup>1</sup> nant forever;  
holy and awesome <sup>1</sup> is your name.

<sup>10</sup>**The fear of the LORD is the begin- <sup>1</sup> ning of wisdom;  
all who practice this have a good understanding.  
God's praise en- <sup>1</sup> dures forever.**

## Second Reading

1 Corinthians 8:1-13

<sup>4</sup>Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that "no idol in the world really exists," and that "there is no God but one." <sup>5</sup>Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as in fact there are many gods and many lords—<sup>6</sup>yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist. <sup>7</sup>It is not everyone, however, who has this knowledge. Since some have become so accustomed to idols until now, they still think of the food they eat as food offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. <sup>8</sup>Food will not bring us close to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. <sup>9</sup>But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. <sup>10</sup>For if others see you, who possess knowledge, eating in the temple of an idol, might they not, since their conscience is weak, be encouraged to the point of eating food sacrificed to idols? <sup>11</sup>So by your knowledge those weak believers for whom Christ died are destroyed. <sup>12</sup>But when you thus sin against members of your

family, and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ.  
<sup>13</sup>Therefore, if food is a cause of their falling, I will never eat meat, so that I may not cause one of them to fall.

L: The word of the Lord

**C: Thanks be to God.**

† Gospel Acclamation

“ Alleluia”

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**Gospel**

**Mark 1:21-28**

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

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

<sup>21</sup>[Jesus and his disciples] went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. <sup>22</sup>They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. <sup>23</sup>Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, <sup>24</sup>and he cried out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God." <sup>25</sup>But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" <sup>26</sup>And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. <sup>27</sup>They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, "What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." <sup>28</sup>At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

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

Sermon *Getting Right with Our Freedom* Reverend Taylor Burton Edwards

† Hymn of the Day

*"Be thou my vision"*

**ELW #793**

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: As we celebrate Christ embodied in human form, we pray for God's blessing on the church, the world, and all of creation.

*A brief silence.*

A: Loving God, we pray that your example of teaching with confidence and authority builds up your church in love. May all church leaders and teachers honor your instruction and model your inclusive ways. God of grace.

**C: receive our prayer.**

A: Renewing God, we pray for all of creation, that waterways flow clean and clear, natural spaces are protected, and our planet is healed. Let us commit to thoughtful care of the earth. God of grace.

**C: receive our prayer.**

A: Justice-seeking God, we pray for those in government and community leadership, that they lead with honor and mindfulness. May they remember their covenants and be upright in their ways. God of grace.

**C: receive our prayer.**

A: Compassionate God, we pray for all in need, especially those who have known rejection, any who struggle with long-term illness or chronic pain, those without access to safe housing or health care, and any who suffer. God of grace.

**C: receive our prayer.**

A: Still-speaking God, we pray for our congregation, for its artists and musicians, for its educators and caregivers, that all gifts are used to care for those in need and to live out your example of accompaniment, gospel witness, and love. God of grace.

**C: receive our prayer.**

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

**C: receive our prayer.**

A: Eternal God, we remember all who have been teachers, mentors, and companions in the church and in our lives especially WJ Barrs. We trust that all who have died rest in your loving care. God of grace.

**C: receive our prayer.**

P: Knowing the Holy Spirit intercedes for us, we offer these prayers and the silent prayers of our hearts in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ .

**C: Amen**

# MEAL

**Anthem**                    *"I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light"*                    Choir

*The gifts may be brought forward.*

Offering Prayer

A: Blessed are you, Holy One, for all good things come from you. In bread and cup you open heaven to us. Meet us at this table, that we receive what we seek and follow your Son, Jesus, in whose name we pray.

**C: Amen**

† Great Thanksgiving                    Page 206

Holy, Holy, Holy                    Page 207

Acclamation                    Page 207

Lord's Prayer                    "Our Father, who..."                    Page 208

Lamb of God                    Page 208

## 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: Giver of every gift, Christ's body is our food, and we are Christ's body. Raise us to life by your power for the benefit of all and to your glory, now and forever.

