

OCTOBER 2025

The Encounter

Monthly Newsletter of St. Matthew's Ev. Lutheran Church

A Stephen Ministry Congregation



"Proclaiming Christ Crucified"

Established 1892

Our Mission

As a Lutheran community of faith, we continue our history of proclaiming Christ crucified through Word and Sacrament in joyful service to God and our neighbor.

Our Vision

A welcoming family, encouraging lives of service to Christ.



The local Life Chain will take place on Sunday, October 5th. Everyone will meet for Prayer in the Nave at 2 p.m.



Blessing of the Animals

Saturday, October 4th at 10 a.m.
in the Courtyard

First Communion Class Sunday, October 19th at 12:30 p.m.

First Communion instruction, with pizza and drinks for lunch. One parent must attend with the student. Please sign up on the big board in the narthex and indicate if you will be having pizza.



Faith Circle will meet Tuesday, October 14th at 10am in the Library. Pastor Peter Hoyer is giving an overview of the Book of Revelation. All women are invited to attend.

CKM Crafters will meet Tuesday, October 21st at 1:00pm in McSwain to continue making crafts. Please sign up in the Narthex, or you may also call Dianne Zenz (910-538-9118) or Norma Troutman (910-512-3123).



Blessing of the Quilts is October 4th-5th and quilts will be decorating the Sanctuary and the Narthex as *Bees on a Mission* prepare to turn them over to Lutheran World Relief for distribution.



Any quilt may be purchased and we also make quilts on request. Monetary donations are also gratefully accepted to help support this important ministry. If you have any questions, please contact Karin Cook.

OWL's Luncheon

We will be celebrating Thanksgiving on October 23rd at 11:30 am in McCombs Hall. Cost is \$10 per person and menu details will be shared soon. Sign up in the narthex by October 19th.



Trunk or Treat

Families and friends, you are invited to our Trunk or Treat party on Tuesday October 28th from 6:00 - 7:30 pm in McSwain Center and the parking lot. All are encouraged to dress up and bring a basket to get some candy! There will also be plenty of activities to enjoy!

If you would like to provide a trunk with a fun theme or lead one of the activities, please sign up on the bulletin board in the Narthex, or contact Ms. Kristine at dyfm@stmatthewsch.org.



Paul Fey Organ Concert

Sunday, October 26 at 4:00 pm

Paul Fey will once again bring his organ mastery and artistry to St. Matthew's. There is no cost to attend and no tickets required. Invite your family and friends.



Reformation Prayer Retreat

The Reformation Prayer Retreat with Dr. Curtis Leins is Saturday November 1st, 8am-1pm. A \$10 fee includes continental breakfast items and a sandwich lunch. Sign up in the Narthex or email Donna Capozio at dcapozio@stmatthewsch.org.



Greetings from Pastor Sam

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

From the moment the old evil foe posed the question, “Did God really say ...”, God’s story has had fierce competitors. The Bible is filled with accounts of competing stories that offer something other than the one true God and end disastrously for those who embrace them. As you read the New Testament, the other stories and wrong readings of God’s story are on display. So, when we are faithful readers of God’s story of salvation, that which the Bible declares from beginning to end, we learn to recognize and even to discern the subtle shifts that cohere with the old enemy’s question, “Did God really say....”

Martin Luther’s explanation of the first commandment in his Large Catechism makes clear that anything or anyone that is more important than the one true God has become your god. People and things make lousy gods, because they abandon or leave us, or we them, for, eventually, nothing but the one true God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) is eternal. Jesus’ warning that whoever loves father or mother, son or daughter, et cetera is not worthy of the Kingdom of God is not mean-spirited or hateful (as narcissists always say today about anything they don’t want to hear). That, dear ones, is reality 101. C.S. Lewis masterfully pictured this in *The Great Divorce* when a mother would rather have had her son in hell with her rather than to give up a heart filled with the lie that her son was hers to possess forever. The grace of God would have held this woman, but she wanted her son on her own terms. She chose to be lost.

