

*St. Matthew Lutheran Church*  
*1505 Dover Street, Worthington, MN*  
*February 2018 Newsletter*

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Dear Fellow Redeemed,

For us Christians the most important date in February this year is Wednesday, February 14—Ash Wednesday, the start of Lent. This is a solemn time for us, yet a holy time as we meditate on the suffering and sacrifice our Savior endured on our behalf. However, if you would ask the world we live in what is the most important thing about February 14 the overwhelming response would probably be Valentine's Day, the day of love. Of course, the real roots of Valentine's Day are anchored in church history.

Little is known with certainty about the real Valentine, or Valentinus. February 14 has been in the past a day to remember three early Christians by this name. In 1969 the Valentines were removed from the Roman Catholic list of saints, because the information about all the Valentines is just too unreliable, but the remembrance began in the year 500. The best-known of the three Valentines was probably a pastor who died as a martyr in the year 296.

This Valentine was a priest who served during the third century in Rome. When Emperor Claudius II decided that single men made better soldiers than those with wives and families, he outlawed marriage for young men. Legend has it that this Valentine, realizing the injustice of the decree, defied Claudius and continued to perform marriages for young lovers in secret. When Valentine's actions were discovered, Claudius ordered that he be put to death.

If this is true, Valentine was a martyr. This is very relevant to Christians today, or at least it should be. It's unfortunate the media (and churches) do not cover the persecution of Christians in the world as well as it covers many other topics. The truth is that Christians are coming under increased pressure, especially in Muslim countries. They are daily paying a high price. Sometimes the price is life itself.

Mission specialists say that more Christians were killed in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century than in all the first nineteen centuries combined. Be thankful for your religious freedom! Pray for those who are bearing up under the threat of suffering and death for the faith. To learn more about what is happening to Christians in the world today, go to The Voice of the Martyrs. [www.persecution.com](http://www.persecution.com).

It is crucial as we enter this Lenten season we take the time to give thanks and praise to the one who was martyred on our behalf, so that we may never truly feel the curse and sting of death. May he continue to strengthen us and all believers throughout the entire world.

In Christ,  
*Pastor Mark*

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**WINTER IS HERE – In the event of bad weather**, please tune into radio stations: FM = 95.1, 93.5 and 104.3 and 730AM for updates about our services and/or activities. Or you may check our Facebook page – [facebook.com/stmattworthington](https://facebook.com/stmattworthington).

# ADULT BIBLE STUDIES

Sundays from 9:30-10:15 a.m. – held in various parts of the church

- **Beginning February 4<sup>th</sup>** there will be a new Bible study opportunity made available on Sunday mornings. This five week study is entitled, **Life. Money. Legacy.** by **Dave Ramsey**. Dave Ramsey will present a biblical view of money in five entertaining, practical messages. Each 30-minute video teaches viewers how to handle their personal finances God's ways and how to build a lasting legacy that will transform generations to come. Nathan Holt and Ron Iverson will lead a discussion after each video segment. The venue for this Bible study will be in the Fireside Room in the lower level of the education wing.
- **The Daniel Plan Bible Study** – 40 days to a healthier life! This study teaches simple ways to incorporate healthy choices into your current lifestyle. The five key concepts for optimal health that promote success: faith, food, fitness, focus and friends. It also encourages you to deepen your relationship with God as you make positive choices each and every day. Lynn Dierks leads this study in the large classroom (across from the men's restroom) in the lower level of the education wing. It's not too late to join!
- **Galatians Bible Study** - If someone asked you to explain the gospel, what would you say? What is the good news of the Christian faith? Writing to the Galatians, Paul made it clear how easily we can be tempted to turn toward fraudulent gospels, especially those that teach we can earn God's love through our works. Though they may have the appearance of truth, they are lifeless and leave us empty in the end. In this Bible Study, Pastor Mark will dive into the book of Galatians, one of the Biblical books that contains some of the clearest explanations of the gospel in the New Testament. Because our gospel is not one based on our works, but faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ. **This Bible Study will begin on February 4, in the basement Fellowship Hall.**

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## WEEKDAY BIBLE STUDIES FOR WOMEN

The Sarah Circle will meet on Tuesday, February 20 at 12:30 p.m. in the Fireside Room. The Hope Circle will meet on Tuesday, February 20 at 5:15 p.m. The Martha Circle will meet on Thursday, February 15 at 1:30 p.m. in the Fireside Room.