**C: Amen**

# SENDING

## Blessing

**Sending Hymn**                    *"Immortal, invisible, God only wise"*                    **ELW #834**

## Dismissal

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

**C: Thanks be to God.**

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:** 6:00-9:00 PM on Friday, 16 February and  
9 am-4:30 pm on Saturday, 17 February

**Why:** To begin our Lenten journey in introspection and prayer

**What to bring:** Your own lunch for Saturday

To register, e-mail [office@stmatthewcolumbusga.com](mailto:office@stmatthewcolumbusga.com) or go to website at <https://forms.wix.com/r/7154127640259985731> to fill out registration form. You can also scan this QR code to register:



Questions? Please feel free to reach out to  
Rachel Zarnke:  
[rzarnke@gmail.com](mailto: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



**READINGS AND PSALM**  
**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2024**

Isaiah 40:21-31  
 Psalm 147:1-11, 20c  
 1 Corinthians 9:16-23  
 Mark 1:29-39



*“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*

**January 21, 2024**  
**Second Sunday after Epiphany**

ATTENDANCE — 69  
 (IN-PERSON— 44 , YOUTUBE - 25)

*Thankfully offered*

**OFFERING**

Benevolence	\$	743.00
Building	\$	20.00
Memorial	\$	50.00
Other	\$	100.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>913.00</b>

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

**In Memory of:**

*Dr. Van Grosse, 2002*

**Serving January 28, 2024**

Opener/Closer	Katherine Kelly
Worship Assistant	Rose Johnson
Communion Assistant	Rachel Zarnke
Lector	Katherine Kelly
Ushers	Bill Wallace
	Katherine Kelly
Altar Guild	Debby Ullman
	Catherine Sayers

**Serving February 4, 2024**

Opener/Closer	Donna Doughty
Worship Assistant	Matt Bonaker
Communion Assistant	Shannon Gardner
Lector	Dave Bonaker
Ushers	Sandy Craven
	Randy Craven
Altar Guild	Rose Johnson
	Catherine Sayers
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.”*  
—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  
Boyd Lester  
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

Broken Tarot Tattoo &  
Piercing  
JD Wings  
Beaute' Matrix  
Burger King  
5 Fourteen  
Animal General Hospital

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

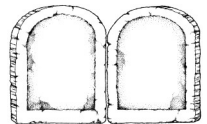
## **Mission Outreach Opportunities:**

- **Mission Focus:** Tackle Hunger - collecting canned goods for Brown Bag of Columbus which provides supplemental groceries to low income elderly age 62 or over.
- 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.

**Remembrance Gathering:** Please come to the Remembrance Gathering Tuesday, February 13th at 3:00 PM in the Church House. The gathering is 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.

Please come join us for a study of the Ten Commandments led by Rabbi Beth Schwartz and Pastor Taylor. This study is on Wednesdays at 6:00 PM in Luther Hall. We would love to have you join us!



## *Save the Date*

- January 31st 6:00 PM-Ten Commandments Study-Luther Hall
- February 2nd 9:00 AM - Growing in Grace
- February 4th 11:30 AM - Birthday Celebration
- February 16th 6:00-9:30 PM - Reach In retreat - St. Thomas
- February 17th 8:00-4:30 PM - Reach In retreat - St. Thomas
- February 18th 12:00 PM - Tackle Hunger Souper Bowl - Luther Hall



**TACKLE  
HUNGER  
AT THE  
SOUPER BOWL!**

**FEBRUARY  
18, 2024  
12:00 PM  
FOLLOWING  
CHURCH IN  
LUTHER HALL**

***PLEASE  
DONATE YOUR  
NON-PERISHABLE  
ITEMS TO HELP  
US TACKLE  
HUNGER!  
LET'S GET TO  
THE END ZONE!***

**Growing in Grace** will meet every Friday from 9:00-11:00 AM in the Church House. God's grace is freely given to us. Join the group to learn to cultivate an attitude of grace in your daily life by learning about and adopting habits to move into a state of grace. Contact Beth Hoag at 706-604-8110 for more information.

**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  
Sonja Metcalf, Parish Administrator  
Lisa Pettit, Sexton

Sandra Nearhoof, Minister of Music  
Penny Davis, Nursery Director