
ST. MATTHEWS LUTHERAN CHURCH ESKO, MN

A family of believers grounded in, growing in and reaching out in Christ

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Esko, MN 55733

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Brenda Hall, Office Manager
Rebecca Bauer, Secretary



Living Among the Bible's Trees

Trees are a valuable commodity here in Minnesota. Nearly every day we see logging trucks hauling trees to the paper mills. People are often busy cutting down trees for firewood to heat their homes. Minnesota is home to many birds and animals who call the forest their home.

This year for Lent, we will examine how the trees of the Bible point us to Jesus' death and resurrection. We will hear how the Bible uses trees in both a law and gospel context. The trees of the Bible reveal that we are sinners and the trees of the Bible make known that there is forgiveness and hope found in Jesus. A tree (the tree of knowledge of good and evil) played a central role in our fall into sin and Christ was crucified on a tree (wooden beams that came from a tree) to save us.

We certainly live among the Bible's trees! The Bible reports God creating trees on the third day (Genesis 1:11–13), and trees apparently survive the Last Day's annihilation of the present ground and sky to reappear on the new earth under the new heaven (Isaiah 65:17; 66:22; 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1–2), such as in the new Jerusalem (Revelation 22:1–20). So the Bible's trees are relevant to us. In fact, considering them helps us realize why we need a Savior, how God provided a Savior for us in Jesus, who died on the cross, and how the saved lives of repentant believers look.

Many trees are mentioned in the Bible. In addition to the trees mentioned in this series, we think of the following: the burning bush (Exodus 3:1–4:17), Absalom's tree (2 Samuel 18:10), trees decorating the temple (1 Kings 6:29–32), Elijah's broom tree (1 Kings 19:1–18), Jonah's vine (Jonah 4), Zacchaeus's tree (Luke 19:1–10), the palm trees (John 12:12–19, Revelation 7:9–17), and Judas's tree (Matthew 27:5–10; Acts 1:15–26). There are, in fact, almost enough trees for another full Lenten sermon series. Trees

See "Living Among the Bible's Trees" continued on page 2

“Living Among the Bible’s Trees” from page 1

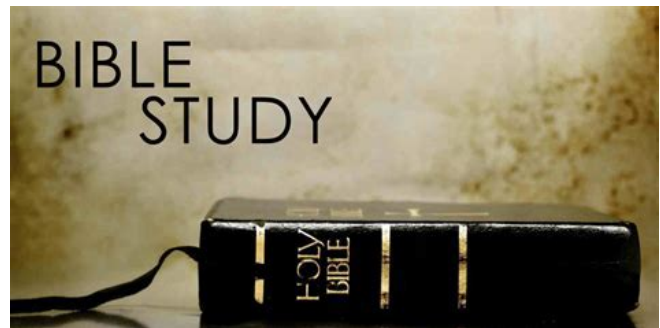
are central to the whole of biblical faith (1 Corinthians 2:2) and certainly to the season of Lent.

So this Lenten season, come and hear about the Bible’s trees! Come and hear about how the Bible’s trees show us our need for a Savior! You are invited to Lent worship, starting on February 26th for Ash Wednesday worship. Soup supper is served at 5:30 p.m., with worship starting at 6:30 p.m.

In Christ,

Pastor Jeffrey Walther

**New Adult Bible Study
Starts Sunday March 1st
1 and 2 Thessalonians
Family Life Center
9:15 a.m.**



Paul wrote several letters to the early Christian churches and to their pastors. The New Testament preserves thirteen of them for us. About AD 51, Paul wrote the first of his letters, 1 Thessalonians. 2 Thessalonians soon followed. In these two letters, we gaze into the lives of early members of the Christian Church. What makes Paul’s letters so important is both their timeliness and their timelessness. Paul wrote them within twenty years of Christ’s death, resurrection, and ascension.

1 and 2 Thessalonians are God’s thoughts on the Antichrist, the second coming of Christ, church discipline, and the encouragement of believers during persecution. Only God, through Jesus Christ and by the power of the Holy Spirit, brings the comfort and hope shown in Paul’s letters. May God’s Word penned by Paul comfort and encourage you as you study 1 and 2 Thessalonians, for “The Lord is faithful. He will establish you and guard you against the evil one” (2 Thessalonians 3:3).



