

St. Matthew Ev. Lutheran Church

Good News

St. Matthew Lutheran Church
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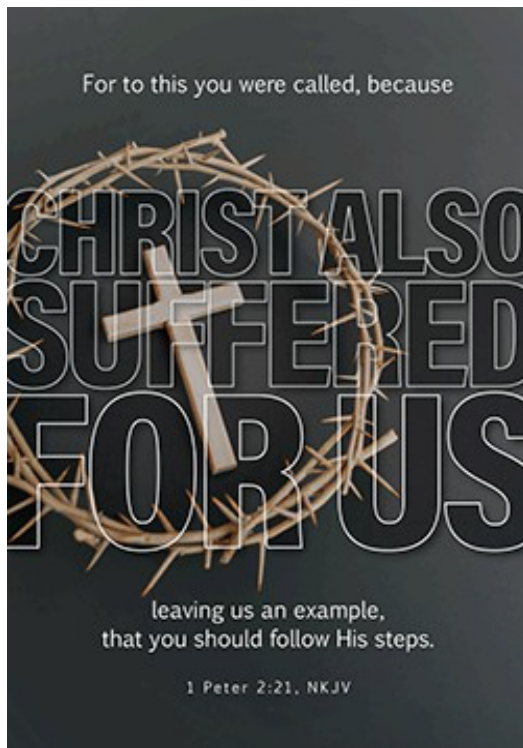


MARCH 2025

From the Pastor's Desk

What is the Lenten Journey?

Lent is indeed a profound time for Christians to reflect, repent, and prepare for the celebration of Easter. This description beautifully captures the essence of Lent as a journey through the wilderness, emphasizing our call to live in communion with God, love one another, and resist anything that leads us away from God and our neighbors.



The connection between Lent and baptism is particularly meaningful, as it reminds us that our journey is one of transformation and renewal in Christ. The encouragement and gratitude you all express towards the Confirmands and their families highlights the importance of nurturing faith in the next generation, ensuring they have a strong foundation in God's Word.

As you rightly understand, this biblical foundation equips them to share God's love with others in a meaningful way. Your prayers for a blessed and enriching Lenten journey, along with the anticipation of new life in spring, serves as an uplifting reminder of

the hope and renewal we find in Christ.

May this Lenten season be a time of deep spiritual growth and renewal for you and our community. Thank you for your dedication to guiding and supporting our youth in their faith journey.

In Christ,
Pastor Kelly

Comments from the President

Comments from the February 2, 2025 Vestry Meeting.

Treasurer's Report

Balances of all church accounts and memorials was provided.

It was reported that on 1/14/25 checks in the amount of \$850 and \$872 were issued for Ukraine Relief and the Ethiopian Pastor respectively. In addition, on 2/5/25 a check in the amount of \$500 was issued to our Adopt-A-Student. Total General Fund Income for January was \$8,988.37 while expenses were \$12,613.35.

A discussion followed concerning the collection of funds for the Ethiopian Church. It was decided that we will collect funds and submit a check on March 30 th and quarterly thereafter.

Due to the hurricane in North Carolina and the Southeast and the wildfires in California we will have a special collection through the end of March. Funds will be sent to The LCMS Disaster Relief Response - Strategic Use Fund. This fund allows our Synod to continue its care and support, as the demands warrant, of those still suffering in North Carolina and other parts of the Southeast as well as those affected by the wildfires in California. The collection for Disaster Relief will be an ongoing collection.

Pastor's Report

Youth Confirmation will be on March 2nd . Confirmands are; Gabby Nehring-Newman, EJ and Madelyn Berger, and Justin Stacy. (There is no Sunday school on March 2nd). Immediately following service, the congregation is invited to stay for cake and fellowship. A special thanks to Lauri Lutz for making the cake.

Mid-week Lent services begin March 12th . (Ash Wednesday is on March 5th). Please come and enjoy the soup and salad each week prior to the service.

Pentecost Sunday, June 1st. Members that are able are asked to purchase a geranium that will remain at church for planting. Of course, you can purchase more than one and take one home.

Pastor and Rebecca will be on vacation May 18th, 25th, & June 1st . Pastor Kudart will fill in.

Pastor Berhanau from the Ethiopian Church in Columbus received our quarterly check and was very appreciative.

Board of Elders reported that six cards were sent out for birthdays, anniversaries, and Caring.

- Ten phone calls were made to shut-ins.
- Four visits were made to shut-ins.
- Meals on call provided 7 meals to 3 different families.

- Mike Conley and Pat Siler continue to lead Adult Sunday School class until Pastor completes Confirmation studies.

Board of Church Property reported that the ceiling tiles in the Narthex have all been painted. Next time there, look up. They look great.

