

Dear St. Matt's Friends,

As I write this message on November 16, I am still thinking about last night in Confirmation. Throughout the fall we have been studying the Gospels and focusing on different aspects of Jesus mission and ministry. We have looked at Jesus as teacher and Healer, and these past couple of weeks have been focused on Jesus as Savior. We did a slow walk with Jesus through Holy Week last week, from Palm Sunday, through the cleansing of the Temple and to the upper room. We concluded that night by taking our place at Jesus' table- sitting on the floor in a circle in the dimly lit sanctuary and served one another communion.



Last night we watched some of the movie "The Son of God" that takes us from that Upper Room, through Jesus' tearful prayers at Gethsemane, through the trials, bearing the cross up the hill to Golgotha, and his agonizing death. This is some pretty heavy stuff for 6th-8th graders, but these kids have entered into this journey with a level of interest and maturity beyond their years. I am so grateful for their guides who have provided essential support to their learning.

It might seem strange that we are covering Holy Week now, right before Thanksgiving, but I still need to cover the rest of the New Testament this year. This is how the timeline falls. However, I am finding this deep immersion in Holy Week in mid-November is shaping my thoughts about the Holiday (Holy-Day) Season. As we get immersed in all of the hustle and bustle of Christmas, do we remember WHY Jesus' birth is worth celebrating?

On the day of his death, Jesus told Pilate **WHY**. He said, **"For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice."**

Can we hear his voice in our hearts and minds? Are we listening in this hectic season?

We are looking ahead to Christmas. But as we rewind the clock to picture sweet Baby Jesus asleep on the hay, sheltered in some cave near Bethlehem, I cannot help but be reminded of that other cave, somewhere near Jerusalem, where some years later this same human body will rest in death. In both cases, so vulnerable; so very human. That's us, don't you see?



It's all one Divine move. This baby is Emmanuel—"God with us." God choosing to be with us in this flesh--in birth and death and everything in between. This is not just a happy birth but God in Jesus stooping down to make a way to bring us all out of the darkness of our caves, into the light of reconciliation and resurrection. This baby, this cross, this Jesus—this is **the way, the truth and the life** for us all. That is, after all, why he was born.

Pastor Kristen

Faith Formation

Confirmation Reminders

- Students are reminded to complete and keep track of their Worship Notes. 12 notes are required this year.
- Once completed, fill out your Service Project form, found in your folder, to receive credit for service completed.
- Reminder to sign up for Worship Assisting. Each student needs to assist in worship at least 3 times.
- 8th Grade students should be working to set up a Confirmation Mentor for conversations during Lent.

Confirmation Things to Know!

- ♦ Wednesday December 6—Class time 6:30-8:15; We will be watching The Nativity Story, pizza and pop will be provided.
- ♦ Wednesday December 13—Class time 6:30-8:15; We will be visiting members from our congregation for Christmas Cheer visits! Each family is asked to bring 1 dozen Christmas goodies. Upon return from visits we will have a little Christmas party before we break for Christmas!
- ♦ No Confirmation December 20, or 27!

Sunday School Dates to Remember

- ♦ Christmas Program Practice December 16 from 9:00—11:00 am
- ♦ Christmas Program December 17 at 2:30, students should report to their classroom by 2:00 pm.
- ♦ No Sunday School December 24 & 31



Bishop Tessa visits with our kids during kids talk on 11/19! The kids were excited to help lead worship with readings and singing! Thank you to all the youth who helped!

LIVING WORD:

The Telling of the Christmas Story

Presented by
St Matthew's Sunday School

Sunday December 17
2:30 pm

St Matthew's Lutheran Church



Please join us following the program in the fellowship hall for refreshments.

3 - Sunday School @ 9 am
10 - Sunday School @ 9 am
16 - Program Practice Time 9-11
17 - Sunday School @ 9 am
17 - Christmas Program - 2:30 pm
24 - No Sunday School
31 - No Sunday School

DECEMBER 2023						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Happy New Year

7 - Sunday School @ 9 am
14 - No Sunday School
21 - Sunday School @ 9 am
28 - Sunday School @ 9 am

JANUARY 2024						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			



St. Matthew's and St. Jude's churches are once again sponsoring 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, by **DECEMBER 10**, to the tree. Please be sure to attach the angel securely to the gift with tape.

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.

