

St. Matthew Newsletter

Our Vision: Connecting the world with Jesus Christ

Our Mission: Faithfully living as the Body of Christ, and sharing the Gospel that brings salvation

❖ Pastor's Message

Rev. Craig Otto

“Learning about Worship”

This summer we are going on a learning journey, and I invite you to come along and offer your commentary on what we see and hear. The Sunday Bible class topic is “Learning about Worship” in which we explore every part of the service—where it came from, what it teaches, and how our faith community gathers around it.

The worship service is central to what we do as Christians, and a Lutheran divine service bears little resemblance to a non-denominational worship experience. Have you compared their typical order of services side-by-side to see what is said in each, and what each church chooses to exclude?

It's eye-opening to realize that a community church may choose to never say “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit” because “that would sound too old and it would limit God.” It causes us to ask what the person means when he says that, and what that practice might mean for someone who worships there for years and doesn't pray to the Lord as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Is it important for our congregation to learn the Ten Commandments and live according to them? Since 2006, we have begun using “The Service of Prayer and Preaching” occasionally in which we recite the commands together. Does that have an effect on those who hear and speak? Does it say anything about what our congregation confesses as truth?

Eastern Orthodox priests give infant communion using a small spoon. What does that practice mean for believers in eastern orthodoxy, and why do Lutherans not commune little ones? There is a Scriptural reason why Lutherans baptize children, supported by theology and practice from the earliest time of the apostles... however, there are also Scriptural reasons why we delay offering communion.

A Lutheran divine service is a meal comprised of elements that inform our faith and provide a healthy balance of God's law and promises. You will discover as you attend the Sunday Bible class how each part of the service is based on a teaching and practice found in Scripture. The Word of God is the basis for choosing “those things that are included” and “those things that are not included.”

As Pastors, we know that our primary role is soul care for everyone in the congregation, and to give a vibrant, living witness to Jesus Christ to our community, that they too may know Christ, receive His forgiveness, and grow confident in His promise of eternal life. Therefore, what we serve on the plate for the meal of a Sunday service has to be God's own words, a heritage passed on from previous generations to ours.

If you were responsible for worship, what would you include? What would you exclude? When you begin to ask these questions, you realize that the Lord has laid on Pastors a responsibility for teaching His Word and proclaiming Christ in this generation. The goal can't be to please everyone (as if that could ever be possible) but the goal is to be faithful to God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—and help people have faith in Him.

I look forward to spending time with you this summer in the Family Life Center each Sunday from 9:30 to 10:30. You'll learn plenty of church history, grow in your appreciation for the Biblical backbone of our liturgy and hymns, and fairly learn about beliefs and practices of other Christians who worship differently than we do. Discussion should be spicy. Come join us!

Yours in Christ, Pastor Otto

❖ **Altar Guild — *Learn how you can serve the Lord at church***

The Altar Guild members will meet on Saturday, June 8th at 10 a.m. in the church library to discuss how to involve new members into the group. We are hoping new women will join us in our preparation for worship services and regular care for the sanctuary. Cleaning, preparing communion, and changing altar paraments are regular tasks; some women also make banners or flower arrangements. Please contact Deb Langsdale if you would like to know more (email is: deblangsdale@cs.com), or come to our meeting on June 8th.

❖ **Mary Martha Circle**

Mary Martha Circle of LWML met on Tuesday, May 21. Patty Bechel served as hostess and gave the closing devotion. Pastor Andrews joined us for Bible study. We had a business meeting to discuss future projects. Please join us on Tuesday, June 25 at 7 p.m. in the meeting room of the Family Life Center. Plans are to work on a hands-on project yet to be determined. Following this meeting, we will go out for yogurt and fellowship.

❖ **LWML Women in Mission — *Current Projects***

Rachel House Baby Bottle Drive — Rachel House helps meet the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of those dealing with unplanned pregnancies. In 2018...

- Over 2,600 girls and women came to Rachel House for help.
- 1,349 ultrasounds were conducted to affirm life.
- 343 men were seen by male advocates in our fatherhood program.
- The Gospel was shared more than nearly 2,200 times.

You can support their work by filling a bottle with coins, currency or a check made payable to Rachel House, and returning it here by June 16, 2019.

Pro Deo Youth Center — Pro Deo, housed nearby at 206 NE Chipman Rd, provides after-school and Friday night programming for teens during the school year and some programs in the summer. In June our LWML will provide a sack lunch for youth and chaperones for a field trip. In July we will serve a hot lunch at St. Matthew and youth will use the church facilities.

VBS — LWML will provide an evening meal during Vacation Bible School at St. Matthew in June.

National Convention — Please pray for the delegates, officers, and attendees as they travel to the national LWML Convention in Mobile, Alabama. They will be doing the business of the LWML, voting for new officers, and prayerfully selecting new Mission Grants for the biennium of 2019-2021. Pray for wisdom and insight for these ladies, for their safe travel to and from the convention, and for them to be spiritually renewed. May all of us be renewed in this effort! Thank you again for your generous support since 1941, we have raised over \$100,000,000 in service to our Lord. All praise and blessings to the Lord our Savior.

