

The Messenger

And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Then I said, "Here am I! Send me." -Isaiah 6:8

Do Not Be Afraid, Little Flock

To whom it may concern,

²² [Jesus] said to his disciples, "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear. ²³ For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. ²⁴ Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! ²⁵ And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? ²⁶ If then you are not able to do so small a thing as that, why do you worry about the rest? ²⁷ Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. ²⁸ But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will God clothe you—you of little faith! ²⁹ And do not keep striving for what you are to eat and what you are to drink, and do not keep worrying. ³⁰ For it is the nations of the world that strive after all these things, and your Father knows that you need them. ³¹ Instead, strive for God's kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well."

³² "Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

flock: [flok] a number of animals of one kind, especially sheep, goats, or birds, that keep or feed together or are herded together.

I am fascinated by sheep so I did some research on the internet (where else could I get information about farm animals?). Sheep are flock animals. They love company and like to stick together in groups. They have a natural inclination to follow a leader. Where a leader goes, they go too. Most farmers take advantage of this and use food to entice the sheep. All you have to do is to find a bucket of the "good stuff" and use it to get the sheep to follow you. Shepherds use this flocking nature of sheep to herd them. The sheep associate the human shepherd with food, water, and protection. So, they will follow the shepherd wherever he/she goes.

Isn't this amazing? I now understand the Bible much better when it says that the Lord is my Shepherd. It makes sense to compare us to sheep because our lives depend on God. The sheep know their shepherd and they follow him. He leads the sheep to green pastures; he finds rivers of water for them to drink. He protects them from wild animals and dangerous paths. When it gets too hot, he shaves their wool to help them cool off. The sheep love him and he loves them. If he calls out, the sheep know the sound of his voice and they listen and follow him.

Wow! The sheep have an incredible faith in their shepherd. Today we are being asked to have the faith of sheep. God, our shepherd is saying to us, "Do not be afraid little flock." "Do not worry little flock." "Don't be stressed out little flock." "I've got you little flock." "You ask where you will find food for tomorrow? Come, I will show you where the pasture is." "You ask where to find a place to rest in this busy and stressful world? Come, I will make you a sanctuary to rest in." "You are hurt, you feel lonely, you are afraid, you are broke, you are troubled? Come to me and I will be your friend." "Do not be afraid little flock."

2020 and COVID-19 will pass. Advent Blessings – Pastor Tawanda

CHRIST

Youth Group – Our gatherings on Dec. 2nd and Dec. 16th have been cancelled at this time. We hope to be back in session soon. Have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!!!



St. Matthew's and St. Jude's churches will once again sponsor the Angel Tree project. This project distributes Christmas gifts to families in need in the surrounding community. **Members are asked to pick an angel from the tree, purchase the gift that is written on the Angel and then return it,**



wrapped, with the angel taped to the present, by December 13. Angels will also be available online using SignUp Genius. Please check our website and Facebook page for more information about giving this way. If you know of someone in our community who should be included in the Angel Tree Project this Christmas Season, please contact Julie Brorby (701-740-2906) or Rita West (701-213-7275).

All names are kept confidential.

Congratulations to Case Vernetta Moen on her baptism on November 14th. Case's parents are Kris and Stacie Moen. Her sponsors are Kyle Moen and Amber Agothness.

Welcome to our Church Family Case!



The Food Pantry is open during December on Tuesday, December 8th from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm and on Tuesday, December 22nd from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm.

If you or someone you know could use the assistance of the Food Pantry, please let them know or come to the Food Pantry during their open hours.



Thank you to
Kristie Adams
for her years of
service as
coordinator of the

Food Pantry. Your dedication to the Food
Pantry and the surrounding community is
greatly appreciated. THANK YOU!!



Beginning December 1st there will
be new coordinators for the Food
Pantry. **Mary Mitchell and Paul
Galegher** have agreed to be the
Food Pantry Co-coordinators!

Thank you Mary and Paul for your service to our
Community!