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## ALTAR GUILD

**Serving in February will be:** Nancy Edwards and Lynn Dierks at the 8 a.m. services. If you would like to be a part of the Altar Guild, please contact Velma Cortright 376-5600 or Sandy Meyer 376-6290.



# A Lenten Journey begins Wednesday, February 14<sup>th</sup>

Lent is a journey we make as we travel with Christ from the Mount of Transfiguration to Jerusalem, where He will face the cross and the grave for our sake. This year's theme focuses upon the journey, though perhaps not in the way we usually walk it. Our overall theme is *"Return from Exile: A Lenten Journey."*



The beginning of our journey is exile in the wilderness of sin and death. From the first sin in the first garden, we have been exiled into the wilderness where we have wandered without any ability to find our way out. But every journey also has a destination. Our return from exile brings us into the promised land, the perfect place, the new garden, the courts of heaven – the ultimate destination which was established for us by Jesus' death and resurrection.

There is great joy in the journey as we see where our returning brings us; but there is also a somber attitude when we consider what Christ faced on account of our sin. Each leg of our Lenten journey begins in the Old Testament and continues into the New Testament, pointing us to the joy that is ours on account of Christ Jesus.

**Ash Wednesday, February 14<sup>th</sup> begins our Lenten Journey. Come enjoy a nice supper served from 5:15-6:15 p.m. followed by our Worship Service at 6:30 p.m.**

Then, every Wednesday evening following that (Feb. 21 & 28, March 7, 14, and 21) you may enjoy a nice meal served from 5:15-6:15 p.m. by several of our church groups, followed by worship at 6:30 p.m. Free-will offerings will be received for the meal.

**We are in NEED of volunteers to help host the Mid-Week Lent Suppers.** If you or your church group can help out, please contact Bev in the church office. THANKS FOR SERVING!

**On Sunday, February 11<sup>th</sup> we will have devotion books available, one book per family, to go along with this Lenten series. Make sure to get your copy!**

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## SUNDAY MORNING COFFEE FELLOWSHIP

You are invited to enjoy coffee, snacks and good fellowship during the Coffee Fellowship held each Sunday morning following the 8 a.m. service. A free-will donation is received to benefit the various projects. **Hosts are needed for the coffee fellowship hour on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays of the month.** Please sign up on the sheet located in the church basement if you or your church group would like to help out. *Please sign-up at least two weeks in advance.*

The third Sunday of the month, the LWML sponsors the coffee hour. The fourth Sunday of the month the youth (YPOGs) sponsor the coffee hour. Proceeds go to support their various activities and their summer mission trip.

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## MUSIC AND WORSHIP NEWS

Lorenda Glade and Joy Schreiber, Directors of Music

### OUR LUTHERAN WORSHIP SERVICE

The Lutheran Church is historically a liturgical church, characterized by the regular proclamation of the Gospel and the regular administration of the Lord's Supper, within the framework of an orderly Scripturally-based pattern of worship. **All** of the weekly worship services at St. Matthew are liturgical services, although the styles of worship differ. For the next few months we will take a closer look at each part of our Lutheran worship services.

The word "liturgy" means "service." Our whole life as Christians is to be our service (liturgy) to God. We gather together for an intimate communion with our Lord. He comes to us, speaks to us and blesses us through His Word and Sacrament. We come to Him and speak to Him in prayer and praise and thanksgiving. It is through the worship service that we receive a foretaste of the heavenly life to come.

#### **Part 1 - We Prepare to Meet our Lord**

We encourage you to come early to the Worship Service! This is your time of preparation, a time to get your mind off the distractions of life and the world, and on to God. Prepare yourself for the worship of God and the hearing and learning of His Word by reading a psalm or pre-service devotion. Or look up and read the Scripture readings, sermon text, and hymns for the day.

