

St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church



Third Sunday of Lent
March 23, 2025

Repent or perish! Cut it out by the roots, or let it go another year? Landowner or gardner? Which is God's voice to you? Which is your voice toward others? Which is your voice towards you?

Holy Communion

Evangelical Lutheran Worship

(ELW) Setting 10, page 203

† Congregation stands as able

GATHERING

Prelude

Sandra Nearhoof



P. Blessed be God, Father, +Son, and Holy Spirit.

C. And blessed be God's kingdom now and forever. Amen.

P. Most merciful God,

C. We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. 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 *"Eternal Father, Strong to Save"*

ELW #756

Kyrie

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Prayer of the Day:

P: Let us pray,

Eternal God, your kingdom has broken into our troubled world through the life, death, and resurrection of your Son. Help us to hear your word and obey it, and bring your saving love to fruition in our lives, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

Children's Message

Donna Doughty

First Reading

Isaiah 55:1-9

¹Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you that have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

²Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, and

delight yourselves in rich food.

³Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live. I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.

⁴See, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples.

⁵See, you shall call nations that you do not know, and nations that do not know you shall run to you, because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you.

⁶Seek the LORD while he may be found, call upon him while he is near;

⁷let the wicked forsake their way, and the unrighteous their thoughts; let them return to the LORD, that he may have mercy on them, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

⁸For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD.

⁹For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

L: The word of the Lord

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 63:1-8

Tone 9

¹O God, you are my God; eager-ly I seek you;
my soul thirsts for you, my flesh faints for you,
as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.

²**Therefore I have gazed upon you in your holy place,
that I might behold your power and your glory.**

³For your steadfast love is better than life itself;
my lips shall give you praise.

⁴**So will I bless you as long as I live
and lift up my hands in your name.**

⁵My spirit is content, as with the richest of foods,
and my mouth praises you with joyful lips,

⁶**when I remember you upon my bed,
and meditate on you in the night watches.**

⁷For you have been my helper,
and under the shadow of your wings I will rejoice.

⁸**My whole being clings to you;
your right hand holds me fast.**

Second Reading

1 Corinthians 10:1-13

¹I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, ²and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, ³and all ate the same spiritual food, ⁴and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ. ⁵Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness.

⁶Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. ⁷Do not become idolaters as some of them did; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play." ⁸We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand

fell in a single day. ⁹We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. ¹⁰And do not complain as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. ¹¹These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come. ¹²So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall. ¹³No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.

L: The word of the Lord

C: **Thanks be to God.**



Gospel Acclamation

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Gospel

Luke 13:1-9

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 13th Chapter.

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

¹At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. ²[Jesus] asked them, "Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans? ³No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. ⁴Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them—do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem? ⁵No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did."

⁶Then he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. ⁷So he said to the gardener, 'See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?' ⁸He replied, 'Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. ⁹If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.'"

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

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

Sermon

The Fruit

Reverend Taylor Burton Edwards



Hymn of the Day

"As Rain From the Clouds"

ELW #508

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.

You may sit, stand or kneel for the prayers.

Prayers of Intercession

A: Led by the Spirit, let us turn to God in prayer for the church, the world, and
all those in need.

A brief silence.

A: We pray for the church, called to be a witness to all peoples. Grant humility
and wisdom to bishops, pastors, deacons, elders, councils, and
congregations, that they may call upon you in making decisions.
God, in your mercy,

C: receive our prayer.

A: We pray for the earth, called to provide abundantly. Teach your people the
goodness of your generosity, that in sharing what we have been given, all
life may flourish on the planet that is our shared home. God, in your mercy,

C: receive our prayer.