❖ **Classics Gathering — *Barbecue and Stories in June***

Our thanks to Don & Peggy Ohrenberg, Elaine Beaman, and Ginger & Robert Lyle for hosting Classics in May. Along with the great food everyone provided, we heard much of the Kansas City/Concordia area Civil War history from John Brackman and friends. The Kobels and Schmidts have an-

❖ St. Matthew Mission Giving... and Thank You Notes

Our congregation has a Mission Tithe committee that recommends which ministries we will fund with gifts. It is a “tithe to the Lord,” a way of thanking God for all His gifts, and trusting Him to provide our daily bread. We want to assist others in their need.

In April of this year we sent out checks totaling \$43,500 to organizations that are bringing the Gospel of Jesus Christ to others and providing human care:

◆ Lutheran Bible Translators	5000
◆ Lead A Child mission agency	5000
◆ Apple of His Eye mission society	5000
◆ Adopt-a-Student gift to Concordia Seminary	5000
◆ City Union Mission	2500
◆ Lutheran High School of Kansas City	5000
◆ Erin MacKenzie, missionary to the Dominican Republic	5000
◆ Jason and Emily Stuhrenberg, missionaries to Ukraine	5000
◆ Mother’s Refuge services to homeless women	2500
◆ Re:Vitality and Every One His Witness evangelism efforts	1000
◆ People of the Book ministry to international residents	2500

We receive thank you letters and phone calls from all of these organizations, most of which we print in the bulletin when they are received. Printed here are just a few:

I have been blessed to know people who experience profound, life-changing JOY when they tell others about Jesus through their sacrificial giving. I pray you are one of them. There is something intensely personal and full of meaning in a gift like the one you have joyfully given. We thank God for you and your gift to The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod in the amount of \$5,000. It will be used in support of Erin Mackenzie. Thank you. God Bless you all! Great church name also. In service to our Lord, Jesus Christ,

Pastor Matthew Harrison, President, The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod

I can’t thank you enough for your generous support of the Church’s work in Latin America through me. Someone recently asked me what I love about being here. So many things, but perhaps one of my favorites is seeing relationships formed, walls broken down, and lightbulbs going off when people see the Church at work in another part of the world and get excited, which in turn shifts their perspective and leads them to want to stay involved long-term.

I’ve mentioned Jamaica often in my Facebook posts, newsletters, and blog posts as one of the places where that paradigm is just getting off the ground. As I write this, my instant messenger is ding-ing with pictures of roof construction on the Ministry Centre. That part of the ongoing renovation project should wrap up in time for Jamaica’s first bona fide short-term team. They arrive on June 24, a couple of weeks after I’m with a team in the DR and a few weeks before I’ll accompany another in Peru. The field

❖ Thank You Notes *(continued)*

Thank you all for your generosity towards the poor and homeless at the City Union Mission. The generous gift you gave will help to provide up to 1200 meals for those we serve. If you would like, we can arrange a representative to come and share about the mission.

Many Blessings, Dennis Ellis, Church Relations Manager, City Union Mission

Thank you for your generous donation to POBLO International! Your financial partnership is a great blessing and allows us to continue meeting the physical, social, and spiritual needs of Muslims and other immigrants and refugees in the United States by sharing the love of Jesus with them in practical and culturally relevant ways.

In His Service, Rev. Farrukh Khan, Director of Development

Thank you for your generous gift to the Navigators ministry. Thank you for investing in the next generation of disciple makers.

With Gratefulness, Jim Young, Senior VP Development, The Navigators

At this time of year marked by the celebration of Christi's resurrection at Easter, I express my deepest gratitude to you for your wonderful gift of \$5,000! In donating to Concordia Seminary, you are making an important difference in the future of our mission to prepare pastors, deaconesses and misionairies for any years of service to the church. Thank you so much! Your generous gifts encourage us greatly and bless future generations.

Most Cordially Yours, Rev. Dale Meyer, President

He is Risen! He is Risen indeed! These words, spoken by many of us on Easter morning echo throughout Christian congregations across many countries around the world. Unfortunately, one of the countries where these words cannot be heard in large numbers is the country of Israel. We would like to THANK YOU for making our being in Israel possible through your prayers and your sacrificial financial support through your gifts of \$5,000. This allows us to "BOLDLY share Jesus as the Messiah!"

Yours in Y'shua - Steve & Nancy Cohen

❖ Church Thank You Notes

Dear St. Matthew Family,

Since April was the last First Wednesday Dinner I will be coordinating and cooking, I would like to thank the many people who have helped over the last 5 years! I especially want to thank Allen and Marilyn Stelljes for the countless hours of shopping, measuring, chopping and baking. Marilyn always kept helpful records we used in planning future dinners!! Deb Jones, who worked with us for the last years. Deb is a joy to have around and is herself handy with a knife and spatula! To all the others who have served, cleaned up, counted money, set up chairs and tables, decorated, ran audio-visual equipment, prepared food and anything else I may have forgotten. THANK YOU!! Could not have done it without any of you!!