St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

701 Broadway St, Thompson, ND 58278 (701) 599-2081

ST. MATTHEW'S LEADERSHIP

Pastor Tawanda Murinda	Pastor	pastor@stmatthewsthompson.org
Vione Jordheim	Admin. Assistant	stmattsvione@gmail.com
Jamie Bischoff	Bookkeeper	stmattsbookkeeper58278@gmail.com
Paul Strande	Council President	stmattspresident@gmail.com
Scott Kuster	Council Vice President	scottkuster@gra.midco.net
Angie Muhs	Council Secretary	bamuhs@yahoo.com
Kevin Cooper	Council Treasurer	kevin.j.cooper@outlook.com
Brook Fretheim	Outreach Team	brookweber@hotmail.com
Chelsea Lupien	Fellowship Team	chelsea.lupien@und.edu
Duane Naas	Properties Team	dnaas@sterlingcarpetone.com
Bre Berberich	Education Team	breberberich@gmail.com
Steve Hancock	Youth Team	shannonandsteven@gmail.com
Valorie Uhlir	Worship Team	valuhlir@yahoo.com

Happy Birthday in December!

- 2 LeeAnn Novak, Brock Vaagene
- 3 Susan Dobmeier, Jamie Turano
- 4 Maggie Johnson, Neil Lindell
- 5 Corbin Peterson
- 6 Jim Hanson
- 8 Ellie Schultz, Heidi Strande,
Jada Welke
- 9 Larry Eliason
- 10 Penny Tomanek
- 11 Ryan Welsh, Max Zammert
- 12 Weston Lupien
- Whitney Everett, Mike Zak,
- 13 Christopher Staveteig,
Jettie Strand
- 15 Tanya Barker, Emma Wilson
- 16 Mike Brorby
- Jason Bischoff, Addison Deitz,
17 Avery Deitz, Ashlyn Deitz,
- 19 Ashley Potter
- 21 Caden Kurz
- 22 Dara Faul, Kaja Starcevic
- 24 Bryn Adams
- 25 Jonathan Dobmeier
- 27 Sheila Wilson, Blake Riewer
- 29 Robert Hodek
- 30 Kameron Anderson
- 31 Nolan Bergeron

Worship

Greetings from the Worship Team:

I'm hoping that as you read this letter we're still able to meet (with masks) for church. We've all been doing such a great job of self monitoring, let's keep it up!

We're planning three Christmas Eve services to keep up with the social distancing. We want everyone to have the opportunity to attend church. Please text Valorie at 701-739-6282 if you hope to come, and we'll keep a tally. Please also keep in mind that there will be a Christmas Day service of carol singing.

I want to thank all that have signed up to assist with services and encourage more to do so.. This is a great time to get accustomed to helping as the jobs are minimal! PLEASE text me if you are available and I'll mark you down. IF you are willing to read, the readings will be emailed to you by Thursday of that week.

ALSO, if you want to partake in communion text me and I'll make arrangements for you to pick up the elements.

THANK YOU TO ALL!! STAY SAFE...

Blessings to all - Cheryl Widman, Nancy Morgan, **Valorie Uhlir - 701-739-6282**



December 2020

Josh & Tanya Barker Family
Richard & Mindy Staveteig Family
Todd & Sarah Fee Family
Travis & Brook Fretheim Family
Jerod & Chelsea Lupien Family
Tim & Christine Sivertson Family
Damon & Bridget Pearson Family
John & Jill Schumacher Family

January 2021

Kory & Susie Sondreal
Raeann Burger
Derek Sondreal Family
Darwin & Michelle Potter Family
David & Sarah Krogfoss Family
Scott & Danean Landa Family
Lonnie & Gretchen Peterson

Ongoing Ministries

MEN IN MISSION St. Matthew's men gather each Sunday morning on Zoom for a chance to chat, drink coffee and learn together. Their topics of discussion vary, but new folks are always welcome to join them.