The sinful heart and mind in each of us is, by nature, captive to the devil’s works and ways. Living repentance as a baptized child of God means daily acknowledging our idols, the very people and things which, at times, can seem to be so holy. Remember. The Romans would not have crucified Jesus without the full support and demand of the religious leadership and most prominent businessmen of Jerusalem. Every person has that walled off area of his or her life in which God has no say. It’s what I have called functional atheism. That is the area where addictions are found (name your own poison). Pay attention to whom are committing heinous acts of violence, and there you find their god. But let’s be clear, there are *no* other gods, there are only masks and manifestations of the one who asked, “Did God really say?” Remember. That rich young man went away sorrowful, because his golden god owned him.

Stewardship of God’s time, talent, and resources isn’t optional. It is what we do to His glory or ours. None of us has more or less than 168 hours weekly. How do we use them? None of us has the same combination of talents but we all have them. How do we use them? At conception and, later, at birth and at death, each of us has the same amount of resources. How do we use what we have in between? Again, does how we live glorify God or ourselves? Definitely, our idols lurk where we are most defensive. As your father in Christ, I must remind you of the account you will give to God for how you have lived. So, God loves a cheerful giver, which isn’t being happy to do more for yourself, but grateful for Jesus, who shed His precious blood for you, me, and the whole hostile world. Life is a beautiful, fleeting gift.

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Never tell a child that her beloved animal friend won’t exist in God’s eternal presence. Folks who say that are Gnostics, whose story abhors creation and wrongly aspires to be pure spirits. The Bible begins in Paradise with animals of every kind. It ends in the new heaven and new earth (Revelation 21:1-7), which is a return to Paradise. When a beloved pet dies, open your child’s beautiful *Story Bible* and let them see the animals being brought to Adam to be named. Tell them Jesus has promised to make all things new! If you have a beloved pet, bring her or him to the Blessing of the Animals on Saturday, October 4, at 10.m. Plan to be at the Life Chain on Sunday, October 5, at 2 pm. Give witness that *every* life is precious.

Grateful to God for you!



Pastor Sam Zumwalt+



All 3rd-5th graders, join us on October 11th from 3:00 - 5:00 pm
for a Nerf and Nacho game night in the youth room.
There will be a snack, a nerf war, games and a devotion.

Please note - you are welcome to bring your own Nerf gun
but are responsible for your belongings throughout the night!



Church Council

At the regular Council meeting, the following was approved:

- The “Continuing Resolution for Disposition of Gifts to St. Matthew’s Evangelical Lutheran Church (SMELC)” was amended to state that distributions from the ELCA Foundation (Herbert & Lucy Bost Memorial Endowment Fund) gifted to SMELC be apportioned each quarter by the Council.
- The Continuing Resolution for the position of [Congregation] Secretary was amended.
- By acceptance of the Pastor’s report, the following were approved as new members: Marci Crouch, Danielle Bashaw, Braelyn Campos, Joseph Campos, and Killian Campos.
- Receipt of the September distribution from the ELCA Foundation be apportioned as follows: Seminary Scholarship Fund, 5%; Contingency Fund, 15 %; General Fund Subsidy for Salaries, 25%; and St. Matthew’s Endowment Fund, 55%.

<u>Operating Fund: August 2025 Final</u>		
	<u>Month</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Revenues:	56,604.99	362,437.20
Expenses:	<u>48,108.44</u>	<u>395,841.11</u>
Income/ (Loss)	8,496.55	(33,403.91)



Caregiver Support Program

Stephen Ministry will present a follow-up program to the September seminar on Sunday, October 12th at 12:30pm in McCombs Hall. This program began last month with a presentation by professional caregivers telling us how to care for ourselves as we take care of those in need.

At our October program Beverly Hunsberger, Patty Macino, and Pr. Peter Hoyer will share their experiences as caregivers. They will describe their situations and offer ideas and suggestions about how they dealt with caring lovingly for their loved ones—how they kept up their own spirits and refreshed themselves as they continued to provide loving service to those in need.

While receiving the clear and helpful guidance of our guest speakers last month, hearing from our neighbors about how to best care for those in their charge will provide real and very meaningful advice and guidance for whenever we may find ourselves in the position of serving those we love.

Be sure to come October 12th to engage in this powerful way to serve others. A light lunch will be provided , so please sign up on the bulletin board in the Narthex.