**Opening Hymn:** We begin the worship service by singing to the Lord a hymn of praise. At St. Matthew, it may be a traditional hymn led by our organist, or it may be a contemporary worship song led by our worship band. Regardless of the style, each service begins with singing a hymn of praise to our Lord and Savior.

**The Invocation:** At every service, Pastor invokes the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. By this we give testimony that we worship the Triune God: Father, Son and Holy Ghost. We ask the Triune God to be with us and to bless us as we carry on our worship.

**Confession of Sins and Absolution:** Before we can draw near to worship our holy God we must first of all cast away our sins. So we come to Him in repentance and faith and confess our sins, whereupon we hear the Pastor, as God's representative, speak to us the words of comfort and forgiveness through our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Next month we will examine Part 2 of our Lutheran Liturgy--how we welcome our Lord in worship together.

*(The above notes are adapted from a Bible Study prepared by Pastor Tom Schuetze, Zion Lutheran Church, Atlanta, GA.)*

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### **LWML (Lutheran Women's Missionary League) NEWS**

The February meeting of LWML will be at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, February 1. Martha Circle is Hostess. The Winter Board Meeting for the Worthington Zone is on February 17<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. at Trinity Lutheran Church, Sioux Valley. Snow date is February 24. February 18 Coffee Hour is hosted by Hope Circle.

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## HUMAN CARE MINISTRY NEWS

Roxann Leckband

Mom's Group will be on February 2, 9, 16, and 23 from 10:30-11:30AM. Please join us for a time in God's Word and fellowship for the moms. There will be a Bible story and play time for the children. Please go to our Facebook page Mom's group at St Matt's to share if you are planning to be in attendance.

Young adults and young families with children, infants to preschool/kindergarten age: On February 16<sup>th</sup> you will be able to fellowship with other young adults at the youth sponsored Sweetheart banquet. There will be reserved seating for you and a supervised nursery for your children. The tickets are \$15/person and can be purchased from a high school youth or you can e-mail Jenna.

**Please note parents of children grades pre-school-2<sup>nd</sup> grade your child/children will be singing at the 8:00 and 10:30 services on February 11<sup>th</sup>. Please have your child here at 8:45 a.m.**

Noon Fellowship will be on Monday, February 12<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 with the main entrée being chicken breast and wild rice. Blood pressures will be taken at 11:30 for anyone who would like to have a reading. Please join us for good food, fellowship and a time in God's Word. Please bring a dish to share, a free will donation or just yourself!

The lower level of the church is open for walkers on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 10:00a.m.-1:00p.m. The path that is marked is approximately .1 of a mile. Come in and walk, enjoy fellowship and work on improving your health.

Please note the Daniel Plan Bible study is being done on Sunday mornings at 9:30. This is a great study with an emphasis on a holistic approach to health. Contact Roxie with any questions or if you have not yet attended and desire to do so.

**ADULT MISSION TRIP:** Adults, if you are interested in traveling to Corpus Christi, TX from March 3-10 for hurricane relief work, contact Roxie. We will be doing a variety of jobs such as carpentry, painting, clean up branches and debris removal etc. Informational meetings will be announced. I will contact the interested parties by text/phone about dates and times of upcoming meetings. During the trip we will have a time of devotion as we prepare our hearts and minds for service in God's kingdom. Please pray for the mission team who will be serving in the Corpus Christi hurricane damaged area. Do not hesitate to contact me with any questions you may have. If anyone would like to make a financial contribution to support the mission team you may place it in the collection plate marked Hurricane Relief mission trip.

*Dear St. Matthew Family,*

*Thank you for all the cards, gifts and well wishes for myself and family during the 2017 Christmas season. I am blessed to be a part of such a caring "family." May God richly bless and keep all of you.*

*In Christ,*

*Roxie Leckband*

*On behalf of the Adopt-A-Family and myself a huge thank you for your support and generosity. The family was greatly blessed with monetary donations and items the family could use in their new home. Please remember this family in your prayers. The family requests prayers for healing, peace and comfort.*

Please, if there are any human care needs, contact the Board of Human Care or myself. We cannot help if we do not know.

