

St. Matthew Lutheran Church
1505 Dover Street, Worthington, MN
December 2019 Newsletter



Part of God's Plan

“In those days...” So begins a well-known passage of scripture. Do you know what comes next? “In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree...” (Luke 2:1). Some of us can quote the whole story by heart. Even though we’ve heard it year after year, the story is still precious to hear, still warms the soul, still excites our minds, still calms our fears.

Two seemingly ordinary people of little means obeyed that decree and traveled to the town of Bethlehem to register for the census. The woman, Mary, was about to have a child. She knew her child was the Son of God, a child to be named Jesus. Joseph, her husband, knew he was not the father of the child, although that was not how the world saw him. These were two of God’s faithful. They had been visited by the angel and learned that they were to be part of the fulfillment of ancient prophecies concerning the Messiah. They didn’t know how things would turn out. They didn’t know all God had in store for them. They trusted God to guide and protect them each step they took on His path.

Of course, God did just that. He provided a place for the child to be born. He sent angels to announce the birth of the king and moved the shepherds to respond to the joyful news and go to worship the new baby.

How many people involved in this most wondrous story realized the important and memorable parts they played? We cannot say for sure but surmise none could really comprehend the eternal significance of the events as they unfolded.

We, too, are involved in God’s plans. Certainly none can equal in importance the birth of Christ, but nothing God does is without purpose. Are we listening for the voice of the Spirit as He speaks to us through God’s word? Are we, as we go about our daily routines cognizant of being God’s feet and hands and voice to carry out His plan? Do we bring our gifts, aware that God may use them according to a purpose we can’t even imagine? How exciting it is to think and know that we are God’s instruments in this world.

In this Advent and Christmas season as we once again witness God’s plan unfolding to bring the Christ child into the world, let us not forget and marvel in that God has plans for our lives, and it all starts as we kneel before a babe lying in a manger.

In Christ,
Pastor Mark



Wednesday evening Advent Worship Services
will take place on December 4, 11, 18 at 6:30 p.m.
Each service will be preceded by a supper served from 5:10-6:10 p.m. in the basement. A free-will offering will be received for the suppers. The Youth, LWML and Council will host the suppers.

SOUTH ENTRANCE (Dover Street) WILL NOT BE USED

Due to the snow and ice of our Minnesota winters, we will NOT use the front door (*south entrance-Dover Street side*) of the church. Please use the north entrance, drive-up entrance or the side entrance off of Burlington Street. **This will start with our first snow fall and continue until next Spring**, after all the snow and ice has melted. Thank You.

St. Matthew's Board of Trustees

CHURCH RECORDS

Baptism

- Greta Ann Widvey, daughter of Peter & Emily Widvey, baptized November 17.

New Members

- LeRoy & Lori Pettibone

Transfers

- Steve & Diane Loeschen
 - Kami Vogt
 - Michelle Halverson
-

MUSIC NEWS

*“Hark the glad sound! The Savior comes, The Savior promised long;
Let every heart prepare a throne, and every voice a song” (LSB 349 vs. 1)*

We are entering into one of the most music-filled months of the church year. Here are the music and worship opportunities for the Advent and Christmas seasons:

- Blended Midweek Advent services will be held at 6:30 PM on Wednesdays, December 4, 11, and 18. Our December 11 midweek service will include Holy Communion. Special music will be a part of each of these services.
- Our Sunday School Christmas programs will take place on Sunday, December 15, 9:30 AM. This will be our only service that day. Our Preschool-Grade 2 children will present “Angel! Angel! What do you See?” and our Grade 3-8 students will share a program based on the carol “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”.
- Usual 8:00 and 10:30 services will be held on Sunday, December 22.
- Christmas Eve, December 24, worship opportunities will include candlelight services at 5:00 PM and 10:00 PM.
- Christmas Day service will be held at 9:30 AM, with brass choir during the hymns. Brass players HS and older are welcome. (or middle school with director recommendation) Please watch the bulletins and screens for more details.
- There will be only one service on Sunday, December 29, 9:30 AM, with familiar carols led both by organ and our worship band.
- There is no Wednesday evening service on January 1, 2020.
- Our usual worship service schedule will resume on Sunday, January 5.

God's Blessings and Peace,
Lorenda Glade, Joy Schreiber, Directors of Music.