If you would like more information or need to talk to a Stephen Minister, you may contact Pastor Sam, Ana Marie Jackson, Terry Miller, or Jon Lindsay for details.



Breakwater (MS youth) meets weekly on Sunday from 4:00 - 5:30 pm! We would love any 6th-8th grader to join us for games, snacks, and a devotion.

Lighthouse (HS youth) meets weekly on Sunday from 6:00 - 8:00 pm! Any 9th - 12th graders are encouraged and welcome to join us for snacks, games, and a devotion.

St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

Christkindlmarkt News

Volume 8

October 2025

Issue 10

8th Annual Christkindlmarkt

An Indoor & Outdoor German Christmas Market

- * Authentic German Beer & Wine
- * Food, Beverages
- * Over 55 Vendors!
- * Christmas Gifts, Decorations
- * Live Music and Dancing
- * Silent Auction
- * Petting Zoo
- * Activities for the Kids

No Admission Fee!
FREE Parking
behind Taco Bell!

Saturday, November 22, 2025 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Kids' Crafts

Jane Shue is managing our Kids' Crafts again this year. She has some really great ideas. This is what she says she has in store for the little ones:

"For the Christkindlmarkt kids' crafts this year, I've planned two crafts and a coloring station. One will be pipe cleaner and bead wreaths, perfect for toddlers or for families who prefer a no-paint option. For the second craft I'm going to do a slightly different version of the wooden angel ornaments we did last year since those were such a hit and turned out so beautiful.

I'd also like to add a coloring station this year. That way kids whose parents don't want to sit for a craft, or kids waiting in line, will have something fun to do in the meantime."

Jane created an Amazon wishlist for supplies. If you would like to help her out by purchasing some of her required materials, use the link below.

https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/1PYLL3BOOV5OA?ref=wl_share



Servant Search

CKM is now actively looking for servants. There is room for everyone. No matter whether you have days or only a few hours we can use your help. Can't make it to the church? There are things you can do at home. Please sign up in the narthex or call, text or email one of the team leaders:

Darin Pope	Property
David Medlin	Culinary Services
Melissa Shaver	Servant Sign Ups
Beth Hales	Retail Management
Keri Rutland	Children's Activities
Carol Roller	Finance

Who are these women and why do they look so happy?



Why, they are none other than your fellow church members, feeling deeply grateful for the opportunity to serve at the Rummage Sale on Saturday, September 13th. It was a full and busy week prior to the big day with the acceptance of donations, sorting and setting up, working the day of the event, and the final clean up afterwards. Thank you to everyone who supported this CKM pre-event fundraiser.

So near and yet...so far

This is the final call for sponsors.

If we wish to grow our festival, we will need an additional \$6,000. We expect huge crowds this year and need to be ready. Please consider being a sponsor. **Every dollar counts. Thank you.**



**"Oh, Mandy,
you came and you gave
without taking"**

Barry Manilow's lyrics
perfectly suit
our servant
Mandy Harrington.

Here she is on duty at
the Ice Cream Social
last month.
Always smiling.
Always ready to help.

Gifts to Honor and Remember

In Memory of Don Westmoreland, a gift to Pastor's Discretionary by Myra Scott.

In Memory of Arthur Moore, a gift to Pastor's Discretionary by Ron and Joy Snyder, Roger and Eleanor Horne; a gift to Altar Guild by Bill and Ruth Rice.

In Memory of Barbara Moore, a gift to Pastor's Discretionary by Mr. and Mrs. Paul Baker, Jr.



1	Phyllis Ramel
4	Harrison Reisinger
6	Liz Newbery
7	Pr. Carl Voges
8	Pr. Bob Kuppler
9	Rebecca Thompson

10	Dot Springs
13	Sue Miller
14	Isla Labriola
15	Adeline Bryn
15	Ashley Calkins
16	Carol Roller
16	Keri Rutland
17	Margo Russell
17	Mike Koder
18	Karen Roberts
19	Madelyn Hanson

20	Grace Woodrum
20	Christi Monroe
20	Haley Snyder
20	Thomas Mowrey
23	Tom Ullring
24	Matt Woodrum
27	Laura Zumwalt
28	Frances Donaldson
29	Melissa Shaver
29	Teresa Weybrecht
30	Tony Irenze