RESPONSIVE PRAYER This gathering is open to anyone, and meets at 7:00 am on Wednesdays in the Sanctuary. This group spends time in responsive prayer, and then enjoys a cup of coffee as well. They are off to work by 7:30. Come and join us as a great way to focus midweek!

WELCA BIBLE STUDY The gathering of this group has been temporarily halted. Stay tuned for updates.



Join us to Celebrate the Season!

Christmas Eve:

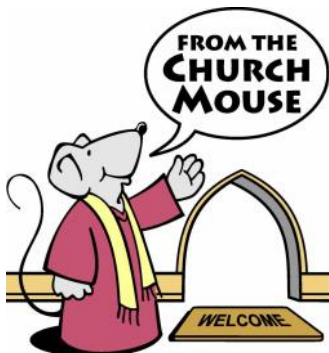
5 pm-Christmas Eve Family Service with Candlelight

8 pm-Christmas Eve Traditional Worship with Candlelight

10 pm-Christmas Eve Traditional Worship with Candlelight

Christmas Day:

10 am-Christmas Carols Hymn Sing & Prayers



Thank you to everyone who is a part of the ministry at St. Matthew's! Here are a few folks we would like to say a special thank you to this month! We apologize if we miss anyone!

The church mouse would like to thank:

- ALL Worship Assistants.
- Thank you to ALL of the Thompson Community for donating to the confirmands Trick or Treat for canned goods to the Food Pantry.
- Thank you to Central Valley Public School for their donation to the Food Pantry.
- Thanks to all who are making a difference!

Pastor Tawanda welcomes visitors Mondays through Thursdays at the church office anytime during the day.



His day off is on Friday and he does have a standing appointment on Tuesday mornings and Wednesday afternoons. Any other appointment times that he may be out of the office will be noted on the calendar.



St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

701 Broadway St., Thompson, ND 58278

www.stmatthewslutheranchurch.org

701-599-2081

November 24, 2020

Dear St. Matthew's Congregation,

We hope that you and your family are well at this time of year as we prepare for the season of Advent. We wanted to let you know of a decision that our executive team made at last night's meeting. We hope you will understand that decisions that have been made throughout this year regarding the pandemic have been made doing our best to protect the safety of our congregation and community. In Mark 12: 28-31, Jesus tells us to love the Lord your God with all your heart and love your neighbor as yourself. As an executive team we feel by taking these measures we are following these two commandments. We all would like nothing more than to have church as normal, the way it was intended. Not having in person worship last spring during the Lenten season was very difficult but we hoped it would not carry over into Advent. Unfortunately, it has.

We continue to encourage everyone to join us online via our YouTube channel for worship service each week. We are trying to cap our attendance at 25-30 people as we are trying to insure everyone's safety as much as possible while trying to remain open. Our Eastern ND synod bishop, Bishop Tessa Moon Leiseth, sent a letter last week highly encouraging all congregations to return to online worship only at this time. Most ELCA churches in our area and synod have done this. The reason we are allowing our service to remain in-person is that we know that sometimes people have things going on in life and being able to attend a worship service is very self-healing. We do also have some members of our congregation that do not have the technology to watch our services online. We know this is tough and again really wish we could be fully open.

If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to any of the following:

Paul Strande, Council President – stmattspresident@gmail.com – 701-740-5372

Scott Kuster, Council Vice-President – scottkuster@gra.midco.net – 701-490-0510

Pastor Tawanda Murinda - pastor@stmatthewsthompson.org - 599-2081 during the day

Sincerely,

St. Matthew's Executive Team

(Paul Strande, Scott Kuster, Angie Muhs, Kevin Cooper and Pastor Tawanda Murinda)

St. Matthew's Lutheran Church
701 Broadway St. Thompson, ND 58278
(701) 599-2081 | stmatthewslutheranchurch.org

Welcome to worship

Sundays at 10:00 a.m.

All Services Live on our YouTube Channel

Address service requested