DIRECTOR OF HUMAN CARE MINISTRIES

By Roxann Leckband

WALK, WALK, WALK..... Please join our "Walking with Jesus" ministry. **Please note the church basement and lower level is open for walking on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9AM-1PM.** The benefits to you will be great! If you have a medical condition, please have your health care provider determine if the walking would be beneficial. *There is a map from an individual who is a faithful walker (*see next page/back of this page.*) This individual personalized the path and tailored it. Come and enjoy the exercise. Create your own map and what it means to you. *Follow the footsteps to determine the path or be creative and do your own thing.

Caroling: Singers of all ages please join us at 11AM on Sunday, December 15th in the Fellowship Hall. We will organize and set out to bring a song of cheer and praise to those who have difficulty leaving their homes. We will plan to return to the church around 12:30- 12:45PM.

Due to the Children's Christmas program there will be NO Mom's group on Sunday, December 15th. We will have a **Moms/children gathering on Friday, December 20th** at 10:00AM in the lower level of the Education Wing. There will be a Bible story time, craft, goodies and a time for the moms to fellowship together.

Noon Fellowship will be on Monday, December 9th. We will have ham and mashed potatoes & gravy as the main entrée. Please join us for this great pre-Christmas meal. You may bring a dish to pass, provide a free-will offering, both or just come. We would love to have you. Please be prepared to share a Christmas memory from your childhood.

Widow's Group will meet on Wednesday, December 11th at 10AM in the Fireside Room and Monday, December 16th at 5:15PM in the Fireside Room and then out for supper around 6:00PM.

GPS Hope - Parent Bereavement group will meet at 6PM. in the Fireside Room on either December 23rd or 30th – date will be announced. Please watch the weekly bulletins for more information.

If you have any questions about these groups please contact Roxie at 376-6168.

We will be collecting coats beginning December 4th in the Great Hall on the Kid's Christmas Coat Tree. It was brought to my attention children in our local schools come to school in the frigid cold without coats. I have contacted our local school and they were very thankful for our efforts to get coats, hats and mittens to the children. There will be an area with a Christmas Tree in the Great Hall. Please donate new or nearly new coats to this ministry. If the coat is old and too worn it will not supply the needed warmth we are looking for. Please bring pre-school size through High school size. We will collect and distribute to the schools throughout the Winter. Thank you for partnering in this ministry!

On January 8th and 15th there will be **Early Communion classes for our 5th graders** from 5:30 until 6:15PM. Parents please note we encourage one or both parents to attend with their child.

May each and every one of you have a very blessed Christmas!

Roxann Leckband

**Please note there is NO Sunday School on December 1st, 15th, 22nd or 29th
and NO Confirmation on December 25th and January 1st.**



LWML NEWS

We would like to introduce you to our Seminary Student – Tanner Post, grandson of the late Gilbert & Arlene Post. He is in his 3rd year at Concordia Seminary, Ft. Wayne, IN. He is on Vicarage in Cedar Falls, Iowa. Tanner grew up in rural Lakefield, MN attending Holy Trinity Lutheran Church. On the 3rd Sunday of every month, St. Matthew LWML will host a coffee hour following the 8:00 worship service. Please join us in helping support this young man. He is married and has two little girls, age 19 months and 1 month. Let's be a blessing to him!

All women are invited to our annual **Christmas Party** on Thursday, **December 5, 2019 at 6:00 pm**. We will have a selection of soups, crackers, and potluck Christmas goodies. Please join us for fellowship, a Christmas Advent program put on by the Sarah Circle, and a gift exchange. If you want to be involved in the gift exchange, please bring a \$5.00 gift to the party. Hope to see you there! Bring a friend! If you have any questions, call Kathy Roslansky 360-1831.

Other Notes: The December 8 coffee hour will be hosted by the Hope Circle. This is also our day we support our Seminary Student, Tanner Post. There will be No LWML Meeting in January 2020. Coffee hour on January 19 will be hosted by the Sarah Circle.

The LWML Young Women in Missions group is meeting for a servant project on December 8th. We will meet at 9:15AM and then leave to visit shut-ins and bring them a Christmas treat. We will pair up with at least one other person. Please bring 3-4 small treats that you can give to the shut-ins that you visit (ex. Small plate of cookies, baggy of snack mix, etc.) Child care will be available at the church, and we will be back before 10:15 when Sunday School is over. Contact Amy with questions, 507-360-5360.



ALTAR GUILD NEWS

Serving in December will be: Sandy Meyer & Marge Ruesch for the 8 a.m. services. Velma Cortright will serve the Christmas services. If you would like to be a part of the Altar Guild, please contact Velma Cortright, 376-5600 or Sandy Meyer, 376-6290.