9	Larson & Caroline Wharton
12	Tom & Erica Ullring
12	Matt & Angie Woodrum
13	Mike & Sally Burns
15	Tony & Arielle Nelson

16	Willard & Jane Dove
16	Jody & Emily Burke
17	David & Tina Medlin
25	Adam & Rebecca Thompson
29	Lala & Landon Bailey
30	Mike & Charlotte Thompson
30	Don & Barbara Butzin
31	Rod & Sherry Andrew
31	Todd & Tracy Darnell

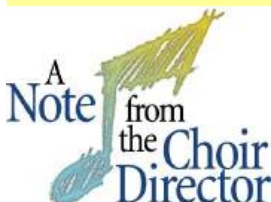


We welcome the following new and returning members to St. Matthew's:

Marci Crouch

Danielle Bashaw and her children,
Braelyn, Joseph, and Killian

Congratulations to Daniel and Shannon Pope on the birth of Matthew Daniel Pope, born on September 5th. Proud grandparents are Darin and Karen Pope.



Our Adult Choir has started singing special music for our congregational worship services. We welcome anyone who would like to join us, especially in October when we will start rehearsing our Advent and Christmas music. Our rehearsals are on Wednesday evenings from 7:00pm-8:00pm. Please call director Bettsy Curtis at 910-791-4582 ext. 104 if you'd like to visit a choir rehearsal so we can have a music folder ready for you.



All rising 9th graders - 12th graders we will be attending the Higher Things Conference June 30th - July 3rd in St. Louis MO! It is a 4-day conference filled with worship, fellowship, and learning. Please contact Ms. Kristine if you are interested in attending.



Our Christian sympathy is extended to...

Jody and Emily Burke on the death of Jody's friend, Mike Duncan.

Pr. Marv and Marcie Schedler on the death of Marcie's brother, Gilbert Bergman.

MEMBERS

Donna Siegmund
Kenn and Wanda Slocum
George Schwenzer
Laura and Micki Matthes
Christine Dingfelder
Ron Asmus
Alex Schwartz
Todd and Tracy Darnell
Fran Perry
Terry Miller
Donna Lawhorn
Ken and Jenny Manning
Butch Ruefle
Brigitte Walters
Joe Mayfield
Helen Knoll

Betty LaFave
Bev Miller
Don and Barbara Butzin
Peggy Davis
Steve Weidman
Frank and Marti Felter
Pr. Marv Schedler
Howard and Lani Beuerman
Sally Birnstein
Sarah Schneider
Ron Salow
Michael Strutt
Ed Ludacer
Carolyn Hooker
Sheila Leach
Patty Macino

Dennis Hall
Ruth Rice
Tina Medlin
Lynette Farmer
Pr. Bob Kuppler
Larry Knott
Roy Nelson
Erika Braje
Killian Campos
Dwight Crim
Jenny Painter
Gabie Walters
Joe Huppmann
Rebecca Seip
Sondra Tullous

FRIENDS/FAMILY OF MEMBERS

Amie Knauer
David Schwartz
Megan McKinney
Rev. Dr. William White
Tom Seip
Fred Peck
Bill Pearson
Lloyd Moore
Krista Boeger
William Fultz
Albert Rossetti
John Jones
Janet Nix
Scott Howl
Vic Weidman
Angie Barlow
Matthew Hall
Gerald Sundberg
Chuck Teigland

Erin Thompson
Carol Mueller
J. Dylan Ott
Gretchen Zunich
Natalie Merck
Jeremy McCollum
Jean Brooks
Jean Langrell
Frank Britton
Tim Schedler
Jill Miller
Cat Garcia Miller
Steve Cottle
Gene Przybranowski
Samantha and Ethan Wilhelm
Luke
Elena Andrades
Tanya Moore
Ruth Schucker

Amy Johnston
Mollie Eberle
Lauren Kuppler
Mary Pat Jones
Bonnie Gaspari
Vance and Ann Alphin
Natalie Pressley
Krysten Lee and Chris
Robert Zenz
Virginia Mough
Russ Kuhn
Betty Mowrey
Deisy Epley
Paulette Myers
Lisa Talmage
Margurite R. Alphin
Lorraine Fritz