Lent and Holy Week Series

Mid-Week Worship On

Wednesdays

Soup Supper @ 5:30 pm Worship @6:30 pm

Living among the Bible's Trees

February 26 -Ash Wednesday

Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil

Psalm 1; Genesis 2:8–9, 15–17; 3:1–24; Deuteronomy 30:15–20

March 4 - Lenten Midweek 2

Great Trees of Mamre near the Machpelah

Psalm 96; Genesis 18:1–33; 23:1–20

March 11 - Lenten Midweek 3

Oak at Ophrah

Psalm 78; Judges 6:1–40; Matthew 12:38–42

March 18 - Lenten Midweek 4

Jesse's Tree

Psalm 80:8–19; Isaiah 6:1–13; 10:33–11:16

March 25 - Lenten Midweek 5

Tree of the Lord's Planting

Psalm 104:10–18; Ezekiel 17:1–24; Mark 4:30–32

April 1 - Lenten Midweek 6

Good Trees Bearing Good Fruit, Bad Trees Bearing Bad Fruit

Psalm 148; Galatians 5:1, 13–25; Matthew 7:15–20

April 9 - (Special Taize Service Led by St. Matthews Choir) Maundy Thursday

Fig Trees

Psalm 105:23–45; Luke 13:1–9; Mark 11:12–25

April 10 - Good Friday

Tree of the Cross

Psalm 74; Deuteronomy 21:22–23; Galatians 3:1–14

April 12 - Easter Sunday: **Tree of Life**

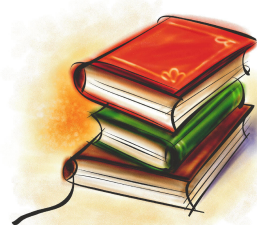
Psalm 52; Ezekiel 47:1–12; Revelation 22:1–20, Matthew 28:1–10

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- 1- Erick Pirila, Cooper Forslund, Dan Heikkinen, Katie Schultz
- 2- Dennis Nordstrom, Chelsea Stahlbusch
- 3- Bennett Bowman
- 4- Deegan Kiminski
- 5- Karen Lindstrom, Riley Fischer
- 6- Blake Abrahamson
- 7- Boyd Hanson, Hunter Roemer
- 8- Nikki Ojanen, Travis Kahlstorf
- 9- Madeline Hipp, Rateah Korby, Emma VanDenHeuvel
- 12- Rhonda Nikunen, Logan Johnsen
- 13- Nathan Linder, Jace Lackas
- 15- Ross Erickson
- 16- Joanna Harms, Ardeth Pykkonen
- 17- Makenzie Kallberg, Connie Haugen, Charlotte Perrot
- 18- Darlene Eng
- 19- Alayna Hester
- 20- Amy Sather, James Hill, Tyler Kahlstorf
- 21- Lorraine Hill
- 22- Judy Burshten, Marjorie Harms, Kate Eskuri
- 23- Krista Roden, Quinn Fischer
- 25- Shari Lindquist, John Nichols, Kaycee Miller, Conor Knox
- 26- Curt Grayson, Gino Bertogliat, John Eng, Brandon Welman
- 27- Beth Hanni
- 28- Pat Johnson
- 29- Rainna Korby, Quinn Ojanen
- 30- Jennah Calverly
- 31- Zachary Niemi

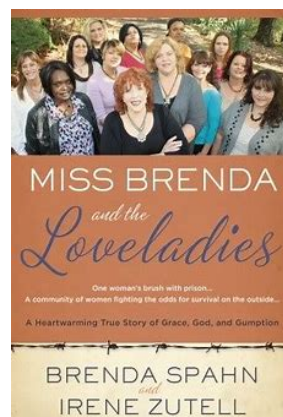
BIRTHDAY LUNCHEON

The next Birthday Luncheon will be held on Thursday, March 12th at 11:30 a.m. at Hong Kong in Cloquet.



BOOK DISCUSSION

For March we will be reading “Miss Brenda and the Love Ladies” by Brenda Spahn “one woman’s brush with prison...a community of women fighting the odds for survival on the outside.” We will meet Wednesday, March 18th at 12:30 p.m. in the Fireside Room. Call Judy Nelson at 218-590-1521.



St. Matthews Offering Income

February 18, 2020

Month	Given	Budget	Difference
July	40,000	43,800	(3,800)
Aug.	37,800	43,800	(6,000)
Sep.	45,000	43,800	1,200**
Oct.	38,500	43,800	(5,300)
Nov.	40,600	43,800	(3,200)
Dec.	51,300	43,800	7,500**
Jan.	38,800	43,800	(5,000)
Feb.	31,300	32,800	(1,500)*
	323,300	339,400	(16,100)

* 3 out of 4 weeks

** 5 Sunday Month

Grades 7-12

IT'S TIME TO
SERVE

SUNDAY, MARCH 22
4:30 PM

*We will be serving dinner
in Duluth at
Union Gospel Mission*

Meet at church - ADULT DRIVERS NEEDED

Made with PosterMyWall.com

IT'S A HOTDISH COOKOFF!

Do you think that you're
the **Best**?

Will your HOTDISH stand
the **Test**?

Sunday, March 8 at 11:45 am

ST. MATTHEWS - FAMILY LIFE CENTER

Join us for
Hotdish and
vote for your
favorite with
donations

**\$20 REGISTRATION FEE
TO ENTER YOUR HOTDISH**

DONATIONS SUPPORT YOUTH PROGRAMS

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Attention Thrivent Members March 31, 2020 Deadline

Thrivent members must direct their 2019 Thrivent Choice Dollars to their charitable outreach funds by March 31, 2020. Please take action before the deadline or you lose your 2019 Thrivent Choice Dollars. Thank you.