St. Matthew's LYO has been busy over the past few weeks. On October 25th, we watched the movie Evan Almighty. We met on November 1st and had a cornhole (bean bag) tournament, and on November 15th we played BINGO and wrote Thank-You notes to special people in our lives. For a service project, the kids are collecting items to create baskets for the Sox For Kids auction. On November 29th we decorated Christmas Cookies.



We will gather again on December 6th to assemble the Sox For Kids baskets and celebrate with a Christmas Party. All area youth in grades 9-12th are welcome to attend!

Special Thank You to Travis and Shannon Johnson for providing freshly popped popcorn for our movie night in October.

The Youth Team

Dara Faul, Bethany Kurz, Sarah Fee, Angie Muhs, Wade Strande and Amy Bergeron

Outreach Team News:

The money collected during October's noisy offering totaled \$306! The Outreach Team used the money to purchase much-needed items for the Grand Forks Mission, including winter gloves, personal care items, towels and underwear. Thank you to all who contributed.



Hatton Men's Club Presents
The 35th Annual
SOX FOR KIDS
Benefit Auction
Saturday, December 9th, 2023
Starting at 6:00 pm at the
Hatton Community Center
(Brisket Sandwich with Sides Offered)

The Outreach Team and LYO participants are teaming up to provide a donation to the Sox for Kids program, which was founded in 1989 to raise money for area children to buy Christmas gifts for themselves and their families.

The Sox for Kids volunteers work with the Salvation Army to identify children in need from all Grand Forks County school districts and from parts of Traill, Steele, Nelson and Walsh counties. The youth from the Thompson community who participate in the LYO program have been asked to bring items that will be used to prepare 2 gift baskets that will be donated to the event. In addition, the Outreach Team will use the proceeds from November 19th's caramel roll sales and the money raised from November's noisy offering to purchase additional items for the gift baskets. The gift baskets will be used as silent auction

items to raise money during the Sox for Kids annual fundraising event being held on Saturday, December 9th, at the Hatton Community Center (at 6:00 pm).

WELCA News

December 10th, 1 pm
St Matthew's Church
Sign Up in the Narthex
Email Recipe!
Welca.stmatts@gmail.com

*Christmas Goodie
Recipe Exchange &
Holiday Fun*

FIRST THE GOODIES - BRING A PLATE OF YOUR
GOODIES FOR EVERYONE TO SHARE, LEAVE
WITH ALL THE RECIPIES!

NEXT THE HOLIDAY FUN - BRING A GIFT \$15
VALUE FOR A FUN GIFT EXCHANGE!

St Matt's Women &
Confirmation Girls



Looking ahead to Christmas Eve!

Worship Services will be held at **4:30pm** and **7pm** this year. Both will have a special time for children and candle lighting.



You are invited to join Pastor Kristen **EVERY MONDAY at 1PM** for an informal time of connecting with God and with one another through scripture, coffee, conversation and prayer.

No homework.

No experience necessary.

ALL are WELCOME!



The Food Pantry is open during December on Tuesday, December 12 from 11:00 am-1:00 pm and Tuesday, December 26 from 6:00-8:00 pm.

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



All women of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church are welcome to

Women's Bible Study

Monday, December 18th at 10:00 am

MEN IN MISSION St. Matthew's men gather on Sunday mornings at 9 am in the Fellowship Hall for a chance to chat, drink coffee and learn together. Their topics of discussion vary, but new folks are always welcome to join them.

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY This group meets at the Church on the third Monday of the month. Their next gathering will be on Monday, October 16th at 10:00 am. All women of St. Matthew's are welcome!



December

Josh & Tanya Barker Family
 Todd & Sarah Fee Family
 Travis & Brook Fretheim Family
 Craig & Chelsea Moen Family
 Jarod Lupien Family
 Damon & Bridget Pearson Family
 John & Jill Schumacher Family
 Richard & Mindy Staveteig Family
 Dan & Tressa Setness Family

January

Paul & Brooke Bakke Family
 Sarah & Charlie Krogfoss
 Kelby & Angie Laxdal Family
 Derek & Bobbi Sondreal Family
 Kory & Susie Sondreal
 Travis & Shannon Johnson Family
 Kevin & Lorelei Robinson Family
 Tyson & Heather Sondreal Family

Upcoming Important Dates

- December 10th– Church Council Meeting
- January 14th– Church Council Meeting
- January 28th– St. Matthew's Annual Meeting
- January 31st– All Teams Meeting



Thank you to everyone for your helping hands. We apologize if we missed anyone, know that you are all appreciated!