REMEMBER OUR HOMEBOUND MEMBERS:

Elsie Cates
Jane and Willard Dove
Ruthann Getsinger

Jean Hoehler
Ed Ludacer

Pat Mahl
Nancy Miller

Those Serving in October 2025

ALTAR GUILD

October 4-5

6:00 Beth Hales
8:30 Cathy Aleksandravicius
11:00 Karin Cook

October 11-12 (C)

6:00 Peggy Davis
8:30 Cathy Aleksandravicius
11:00 Karin Cook

October 18-19

6:00 Beth Hales
8:30 Cathy Aleksandravicius
11:00 Karin Cook

October 25-26 (C)

6:00 Peggy Davis
8:30 Cathy Aleksandravicius
11:00 Karin Cook

ACOLYTES and CRUCIFERS

October 4-5

6:00
8:30 Irene Glaeser
11:00 Tom Ullring

October 11-12 (C)

6:00
8:30
11:00 Irene Glaeser

October 18-19

6:00
8:30
11:00 Irene Glaeser

October 25-26 (C)

6:00
8:30
11:00 Morgan Gene Simmons,
Kandon Davis

USHERS

October 4-5

6:00
8:30 Craig Hales
11:00

October 11-12 (C)

6:00
8:30
11:00

October 18-19

6:00
8:30
11:00

October 25-26 (C)

6:00
8:30
11:00

LECTORS

October 4-5

6:00 Sandy O'Donnell
8:30 Irene Glaeser
11:00 Frances Donaldson

October 11-12 (C)

6:00
8:30
11:00 Marti Felter

October 18-19

6:00 Marti Felter
8:30
11:00 Dave Davis

October 25-26 (C)

6:00
8:30
11:00 Bev Miller

GREETERS

October 4-5

6:00
8:30
11:00 Alan Scheidt

October 11-12 (C)

6:00
8:30 Ron and Suzanne Asmus
11:00

October 18-19

6:00
8:30 Cathy Aleksandravicius
11:00 Ashley and Christie Cribb

October 25-26 (C)

6:00
8:30
11:00 Bev and Alan Hunsberger

ALTAR FLOWERS

October 5

Cathy Aleksandravicius
(Anonymous)

October 12

Sharon Callender
Cathy Aleksandravicius

October 19

Beth Jarrott and Donna Lawhorn
Helen Knoll

October 26

Gilbert and Karen Alphin

HOSPICE MEAL

October 3 - Phyllis & Teresa
Weybrecht

October 24 - Erika Braje

Upcoming Worship and Events

November 1 - Reformation Prayer Retreat with Dr. Curtis Leins, 8:00 am; *Turn clocks back one hour tonight!*

November 1-2 - Feast of All Saints, Eucharists 6:00 am, 8:30 am and 11:00 am

November 3 - Evening Prayer, 6:00 pm

November 5 - Midweek Eucharist and Healing Prayer, 12:00 pm

November 8-9 - Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost, Eucharists 6:00 pm, 8:30 am (Contemporary) and 11:00 am

November 10 - Evening Prayer, 6:00 pm

November 12 - Midweek Eucharist and Healing Prayer, 12:00 pm

November 14 - Deadline for Annual Report submissions from Ministry Teams, Church Leaders, and Staff

November 15-16 - Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost, Eucharists 6:00 am, 8:30 am and 11:00 am;

Budget Forum (no Adult SS), 9:45 am

November 17 - Evening Prayer, 6:00 pm

November 18 - Eucharist and Healing Prayer, 12:00 pm

November 22 - Christkindlmarkt, 10:00 am

November 22-23 - Christ the King, Eucharists 6:00 pm, 8:30 am (Contemporary) and 11:00 am

November 25-26 - Thanksgiving Eucharist, 7:00 pm (Tuesday), 12:00 pm (Wednesday)

November 27-28 - Thanksgiving; Church Office closed

November 29-30 - First Sunday in Advent, Eucharists 6:00 pm, 8:30 am and 11:00 am