ALTAR FLOWERS – Thank you for providing bouquets for our Altar area. Due to the closing of McCarthy's Floral, there is a change to our Altar Flower procedure. Because of increased bouquet costs and billing difficulties, St. Matthew's is no longer ordering the Altar bouquets. **You may contact Hy-Vee individually to order your bouquets and arrange for delivery or pick-up. You may also provide flowers from your own garden. If you order from Hy-Vee and are having them delivered to the church, please tell them to deliver on FRIDAY MORNINGS – to ensure that someone is at the church to receive the delivery.**

We still have the Flower Calendar in the Narthex to regulate the number of bouquets provided weekly. **Therefore, please continue to sign-up to help beautify our Altar area. If you would like your Altar flowers listed in the bulletin that information MUST be into the church office 2 weeks before the date you are providing the flowers.** If you have any questions, please contact the church office. Thank You for continuing to provide bouquets for our Altar area.

Christmas Poinsettias to Beautify our Church

We are trying something new this year! The church will NOT be ordering poinsettias. Instead:



- 1) **You may go out and purchase a poinsettia(s) of your choosing** (*color & foil color will not matter*), from wherever you choose to purchase it from.
- 2) If you wish to have your name printed in the bulletin for the poinsettia in memory or honor of someone, please contact Bev in the church office by December 18th with that information.
- 3) Please have your poinsettia here at the church by 9:00AM on Saturday, December 21st. The Altar Guild will be decorating the church at that time. Please do not bring your plant(s) any earlier than December 20th, to ensure the plant stays fresh for Christmas.
- 4) Please label your poinsettia with your name to ensure you get the correct one back. We will also have labels available here to use.
- 5) You may pick-up your plant after the Christmas Day worship service.

Please help us beautify our church for the Christmas Season. Thank You.

PLEASE TAKE NOTE: WHEN THE WINTER WEATHER IS QUESTIONABLE - HOW DO I FIND OUT IF CHURCH SERVICES/ACTIVITIES HAVE BEEN CANCELLED?

To find out if worship services have been cancelled, please tune into the following local radio stations for announcements: FM Stations 95.1, 93.5 and 104.3. *The radio station's website is updated as soon as they receive announcements, so you may want to check that rather than having to listen for the announcement* – www.us95.us.

*You may also check our Facebook page – facebook.com/stmattworthington. **The Facebook page will be the first thing to be updated about weather cancellations, etc.***

THANK YOU NOTE

Thank you to all the volunteers that helped with our Harvest Dinner. Thank you to everyone who brought pies for the dinner and items for the bake sale. A special Thank You to those that helped with the serving of the meal and the clean-up. With your help we served approximately 300 people in the dining room and had 56+ take-outs. God's Blessings to each and every one of you!

St. Matthew's LWML

WEEKDAY BIBLE STUDIES FOR WOMEN

The Martha Circle will meet on December 19th at 1:30 p.m. in the Fireside Room. The Sarah Circle will meet on Tuesday, December 17th at 12:30 p.m. in the Fireside Room. The Hope Circle will meet on Tuesday, December 10th at 5:15 p.m. in the Fireside Room.

Please Note: The January Church Newsletter will be mailed out the first week of January!

Have you heard the saying – “Always leave your campsite in better shape than it was when you found it.” This is a good saying to abide by in our daily lives. Therefore, if you use a room at the church, you may move the furnishings around to work for you; however, PLEASE return the room to its original setting before you leave. Thank You for your attention to this.

2019 GIVING – Please remember, all offerings to the church to be counted as 2019 giving, **MUST PHYSICALLY BE IN THE CHURCH OFFICE by December 31st.** Anything received after that time must be counted towards 2020 giving. THANK YOU!

The 2020 Offering Envelopes have arrived! Please pick-up your box from the Great Hall! The boxes include envelopes that provide “special giving opportunities” throughout the year in addition to regular weekly envelopes. So even if you signed up for the automatic giving, you will still have a box printed for you.

ELECTRONIC GIVING AVAILABLE - *A convenient, consistent way to help our church grow!* Our church offers electronic giving, which allows you to make donations on a scheduled, automatic basis. If you are writing checks and preparing envelopes every week, you will especially appreciate electronic giving. It is convenient for you and provides much-needed donation consistency for our church. To set up electronic donations, simply complete the authorization form available at each entrance to the church and on our website, www.stmatthewworthington.com and return it to the church office. Donations can be debited automatically from either a checking or savings account. If you have any questions, please contact our Church Treasurer, Tammy Brunk, 507-360-8977. Help us grow!