- Nancy Morgan, Sue Simon, Sharon Gustafson, Val Uhler, and Bill & Cheryl Widman for the beautiful seasonal advent and Christmas decorations.
- Beth Kurz and the outreach team for the delicious caramel rolls on November 19th
- The "one and done" team for help with Pr. Kristen's desk
- Bre Berberich and Carrie Herrig for the wonderful Youth Led Worship Service
- The anonymous donor who generously helped us update our worship technology!
- All of the youth and families for helping with worship duties!



Happy Birthday in December!



- 2 LeeAnn Novak, Brock Vaagene
- 3 Susan Dobmeier, Jamie Turano
- 4 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
- 13 River Derosier, Whitney Everett, Christopher Staveteig, Jettie Strand, Mike Zak
- 15 Tanya Barker, Emma Wilson
- 16 Mike Brorby
- 17 Jason Bischoff, Addison Deitz, Ashlyn Deitz, Avery Deitz
- 19 Ashley Potter, Aspyn Robinson
- 21 Caden Kurz
- 22 Dara Faul, Kaja Starcevic
- 23 Quinn Ellingson
- 24 Bryn Adams
- 25 Jonathan Dobmeier
- 26 Cam Carrier
- 27 Blake Riewer, Sheila Wilson
- 28 Annistyn Laxdal
- 29 Robert Hodek
- 30 Kameron Anderson
- 31 Nolan Bergeron



A Note from your Church Council:

Scripture states “When they saw the star, they were overjoyed” (Matthew 2:10).

The Advent season is a joyful season, a joyful time. It is a time to listen, reflect, and anticipate His coming. The birth of Jesus.

Whether your Christmas season is busy and stressful, wonderfully joyous, sad, and lonely, or a combination of all of them, Jesus is with you and wants you to come to Him with everything. He loves us perfectly and is constantly caring for us. His living presence will bring you Peace, Joy, Hope and Love.

Celebrate the reason for the season. The King will soon be born.

May the peace and blessings of Christmas be yours, and may the coming year be filled with happiness.

Church Council News

Below, you will find a current summary of our Finances and updates impacting the entire congregation.

Summary of Finances

Financial Reports Summary	September	October
	2023	2023
General Giving Income – YTD	\$94,758	\$107,027
General Giving Income – Month	\$12,191	\$12,270
Net Income – YTD	\$ (27,455)	\$ (25,773)
General Giving Checking Account	\$28,106	\$29,359
Special Giving Checking Account	\$36,926	\$37,650
Line of Credit	\$-	\$-

Updates

The Nomination Committee met with John Schumacher, Council President after worship on Sunday, November 19 to discuss the open positions we have. There are many positions to fill in the New Year. Here are a few examples of positions they will be working to fill:

Audit Team Member – 3-year term

Worship Team Lead – 2-year term

Outreach Team Lead – 2-year term

Treasurer – 2-year term

President – 1-year term

Continued on next page



Updates

If you would like information about any of the openings, please speak with a member of the Church Council or Nomination Committee. We plan to hold our Annual Meeting on January 28, 2024 (DATE CHANGE) and this is when our new officers would begin their term.

We currently are on hold with putting our next Call Committee together. Pastor Kristen informed the Executive Council in early November of her willingness to stay longer than her current contract. While we are excited for the opportunity to have her stay and lead us, we are left with many questions about the best way to extend her time with us. The Council will be working closely with the Bishop and the Synod Office to determine the best path forward for us a church and for Pastor. We hope to have more clarity in the New Year and be able to share this information with you, at the Annual Meeting set to take place after worship on January 28. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to a member of the Executive Council.

Pastor Kristen and our Teams are busy planning a wonderful holiday season. We as a Council are excited to come together for fellowship and celebration. Stay connected to what is happening via our Facebook and Instagram pages, the church website, and of course through announcements made during Sunday service.

We invite all members of St. Matthew's to attend our Council meetings which generally will be held the second Sunday of every month. Our next meeting will take place on Sunday, December 10 following worship. Approved meeting minutes will be made available upon request.