A: We pray for the nations, called to protect their inhabitants and collaborate in the work of justice and peace. Forge bonds of compassion and mutual care across human borders and boundaries, that all the world may have enough to live. God, in your mercy,

C: **receive our prayer.**

A: We pray for those in need, called to receive your compassion. Comfort those whose lives have been disrupted through natural disasters and human conflict. Aid communities in coming together to mourn, heal, and rebuild. God, in your mercy,

C: **receive our prayer.**

A: We pray for this assembly, called to welcome its neighbors to the table of your grace. Bless food pantries, community gardens and kitchens, clean water projects, and all ministries that address human hunger and thirst. God, in your mercy,

C: **receive our prayer.**

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

C: **receive our prayer.**

A: We give thanks for the faithful lives of those who proclaimed your gospel in times of challenge and strife, and for all those whose lives of love and service have ended especially Margarete Walsh, Patricia Bonaker, Betty Davidson, and Mike Regnier. May their witness inspire our own. God, in your mercy,

C: **hear our prayer.**

P: Receive the prayers of your people and draw all things together in your love, in the name of Jesus, who leads us from death to life.

C: **Amen.**

MEAL

Anthem

“As the Deer”

Choir

The gifts may be brought forward.

Offering Prayer

A: Gracious Provider, you set your immense treasures among us, opening your heart to the world. As we prepare to feast on your bountiful love, deepen our commitment to sharing those treasures with others, through our Savior, Jesus Christ. .

C: **Amen.**



Great Thanksgiving

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Holy, Holy, Holy

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Lord's Prayer

“Our Father, who...”

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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: Generous Host, you have shared your feast with us and made us new. Send us now to set tables of love and grace in your communities, that your liberating love might nourish the world into freedom, in the name of the crucified one, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

SENDING

Blessing

Sending Hymn

“Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer”

ELW #618

Dismissal

A: Go in peace. Resist evil in the strength of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

The Memorial Book is open today to the Glory of God

In Memory of:

Delbert Paul, 2002

READINGS AND PSALM
SUNDAY, MARCH 30, 2025

Joshua 5:9-12
 Psalm 32
 2 Corinthians 5:16-21
 Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32



*"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*

March 16, 2025
2nd Sunday of Lent

ATTENDANCE — 64
 (IN-PERSON— 49, YOUTUBE - 15)

OFFERING

Benevolence	\$	5,745.00
Building	\$	130.00
Memorial	\$	250.00
Other	\$	100.00
Total	\$	6,225.00

Save the Date

- March 24th - 11:00 - Chair Yoga - Luther Hall
- March 25th - 10:15 - Bible Study (bring lunch) - Church House
- March 25th - 5:00 PM - Men's Group - Mr. Pizza
- March 26th - 5:30 - Wednesday Lenten Service
- March 27th - 9:00 - WNN Care bag packing - WNN Outreach Ctr
- March 28th - 10:00 - Craf-Tea - Luther Hall
- Mon, Tues, Thurs, Friday - 5:30 - Online Evening Prayer

Serving March 23, 2025

Opener/Closer	Lisa Pettit
Worship Assistant	Rose Johnson
Communion Assistant	Terri Niederhammer
Lector	Katherine Kelly
Ushers	Jim Sperry
	Ron Ullman
Altar Guild	Debby Ullman
	Martha Vargas
Live Streaming	Matt Pettit

Serving March 30, 2025

Opener/Closer	Bill Wallace
Worship Assistant	Donna Doughty
Communion Assistant	Rose Johnson
Lector	Amy Hoag
Ushers	Sandy Craven
	Randy Craven
Altar Guild	Rose Johnson
	Catherine Sayers
Live Streaming	Jaxson Gardener

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
Persecuted Christians
The ministries of
St. Matthew
Bishop Kevin
Strickland
Southeastern Synod
Staff
Pastor Taylor Burton
Edwards
St Matthew
Congregational
Council
Laura Alexander
Carol Bingemann
Dave Bonaker
Matt Bonaker
Davidson Family
Myrna & Ken Hoag
Mairetha & Bennie
Jackson
Sean Jeffery
Marga Miller
Charlotte Moore
Traudel Mosely
Terri Niederhammer
Debby Owen
Dorothy Redden
Regnier Family
Connie Sieg