The ladies' room by the nursery is very close to being completed. Great job to the members who worked on it. The men's room is next but is a little more involved. They need to get a bid from contractors to widen the entrance door, as it is currently not handicap compliant.

Board of Christian Education reported that the theme for this year's VBS will be "Egypt – Joseph's Journey from prison to palace". VSB will be held July 6th – 10 th . Supper at 5:30, VBS at 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Please watch for details and please volunteer to help out.

New Business

This year's Hearts for Jesus Campaign will support the St. John Garfield Basketball Outreach Ministry at St. John Lutheran Church in Garfield Heights, Ohio. This ministry began 20 years ago as a means to reach youth in their community and share Jesus' love with them. We will collect funds on May 4th, 11th, & 18th. For additional information please go to: LCMS.org search Hearts for Jesus Campaign 2025.

Calendar

- March 2nd, Transfiguration Day.
- March 2nd, Confirmation Class Graduation. (No Sunday School)
- March 5th, Ash Wednesday. 6:00 p.m. supper (soup & salad), 7:00 p.m. service in the Sanctuary.
- March 9th, Vestry meeting.
- March 9th, Daylight Savings Time begins.
- Please see the attached March calendar for all other events in March.

Pastor Reagan Contact Information

Pastor Reagan: 614-564-7317 (cell)

k_w_reagan@yahoo.com (email)

If you require pastoral assistance in any way and/or are scheduled to go into the hospital or end up there unexpectedly, please contact me so that I/we can include you in our prayers (unless instructed to maintain privacy) and I can visit you. Your health and well-being is important to all of us!

From the Congregation

Newsletter Articles

Newsletter articles are due the 20th of each month. Articles should be submitted to Kary Ellen Berger, by email, at karyellen.berger@gmail.com

Prayer List

IN OUR PRAYERS WE REMEMBER: Luanne Handley-Blair; Laurie Miller; The Stapleton family; Trish & Richard Jordan; Carol Reagan; Marliese Driver; Elizabeth Karns-Poole; Tom Lingg; Ron Brock; Bill Yorgen; Paul Woods; Alisa Quinn; Andrew; Marita Gabler; Ezra Gonzalez; Linda Moncel, Jay Popkin, Jim Anderson, Edie Spriggs, Drew Gerig, Bob Brown, Tony Campen, BJ Bowling, Phill Bullock, Patricia Singer, Brian Tucker, Khalia Lawrence, Lori C, Larry C, Kevin Younger, Andrew Reagan, Sandy Kudart & Kervyn Mach. We ask that you be with those who are away serving our country, all absent members, and those suffering from manmade and natural disasters. We continue to pray for the deliverance of your people oppressed around the world.

| Those Celebrating Birthdays in March: | | Those Celebrating Anniversaries in March: | |
|---------------------------------------|----------|---|----------|
| Elizabeth Berger | March 6 | | |
| Madelyn Berger | March 6 | Al & Lauri Lutz | March 23 |
| Al Lutz | March 7 | | |
| Susan Armstrong | March 7 | | |
| Patricia Jordan | March 8 | | |
| Ed Werner | March 8 | | |
| Vickie Fennell | March 16 | | |
| Judy Scheidt | March 16 | | |
| Marliese Driver | March 18 | | |
| Becky Stacy | March 19 | | |
| Abigale Wiehe | March 22 | | |

Special dates

- Transfiguration Sunday, *March 2, 2025*
 - Confirmation Sunday at St. Matthew
- Ash Wednesday, *March 5, 2025*
- World Day of Prayer, *March 7, 2025*
- Daylight saving time begins, *March 9, 2025*
- First day of spring, *March 20, 2025*

Poetry Feature by James Greening

From his collection, *Death Fields & Love Storms*

The Sailor

Throughout my life, I've been lost.
And, when I paddled harder, the harder I was tossed.
I searched to the skies for navigation.
I prayed to the Heavens for revelation.
I cried; I screamed; I pouted.
A sense of despair had sprouted.
Yet, as my heart had turned as dark as the sea,
A hope entered into my Soul, in the form of She.
The North Star became unclouded.
How could I have ever doubted?
Her lighthouse shown so brightly;
Her beams of radiance grabbing so tightly.
I am found within the abyss, she is my sun above.
And, this dark old sea of life is now an Ocean of Love.
The waves are calm, her vitality leaving never.
Within this Lake of Love, I shall swim forever.

The Wonder

I often wonder.
Wonder what it is to be rich.
I wonder what feelings rush through your mind
when flying as a bird.
I wonder how your heart beats when stalking your
prey as a lion,
Or what flashes before the inner eye of the prey
while being chased.
I wonder what it is like to awaken from slumber
with nothing to do but your inner heart's most
desire.
I wonder what my inner heart would tell me to do,
and furthermore,
If I even have a heart anymore.
I often wonder.
Wonder what it is to be poor.
I wonder if the beggar on the street lives life more
than I.
I wonder if the woman pushing the cart full of her
life knows something I do not,
Or if this is just my heart speaking.