Please let us know if we can answer any questions you may have. Thank you for taking the time to read this information. It is truly a blessing to be in fellowship and service with all of you.

Respectfully submitted on the behalf of the Church Council by Carrie Herrig, Council Secretary



CHRIST *the savior*
is **BORN**



Color the picture and bring back to church for the bulletin board

Exploring Acts: Synod-wide Scripture Read with Dr. Eric Barreto



January 7- February 4, 2024



EaND Synod

All congregation members across the Eastern North Dakota Synod are invited to participate in a synod-wide Scripture read! Together, we will dwell in the words and stories of the book of Acts.

Each day, you are encouraged to read one chapter of Acts, and every Sunday afternoon we will gather via Zoom from 2:00-3:30 for conversation with Dr. Eric Barreto, Professor of New Testament at Princeton Seminary. This event kicks off with an introductory Zoom session on January 7, and our reading schedule begins January 8. We hope you'll consider joining us!

Learn more at www.eandsynod.org/events/exploring-acts

Zoom Meeting ID: 898 7923 8361

Zoom Meeting Schedule:

January 7, 2:00-3:30 (Introduction)

January 14, 2:00-3:30

January 21, 2:00-3:30

January 28, 2:00-3:30

February 4, 2:00-3:30 (Wrap-up)

Reading Schedule:

January 7: Introductory Zoom (no assigned reading)

January 8: Acts 1

January 9: Acts 2

January 10: Acts 3

January 11: Acts 4

January 12: Acts 5

January 13: Acts 6

January 14: Acts 7 & Zoom Conversation

January 15: Acts 8

January 16: Acts 9

January 17: Acts 10

January 18: Acts 11

January 19: Acts 12

January 20: Acts 13

January 21: Acts 14 & Zoom Conversation

January 22: Acts 15

January 23: Acts 16

January 24: Acts 17

January 25: Acts 18

January 26: Acts 19

January 27: Acts 20

January 28: Acts 21 & Zoom Conversation

January 29: Acts 22

January 30: Acts 23

January 31: Acts 24

February 1: Acts 25

February 2: Acts 26

February 3: Acts 27

February 4: Acts 28 & Zoom Conversation

December 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 9am-Men in Mission 9am- Sunday School 10am-Worship	4 1pm- Dwelling In The Word 7pm- Quilting	5 9am-Quilting	6 6:30pm-Confirmation Movie Night!	7	8	9
10 9am-Men in Mission 9am- Sunday School 10am-Worship 11:15- Council Meeting 1pm- WELCA Holiday Fun	11 1pm- Dwelling In The Word 7pm- Quilting	12 9am-Quilting 11am- Food Pantry	13 6:30pm-Confirmation Christmas Cheer Visits	14	15	16
17 9am-Men in Mission 9am- Sunday School 10am-Worship 2:30pm-Christmas Program	18 10am-Womens Bible Study 1pm- Dwelling In The Word 7pm- Quilting	19 9am-Quilting	20 Newsletter Deadline	21	22	23
24 4:30pm- Christmas Eve Service 7pm- Christmas Eve Service	25 Church & Office Closed 	26 9am-Quilting 6pm- Food Pantry	27	28	29	30
31 9am-Men In Mission 10am- Worship						

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.

Education Hour Sundays at 9:00 a.m.

All services live on our YouTube Channel

Address service requested

Saint Matthew's Lutheran Church

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

ST. MATTHEW'S LEADERSHIP

Pastor: Kristen Larsen-Schmidt stmattspastor@midconetwork.com

Administrative Assistant: stmattsadmin@midconetwork.com

Bookkeeper: John Schumacher stmattsbookkeeper58275@gmail.com

Council President: John Schumacher stmattspresident@gmail.com

Council Vice President: Scott Kuster scottkuster@gra.midco.net

Council Secretary: Carrie Herrig carrie.herrig@outlook.com

Council Treasurer: Justin Bergeron jbergero@yahoo.com

Outreach Team Lead: Beth Kurz bkurz@undeerc.org

Fellowship Team Lead: Unfilled. Interested? Please talk with a council member!

Properties Team Lead: Dan Herrig dan@sandsteelbc.com

Education Team Lead: Bre Berberich breberberich@gmail.com

Youth Team Lead: Dara Faul darafaul@gmail.com

Worship Team Lead: Sue Simon ssimon@gra.midco.net