Pam York, Dinner Coordinator

To Pam and Lonnie York,

Thank you for your generous spirit in hosting our First Wednesday dinners since 2014. You made every occasion special, thinking of the children, providing fun themes, and involving many people in this blessed work of hospitality. Blessed are the hands that serve.

❖ New Staff Position Recommended

The Board of Elders is recommending a new staff position for St. Matthew to nurture our ministries to children, youth and families.

The Personnel Committee on the Board of Elders (Ron Brohammer, Jim Ebert, Todd Gemeinhardt, Caryl Froeschle, and both pastors) held twelve meetings in 2019 to assess ministry areas, mission priorities, and current staff resources to determine how we can best serve our congregation and community. They presented a ministry description for a **Director of Family Life** at the May 14th Elders meeting and it was approved.

The purpose of the new staff position is: 1) To nurture the Christian faith among children, youth, and families; 2) To encourage all members to grow in Christian maturity through the entire life cycle; 3) To encourage a “home-centered, church-supported” model of instruction that views the home as a primary place for lasting faith formation and influence; and 4) To encourage lay involvement in service and fellowship activities which build up the Body of Christ and serve our neighbors.

The congregation will soon have the opportunity to review the ministry description. The next step is for the Board of Elders to call a special voter’s meeting for the congregation to consider creating the new staff position. If the motion is approved, they may begin the search for qualified candidates who could receive a divine call.

❖ Fellowship Coordinator Position Needed

Do you like to organize events? We are looking for a volunteer who is interested in facilitating the fellowship mission of St. Matthew. With the help of a volunteer committee, the individual would gather ideas for meals, events, and outreach activities that involve our members and coordinate the scheduling of those events. This is an elected position to our Board of Directors, but we currently have a vacancy, so we are asking for a volunteer to assist us with possible events for fall. If interested, please contact our congregation president, Bob Borgelt (bborgelt76@gmail.com). Thank you!

❖ Confirmation Class of 2019

We give thanks to God for our young people learning about the Christian faith, and professing faith in Jesus Christ. May the Lord continue to cause these seeds of faith to grow, that they may remain faithful throughout their lifetime.

- ◆ Owen Avery, son of Ron and LeAndra Avery
- ◆ Miriar Baxley, daughter of Trevan and Temple Baxley
- ◆ Kannon Dillabough, daughter of Jason and Karin Dillabough
- ◆ Riley Hardin, son of Rachel Hardin and the late Wes Hardin
- ◆ Isaac Herkamp, son of John and Raylene Herkamp
- ◆ Amelia Miller, daughter of Jason and Monica Miller
- ◆ Timothy Peterson, son of Graig and Marina Peterson
- ◆ Ellen Torres, daughter of Aaron and Katy Torres

We pray for each family, and particularly for two families that are now moving. The Hardin family is moving to Nebraska, and the Peterson family is moving to St. Louis. *May the Lord bless you and keep you—the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.*

❖ What is it like to be a Pastor?

St. Matthew



Lutheran Church
700 NE Chipman Rd.
Lee's Summit, MO 64063
Return Service Requested

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Church Breakfast

Everyone invited!

Come enjoy a hot breakfast including biscuits and gravy, eggs, bacon, sausage, fruits, breads and juices.

Father's Day

Sunday, June 16, 9:30

JUNE 2019 NEWSLETTER

❖ Sunday School is held all summer long — *Two classes are held*

Family Sunday School begins June 2. We meet in the open gathering space by our preschool/Sunday school rooms. Each week we begin by keeping families together for a common devotion. Then *Dawn Sanders* and *Hannah Andrews* will work with the children after the opening devotion, and *Pastor Andrews* or *Pastor Otto* will explore the week's Scripture lesson with the parents. We will dig deeper into God's Word and learn ways to you can teach your children what you've learned throughout the week. This summer we explore several books of the Bible: Jeremiah, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Joel, Titus, and Galatians.

Sunday Bible Class will meet in the Family Life Center. Our topic is "Learning about Worship." We will explore each part of our worship services to better understand its origin and what purpose it serves. We'll devote a week to learn about each topic: hymns, creeds, Scripture readings, communion liturgy, worship space, prayers, and more. We will explore how our orders of service have changed or stayed the same over years. In addition to topical discussion, we will read Scriptures each week that have formed our worship services.

❖ Vacation Bible School — *Evenings June 17-21 for children, youth and adults*

Vacation Bible School is less than three weeks away, June 17-21. This year it will be held during the evenings from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Everyone is invited to join us for fellowship and the study of God's Word. Each night there will be a dinner for everyone together starting at 5:30, followed by Bible study for adults, and for the kids there will be their own Bible lessons, games, music, and crafts... and it's all free! Invite your friends and neighbors to come learn about faith in Jesus. Register to attend or volunteer at www.myvbs.org/createdinchrist.

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