GRAIN OFFERINGS - Any farmers that would like to make a donation using loads of grain may do so by simply telling the grain elevator, and then calling Bev in the church office. She will then have to call the elevator and ask them to sell the grain and send the church a check. **THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**

The Ministry Planning Committee News

We are **looking for:** 1) a new social media person to help keep the Church App and other platforms up to date; 2) members for the new “Welcoming Ministry” to reorganize the Great Hall. Please contact Tim Hansberger, 507-360-9089, with any questions, or if you are interested in either of these ministries.

HIGHLIGHTS from the November 12 Council Meeting: Church Office did not receive anything at the time of this newsletter typing. Next Council meeting will take place on Tuesday, December 10 at 5:30 p.m.

November 3, 2019 Voters Meeting Highlights –

Treasurer: For quarter ending 9/30/19 = Income was \$97,641.75; Expenses were \$94,149.84; Checkbook Balance: \$21,378.51. Building Fund Income: \$245.00. Building Loan Balance: \$174,300.00. Scholarship Balance: \$472,242.49, scholarships given for the 1st Semester totaled \$22,400.00. Memorial Fund Balance: \$30,509.41. Youth account: \$7,433.54. There was a \$3,736.91 positive income for the third quarter. Contact Tammy if you are interested in automatic giving.

Pastor: Reflected on his 5 weeks away and thankful for our leadership and staff while he was away. It's good to be back. There are 5 or 6 small groups going and encourage anyone to start up a group. Tuesday morning 8AM Bible Study with him is starting up again. He will be starting a small group Bible Study to meet between services on Sundays with the topic of mental health issues.

Roxie: The feedback from the women who attend the Widows Group indicates the support is beneficial. A parent bereavement support group has been started. Our group will be associated with a ministry called GPS Hope (Grieving Parents Sharing Hope). The group will meet on the 4th Monday of the month from 6-7pm in the Fireside Room. If you know a family who has lost a child let them know about this group. This is open to the community. Cold and flu season is here. Please take an informational pocket card available at the church entrances. Thanks for our great kitchen help on Wednesday nights. A meal is served on Wednesday nights for all Confirmation and WSS attendees.

Jenna: HS seniors meet once a month and discuss how to bring their faith with them post-high school. HS Sunday school is going through "What is Lutheran Worship." There are usually about 20 kids that attend Wednesday evening youth group. Attended Okoboji Lutheran Bible camp outreach night. Youth sold 225 dozen hoagies in October. This was a great fundraiser! Youth Board meets the 2nd Wednesday of every month. There is a monthly MS Prayer/Play event held. This is for 5th-8th grade confirmation students and friends. The 2020 HS Mission Trip will be to Shoshone Camp in Idaho July 18-25. MS Mission Trip will be in Sioux Falls June 26-28. Our youth will be serving at the Helping Hand Pregnancy Center Banquet Nov 19th. Jenna is in her last year of classes at Concordia, Irvine.

Music: Adult choir has been blessed with an increase in participation among our ladies, but we could definitely use more male voices. Our mid-week Advent services will be blended worship services and will include special music. The Sunday School Christmas Program is scheduled for December 15 and will be the worship service for that Sunday. Thank you to Darci Holt for playing for the younger students and Lorenda who is accompanying the 3-8 grade students. We have purchased a new keyboard to use in our preschool-2nd grade Sunday School area. This was funded through Thrivent Choice dollars. It is hoped we can also use this keyboard for events in the Fellowship Hall and for our summer outdoor worship.

Elders: Have been discussing the Budget and aligning income with expenses. Working on a structure to help Pastor with job duties, and trying to be creative to get help for him, looking at using our staff more with their abilities.

Trustees: Working on computer updates and doing general maintenance. Boiler for north entrance will be installed soon. Need to install a stabilization part on the Chevy van per our insurance.

Christian Education: Working on Christmas program which will be December 15th at 9:30 a.m. with refreshments to follow the service.

Ministry Planning Committee: Worked on the financial need letter and small group ministry. Looking at ways to get more people involved and need ideas from everyone on how to do this and be more involved in serving our community. Looking at making changes in the Great Hall to move the fellowship from the elevator entrance into the Great Hall. Open to suggestions. Need to greet visitors as they come in, not just hand them a bulletin. The objective of this committee is to get people involved in small projects, not to have committees that you serve a term on.