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
			1 8:30 Men's Breakfast Bible Study 12:00 Healing Euch. 6:00 Crossways 6:00 Handbells 7:00 Confirmation 7:00 Adult Choir	2 10:00 Crossways 10:00 Quilt Ministry 7:00 Midtown AA	3 Hospice Meal - Teresa and Phyllis Weybrecht	4 10:00 Animal Blessing 11:00 Fellowship 4:00 Pastoral Support Team 6:00 Eucharist; Quilt Blessing
5 17th Sunday after Pentecost Quilt Blessing 8:30 Eucharist 9:45 Sunday School 11:00 Eucharist 12:30 Executive Team 2:00 Life Chain (Nave 2pm; event 2:30-3:30pm) 4:00 Breakwater Youth 6:00 Lighthouse Youth	6 9:00 Counting Team 12:00 Conversations 6:00 Evening Prayer 7:00 Midtown AA 7:00 Harbour Towne Band rehearsal	7 10:00 Staff Meeting 10:00 Prayer Group 5:30 Joyful Noise 6:00 Girl Scouts 1327 6:30 Stephen Ministry	8 8:30 Men's Breakfast Bible Study 11:00 Finance Team 12:00 Healing Euch. 6:00 Crossways 6:00 Handbells 6:15 Young Adults 7:00 Confirmation 7:00 Adult Choir	9 10:00 Crossways 10:00 Quilt Ministry 6:30 Council 7:00 Midtown AA	10	11 3:00 Harbor Kids (3rd-5th grade) 6:00 Eucharist
12 18th Sunday after Pentecost 8:30 Eucharist (C) 9:45 Sunday School 11:00 Eucharist 12:30 Stephen Ministry Seminar 12:30 Grief Support 12:30 Young Adults 4:00 Breakwater Youth 6:00 Lighthouse Youth	13 9:00 Counting Team 12:00 Conversations 6:00 Evening Prayer 7:00 Midtown AA 7:00 Harbour Towne Band rehearsal	14 10:00 Staff Meeting 10:00 Prayer Group 10:00 Faith Circle 5:30 Girl Scouts 354	15 8:30 Men's Breakfast Bible Study 12:00 Healing Euch. 6:00 Crossways 6:00 Handbells 7:00 Confirmation 7:00 Adult Choir	16 10:00 Crossways 10:00 Quilt Ministry 3:00 Library Team 7:00 Midtown AA	17	18 St. Luke 6:00 Eucharist
19 St. Luke Pledge Sunday 8:30 Eucharist 9:45 Sunday School 11:00 Eucharist 12:30 First Communion Class 4:00 Breakwater Youth 6:00 Lighthouse Youth	20 9:00 Counting Team 12:00 Conversations 3:45 WCA Basketball 6:00 Evening Prayer 7:00 Midtown AA 7:00 Harbour Towne Band rehearsal	21 10:00 Prayer Group 1:00 CKM Crafters 3:45 WCA Basketball 5:30 Joyful Noise 6:00 Girl Scouts 1327 6:30 Stephen Ministry	22 8:30 Men's Breakfast Bible Study 12:00 Healing Euch. 6:00 Crossways 6:00 Handbells 7:00 Confirmation 7:00 Adult Choir	23 10:00 Crossways 10:00 Quilt Ministry 11:30 OWL's Luncheon 7:00 Midtown AA	24 Hospice Meal - Erika Braje	25 6:00 Eucharist
26 Reformation 8:30 Eucharist (C) 9:45 Sunday School 11:00 Eucharist 12:30 Young Adults 4:00 Paul Fey Organ Concert & Reception 4:00 Breakwater Youth 6:00 Lighthouse Youth	27 9:00 Counting Team 12:00 Conversations 3:45 WCA Basketball 6:00 Evening Prayer 7:00 Midtown AA 7:00 Harbour Towne Band rehearsal	28 10:00 Staff Meeting 10:00 Prayer Group 5:30 Girl Scouts 354 6:00 Trunk or Treat	29 8:30 Men's Breakfast Bible Study 12:00 Healing Euch. 6:00 Crossways 6:00 Handbells 7:00 Confirmation 7:00 Adult Choir	30 10:00 Crossways 10:00 Quilt Ministry 3:45 WCA Basketball 5:00 Endowment Team 7:00 Midtown AA	31 3:45 WCA Basketball Saleeby/Vanderwal (Wedding rehearsal)	