Allena Sperry
Carla Stickles
Harold Vinson
Eric & Tinisha Bryant
George Capps
Jim Chappel
Jean Clemmons
Xavier Danguilan
Penny Davis & Family
Lynne Funck
Brandy Garnett
Mike Gewin
Moses Glidden
Becky Goldsmith
Estrella Gonzales
Sarah Goodman
Doris Grier
Petra & Franklin
Henderson
Norma Kilby
Ken Korn
Emma Kump
Melissa Lancheros
Laura & Boyd Lester
Robert Lowe
Michelle Matthias
Sandra McPeters
Brady Meeks
Tim Moore
Moser Family
Nearhoof Family
Angela Paul

Vincent Pawlowski
Beth Price
Mark Purushotham
Bill Rahm
Tiffany Richardson
Ruocco Family
Dayna Ryan
Shirley Scott
Dou Shizhen
Ricky Skinner
Amanda Steinagel
Torrijos Family
Fred Turpin
Charlie VanHousen
Dawn VanHousen
Molly Wright
Martha Zimmerman

Israel
Ukraine
Gaza
Lebanon
Western North Carolina
Los Angeles

Mario's Tire
Mariner Finance
Woodville Apartments
Beal Wellness

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 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 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.

Mission Outreach Opportunities:

Mission Focus:

- Lion's Club: St Anne's Glasses, sunglasses and old cell phones
- Family House of West GA: Pop tabs
- Flags to Retire: Bring used American flags that you no longer want or need.
- St. Anne's: Feminine hygiene products, Personal hygiene products (travel size), toilet paper, and non-perishable food items
- Safe House Sealed plastic utensils (take-out meals)

Leave donations in the labeled containers in the Narthex between bathrooms.

Craf-Tea: This group will meet Fridays 10:00-12:00 PM in Luther Hall. If you enjoy crafts and tea, this group is for you! Please see Beth Hoag for more information.

Men's Group: This group usually meets the 4th Thursday of the month. However, in March, we will meet Tuesday, March 25th at 5:00 at Mr. Pizza.

Chair Yoga: We are meeting every Monday at 11:00 AM in Luther Hall. Wear comfortable clothing and sneakers.

**March 12, 2025
Ash Wednesday**

ATTENDANCE — 33
(IN-PERSON— 24, YOUTUBE - 9)

OFFERING

Benevolence	\$	150.00
Total	\$	150.00

MARCH 27TH - 9:00 AM

We will be packing care bags at the Wynnton Neighborhood Outreach Center! Please join us for this very important mission task!



Happy March Birthday



- | | |
|-----------------|------------------------------|
| 8 Aidan Gardner | 17 Callie Gardner |
| 9 Eileen Barrs | 18 Debbie Owen |
| 9 Jon Hoag | 24 Joseph Steinagel |
| 14 Erin Thies | 26 Evelyn Seames |
| 15 Brandon Hoag | 27 Rev. Grace Burton Edwards |



LENTEN CHALLENGE!

Lenten challenge begins Ash Wednesday! Here is your challenge: Each day of Lent, place an unwanted items in a box or bag for donation to our annual yard sale. Drop off dates for yard sale donations at the Sieg building from 10-noon are:
 April 12th, May 17th and June 7th.
 Thank you for participating and good luck on the challenge!

Lent Worship Schedule

LENT MIDWEEK WORSHIP

EVENING PRAYER

MARCH 26

APRIL 2, 9

5:30 PM

MAUNDY THURSDAY

APRIL 17

7:00 PM

GOOD FRIDAY

APRIL 18

7:00 PM

HOLY SATURDAY - APRIL 19 - 10:00 AM

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

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

Lisa Pettit, Sexton

Sandra Nearhoof, Minister of Music

Penny Davis, Nursery Director