Current Business: By-Law Changes – we want to get more members involved in the voters meetings. Therefore, would like to go down to 2 Semi-Annual Voters meetings rather than 4 quarterly meetings. Hoping this will make it easier to get attendance at these meetings. The Annual Meeting would be in April and the Budget meeting in October. We would still have Special Voters Meetings as needed. Change the meeting notice from 3 weeks before a meeting to 2 weeks before a meeting. Advertise one week, then Agenda posted next week.

New Business: The 2020 Budget – tried to take common sense approach to the Budget. We are only bringing in about 83% of our Budget currently. We ended up at a 90% change on the proposed budget. Total Budget presented was \$458,951.00 Last year's budget was \$501,866.00.

Next meeting will be in April – date TBD.

Worship Service Helpers for December 2019

ACOLYTES

Dec. 1 (8) Lance Gordon (10:30) Sierra Goedtke

Dec. 4 6:30 p.m. – Nia Iverson

Dec. 8 (8) Emily Lowe (10:30) Evan Hansberger

Dec. 11 6:30 p.m. – Logan Meyeraan

Dec. 15 9:30 a.m. – _____

Dec. 18 6:30 p.m. – Wyatt Peterson

Dec. 22 (8) Isaiah Schroeder (10:30) Lucy Thier

Dec. 24 5 p.m. – Addison Peralta-Cross

Dec. 24 10 p.m. – Damien Leckband

Dec. 25 9:30 a.m. – Damien Leckband

Dec. 29 9:30 a.m. – Garret Larson

Jan. 5 (8) Paige Barber (10:30) Nevaeh Roesner

NURSERY (10:30 ONLY)

Alaya Rowley, Gail Holinka

no nursery

Madison Sieve, Kasen White

no nursery

Marlis Rohwer, _____

no nursery

Ryker Thier, Tammy Markus

Alexa Kilker, Marlis Rohwer, Beth White

no nursery at 10pm

no nursery

Elizabeth Gerdes, Jessica Larson

TJ Ostrem, Angie Koplow

** Please be sure to mark your calendars and **arrive 15 minutes before service begins.** If you cannot fulfill your scheduled date, please find a replacement and **call the church office with the change.** THANK YOU*

GREETER SCHEDULE

If you are unable to fulfill your scheduled time, please try to find a replacement and call the church office with the change. **If you can help fill in any of the open slots, please contact Bev in the church office. Thanks for serving.*

Dec. 1 8 a.m. – Chad & Stacey Hokeness Family
10:30 – Kevin & Danika Schmidt

Dec. 4 6:30 p.m. – Myron & Sandy Meyer

Dec. 8 8 a.m. – Lorna Buntjer, Julie Buntjer
10:30 – Dave & Mary Krueger

Dec. 11 6:30 p.m. – Clarence & Twyla Mess

Dec. 15- 9:30 a.m. – Joel & Julie Lorenz

Dec. 18 6:30 p.m. – Voris & Sandie Spittle

Dec. 22 8 a.m. – Cindy Brunk, Ron Markman
10:30 a.m. – David & Alexie Cross

Dec. 24 5 p.m. – Al & Gail DeGrote, Karen Schwartz
Dec. 24 10 p.m. – Elders

Dec. 25 9:30 a.m. – Greg & Roxie Leckband Family

Dec. 29 9:30 a.m. – Margaret Schroeder,

Jan. 5 8 a.m.- David & LaVonne Holt
10:30 – Mike & Cindy Froderman

Upcoming Worship Services at St. Matthew Lutheran Church

Mid-Week Advent Services

Wednesdays -Dec. 4, 11 and 18 at 6:30 p.m.

** Our midweek Advent Services are preceded by a delicious supper served from 5:10-6:00 p.m.*

Sunday, December 1st

8:00 a.m. Traditional Worship

9:00 a.m. Coffee Fellowship

NO Sunday School

9:30 a.m. Adult Bible Study

10:30 a.m. Contemporary Worship

Sunday, December 8th

8:00 a.m. Traditional Worship

9:00 a.m. Coffee Fellowship

9:15 a.m. Sunday School

9:30 a.m. Adult Bible Study

10:30 a.m. Contemporary Worship

Sunday, December 15th

9:30 a.m. Sunday Morning Worship Service

**Includes the Children's Christmas Program*

Sunday, December 22nd

8:00 a.m. Traditional Worship

9:00 a.m. Coffee Fellowship

NO Sunday School

9:30 a.m. Adult Bible Study

10:30 a.m. Contemporary Worship

Christmas Eve

5 p.m. Christmas Eve Family Service

10 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Christmas Day

9:30 a.m. Festival of Christmas Service

Sunday, December 29th

9:30 a.m. Worship Service

Wednesday, January 1st

- NO Service