I wonder why it was so hard for the rich man to give all in order to know Christ.

The Lenten Desert

During the Lenten season, which begins on Ash Wednesday (March 5 this year), Christians figuratively follow Jesus into the desert. Just as our Savior spent 40 days fasting and facing temptation, we focus on self-reflection and contrition. In an 1873 hymn, Claudia Hernaman wrote, “O Lord, throughout these forty days, you prayed and kept the fast. Inspire repentance for our sin, and free us from our past.”



The desert experience of Lent serves a clear purpose, filling us up rather than depleting us. “This is what Lent is meant to be,” writes theologian Ron Rolheiser. “Time in the desert to courageously face the chaos and the demons within us and to let God do battle with them through us. The result is that we are purified, made ready, so the intoxicating joy of Easter might then bind us more closely to God and each other.”

Resting in Jesus

An old hymn declares:

I heard the voice of Jesus say, “Come unto me and rest.
Lay down, O weary one, lay down your head upon my breast.”
I came to Jesus as I was, so weary, worn and sad.
I found in him a resting-place, and he has made me glad. (Horatius Bonar, 1846)



Many people these days feel exhausted by division, the news, hatred that seems louder than love. More than ever, we who are “weary, worn, and sad” need to hear Jesus say, “Come unto me and rest.”

Jesus wants to be our resting place — but not so we can hide forever from reality. Instead, he offers a place of refreshment where we can relax long enough to remember that not everything is bad; there is gospel to share. Not everything is hatred; God’s love is stronger.

Resting in Jesus, we focus on God’s goodness. We are reminded of love shown by kind people to those in trouble, bold voices speaking for justice, warm friendships that brighten our days. Gladdened by rest, we rise again. Jesus walks with us, as always. We can lean on him every step of the way. —Heidi Hyland Ma



LENTEN CALENDAR

Ash Wednesday, March 5 – Meal – 6:00 p.m. (Soup & Salad)
Worship – 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary

Wednesday, March 12 – Meal – 6:00 p.m. (German)
Worship – 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, March 19 – Meal – 6:00 p.m. (Mexican)
Worship – 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, March 26 – Meal – 6:00 p.m. (Italian)
Worship – 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, April 2 – Meal - 6:00 p.m. (American)
Worship – 6:30 p.m

Wednesday, April 9 – Meal - 6:00 p.m. (Soup & Salad)
Worship - 6:30 p.m.

Palm Sunday, April 13 – Worship – 9:30 a.m.

Maundy Thursday, April 17 – Worship – 7:00 p.m.

Good Friday, April 18 – Worship – 7:00 p.m.

Saturday, April 19 - Set-up for Easter Breakfast - 10:00 a.m.

Easter Sunday, April 20 – Breakfast – 8:30 a.m.
Worship – 9:30 a.m.

A sign-up sheet is located on the table in the Narthex with the theme indicated for each week.
Families/individuals are asked to provide one of the food items for supper.

March 2025

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|--|--------|---------|---|---|-----------------------|---|
| | | | | | | 1 |
| 2 <i>Transfiguration</i> Holy Communion <i>Confirmation</i> Choir, 9 am Choir, Noon | 3 | 4 | 5 Bible Coffee – 10:00 am <i>Ash Wednesday</i> Supper: 6 pm (Meal: Soup & Salad) Service: 7 pm | 6 Al Anon, 10:30 a.m. | 7 A.A., 8:00 p.m. | 8 |
| 9 Holy Communion Choir, 9 am Choir, Noon Vestry – 11 am <i>Daylight Savings</i> <i>Time Begins</i> | 10 | 11 | 12 Bible Coffee – 10:00 am Lent Supper/Worship Service, 6:00/6:30 pm (Meal: German) | 13 Al Anon, 10:30 a.m. | 14 A.A., 8:00 p.m. | 15 |
| 16 Holy Communion Choir, 9 am Handbells, Noon | 17 | 18 | 19 Bible Coffee – 10:00 am Lent Supper/Worship Service, 6:00/6:30 pm (Meal: Mexican) | 20 Al Anon, 10:30 a.m. <u>Newsletter Articles</u> <u>Due</u> | 21 A.A., 8:00 p.m. | 22 |
| 23 Holy Communion Choir, 9 am Handbells, Noon | 24 | 25 | 26 Bible Coffee – 10:00 am Lent Supper/Worship Service, 6:00/6:30 pm (Meal: Italian) | 27 Al Anon, 10:30 a.m. | 28 A.A., 8:00 p.m. | 29 My Brother's Keeper, 8 a.m.- 1:30 p.m. |
| 31 Holy Communion Choir, 9 am | 31 | | | | | |

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