## EVANGELISM NEWS

Thank you to all who served as the hands and feet of Jesus delivering mobile meals during the month of January: Gary and Velma Cortright, Virgil and Donna Reed, Daryl and Karen Doeden, Steve Rubis, Jim and Eloise Langseth, Jen Iverson, Linda Lindemann, LaVonne Holt, Dave and Kathy Roslansky, Lyle and Deb Meyer, Clarence Mess, Gary Obermoller, Lenny Ruesch, Laurita Roos and friend, John Galstad, Alvin Sachen, John and Marlene Moberg, Natya Khamphanh, Marlene Jurgensen, Marianne Behrens, Don and Chris Brink, Pat and Terri Riley, Rita Shirkey, Bill and Karen Knigge, Ron and Karen Obermoller. May God bless you for your kindness!

**INTENTIONAL EVANGELISM CHALLENGE MOMENT** – If you think one person cannot make a difference, look back at Him. He changed the world and you can too! Let's believe in God's love and guidance as we enter 2018! Believe it before you see it. Trust God's promises and trust His work in your life during this next year. Pray...Lord use me.

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### Notes from the January 9, 2018 Council Meeting

Treasurer's Report: December expenses were \$36,994.38; income was \$42,705.73. Building Fund income was \$868.00. Net income for the month was \$6,579.37. Balance in the General Fund Checking Account on December 31, 2017 was \$72,482.96. Memorial Fund Balance is \$124,587.55. Scholarship Fund Balance is \$711,773.52. Youth Account monthly report was \$20,098.39.

Staff Reports:

- Pastor Mark – Average weekend attendance was 236. Average Wednesday attendance was 136. Church logo discussed and Gail Holinka's graphic design class worked on designs. Vote was taken and selection made. Have discussed with Katie Hansen about suggestions for the basement room that is currently seldom used. Would like to redesign this space so that it could be better used by our youth. Have accepted to serve on the YMCA Board of Directors as the clergy representative. Working on Lenten services.
- Roxie – Walking ministry and Faithfully Fit have been well attended. Have begun a card ministry. VBS dates are being set. Many positive comments were received about the Sunday School Christmas Program.
- Jenna Bents – Youth did Salvation Army bell ringing at Shopko. Youth had a fun Christmas party. Planning continuing for the Alaska Mission Trip. Youth have begun selling tickets for the Sweetheart Banquet. Jenna has checked into an alternate online route for getting her DCE certification through Concordia in Irvine, California.
- Lorenda & Joy – Thanks to choir director, Louise Clausen and to Linda Lang, accompanist for putting together the choir cantata that was done on December 13<sup>th</sup>. Thank you to Roxie Leckband, Connie Reitmeier, Jen Iverson, Ron Dorschner, Bill Gordon, Pastor & Joy Schreiber, student piano players, Sunday School Staff, parents, and all others who helped with the Christmas Program in any way. We thank our worship band, adult and bell choirs, directors, accompanists, soloists, small groups and our sound techs for their extra rehearsals and efforts during the Advent & Christmas seasons. Elders approved at their December board meeting to modify the procedure for removing band equipment for weddings and funerals. Joy, Pastor and Lorenda suggested keeping all microphones and stands with personal monitors in the band area at all times. Chairs and music stands can be removed from the area, and the keyboard and drum set would continue to be covered. We tried out the new procedure at a funeral on December 20<sup>th</sup> and no complaints were noted.

*(continued)*

**Notes from January 9 Council Meeting continued:**

Board of Elders: Need to find more people willing to learn how to do the sound board, especially at the 10:30 a.m. service. Discussed weather cancellation policy. When warnings have been issued, a committee of the President of the Congregation, Board of Elders Chairman, Board of Trustees Chairman, and Pastor Schreiber will decide ahead of time and give members as much notice as possible prior to the scheduled services.

Trustees: Discussed the replacement of windows in the education wing. Have made some contacts, but do not have any specific estimates at this time.

Evangelism Committee: Prayer Intercessors have been going well. Serving at the Banquet on January 27<sup>th</sup>. Doing Mobile Meals for the month of January.

Human Care: Continuing with the prayer shawl ministry.

New Business: Discussed doing an Annual Report this year as have done the past 2 years. A deadline of February 13<sup>th</sup> to have reports submitted to church office was decided. Will try to have it printed by end of February. Discussed how to get more adults to attend voters meetings and when there is a meal prior to the meeting, attendance is significantly better. Discussed summer church services and whether to just have one service at 9:00 a.m. It was decided to have one blended service at 9:00 a.m. from Memorial Day through Labor Day weekends.

The next meeting of our Church Council will be on Tuesday, February 13, 2018 at 5:30 p.m. in the Fireside Room.

**MISCELLANEOUS NOTES**

**Altar Flowers** – if you would like to provide flowers for the altar on a specific Sunday please sign up on the flower calendar in the Narthex. Please sign up at least two weeks in advance. Bouquets are ordered from McCarthy’s Floral for \$25. If you have any questions, please contact Ruth Ramert, 372-7225.

**Reminder** –please pick up your **2018 Offering Envelopes**. They are on the table in the Great Hall.

**Can you unscramble these Books of the Bible?**

Created by BibleQuizzes.org.uk

seesign \_\_\_\_\_  
hemwatt \_\_\_\_\_  
usedox \_\_\_\_\_  
visitclue \_\_\_\_\_  
nailed \_\_\_\_\_  
nominaltaste \_\_\_\_\_  
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shipinpipal \_\_\_\_\_  
human \_\_\_\_\_  
chairhaze \_\_\_\_\_

# *Worship Service Helpers for February 2018*

## **ACOLYTES**

February 4 (8 AM) Nia Iverson (10:30) Maelie Holt  
February 11 (8 AM) Austin Barber (10:30) Jonathan Banegas  
**February 14 6:30 PM – Kyle Ahrenstorff**  
February 18 (8 AM) Brandon Arzu-Bustad (10:30) Brandon Bosma  
**February 21 6:30 PM – Evan Hansberger**  
February 25 (8 AM) Hannah Henning (10:30) Mark Geertsema  
**February 28 6:30 PM – Logan Meyeraan**  
March 4 (8 AM) Ashley Riley (10:30) Sierra Goedtke

## **NURSERY (10:30 service only)**

February 4 Evan Hansberger  
February 11 Kiera Ahrenstorff  
February 14 – 6:30PM = \_\_\_\_\_  
February 18 Presley Sieve  
February 25 Carson Wolford  
March 4 Maelie Holt

## **Nursery Adult Supervisor**

Beth White  
Jessica Larson  
Marlis Rohwer  
Jennifer & Christine Preuss  
Danika Schmidt  
Beth White

*\* Please be sure to mark your calendars. If you cannot fulfill your scheduled date, please find a replacement and **call the church office with the change.***

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## ***GREETER SCHEDULE for February 2018***

If you cannot fulfill your scheduled date, please find a replacement and call the church office with the change. THANK YOU FOR SERVING! If you would like to be added to the Greeters Rotation Schedule please contact Bev in the church office, 376-6168.

February 4 8 AM - Dale & Bonnie Schroeder  
10:30 – Joel & Kim Rogers

February 11 8 AM – Kent Brunk, Cindy Brunk  
10:30 – Kevin & Danika Schmidt

February 14 6:30PM – Voris & Sandie Spittle

February 18 8 AM – Sue Koob, Ron Markman  
10:30 – Dave & Mary Krueger

February 21 6:30PM – Myron & Sandy Meyer

February 25 8 AM – YOUTH  
10:30 - YOUTH

February 28 6:30PM – Byron & Marlene Baumgarn

March 4 8 AM – John Glastad, Ilona Benson  
10:30 – Bruce & Shawn Boomgarden