Julie Kesti
Thrivent Congregational Representative
St. Matthews



**LCMS Service of Worship - every Sunday at
9:30 a.m. televised by KBJR Channel 6 NBC**

Main Street Living Northland is a locally produced TV program that includes a 30 minute worship service led by participating pastors of the Minnesota North District of our LCMS, along with a 30 minute remastered program called "This is the Life" from Lutheran Hour Ministries (starting at 10:00 a.m.).

March 1
Pastor John Bonk
Shepherd of the Lake Lutheran Church
Two Harbors, MN
"I Am So Tempted"

March 15
Dr. Arleigh vonSeggern
Trinity Lutheran Chapel, Cable, WI
St. Paul Lutheran Church, Marengo, WI
"Living Water That Satisfies"

March 29
Pastor Jeff Lee
Mission and Ministry Facilitator
MN North District Office, Brainerd
"Life or Death"

April 12
Pastor Matt Kohl
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
Cloquet, MN
"A New Focus"

March 8
Pastor Jeff Walther
St. Matthews Lutheran Church
Esko, MN
"The Power and Promise of John 3:16"

March 22
Pastor Kevin Richter
Peace In Christ Lutheran Church
Hermantown, MN
"Hear You Deaf and Look You Blind"

April 5
Pastor Don Stauty
Gloria Dei and Redeemer Lutheran
Virginia and Aurora, MN
"Face to Face with Jesus"

April 19
Pastor Kirk Schield
Christ Lutheran Church
Superior, WI
"Jesus Speaks Peace to Us"

YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY VOLUNTEER TRAINING

SATURDAY, MARCH 28

**9:30 - 11:30 AM
Church Basement**

- SHARING IDEAS & VICTORIES
- BRAINSTORMING
- TRAINING
- GET-TO-KNOW EACH OTHER BETTER
- FOOD
- PRIZES

FOR THOSE WHO ARE
CURRENTLY INVOLVED IN
YOUTH AT CHILDREN'S
MINISTRIES AT ST. MATTHEWS
AND THOSE WHO WOULD LIKE
TO BE!



**LET'S
CELEBRATE!**

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GUY'S SPORTS NIGHT

**GRADES
7-12**

FREE!

MORE INFO TO COME!

ST. MATTHEW'S FAMILY LIFE CENTER

**COME FOR
GAMES & FOOD!**



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Esko All School Reunion Celebrating One Century of Graduating Esko High School Seniors 1921-2021

Friday, July 30, 2021 and Saturday, July 31, 2021

Events are to be held at the Esko Schools and Athletic Field.

Individual class events are also being scheduled separately from these reunion festivities. Contact your classmates for your class information.

Please join our Facebook page:
Esko All School Reunion

Contact:

Facebook: Dan Bass Esko All School Reunion
Email: Maggie "Nic" Sunnarborg at msunnarborg@esko.k12.mn.us

**SCHOOL
REUNION**



The combined meeting of the LWML groups was held on Tuesday February 11th, 2020 with Pat Johnson presiding; eight members were present. Minutes of the January meeting were read and approved.

There was no Treasurer's report.

Correspondence included thank you messages for Christmas bags and gifts, and a thank you from Bethesda for our annual gift.

Old Business:

We will volunteer to help with Bingo, and bring small gifts to the two nursing homes, Inter Faith, Carlton, Feb 12, and Sunnyside, Cloquet Feb 20th.

Ladies movie night is Sunday Feb 16th.

We will be serving soup on Ash Wednesday, February 26th at 5:15. Cooking will be Wednesday morning with set up is at 4:30. Sign up sheets for food donations and workers were passed around.

The Pot Luck held the previous Sunday was discussed.

No progress has been made on the new faucet for the kitchen sink.

New Business:

It was decided to pass out Spring cheer bags. We will review the list at the March meeting. Bags will be ready to deliver at the April 14th meeting

The next sewing date is Thursday, March 19, and Friday March 20, 9:00am – 2:00pm. We plan to concentrate on backpacks.

The next combined circle meeting date will be March 10 at 6:30 pm at the church. We will be discussing Chapter 17 in "Love Rules; A Study of the Ten Commandments. Please remember to bring your book.

Respectfully submitted

Judy Nelson

Stewardship Corner

We are at the beginning of Lent. During the Lenten season, the church calls to our attention the sufficiency of what God gives. It points to the sufficiency of God's grace in the atoning work of Jesus. It shows us the sufficiency of faith in Jesus' work for us. It makes known the sufficiency of God's Word in faith and life.

But Lent doesn't just remind us of the sufficiency of God's spiritual gifts, the gifts that pertain to our redemption and salvation. Lent also reminds us of the sufficiency of the physical, temporal gifts of God, those that pertain to this body and life. In other words, it reminds us of the importance of godly contentment and of outward discipline and training of the body.

This outward training of the body teaches us not to give in to every desire of our flesh but to learn to say no to them. And it does this in such a way that if you fail, it is no sin. It is a way to practice without putting yourself into a compromising situation.

The easiest example of this is fasting. When you fast, you are practicing saying no to the desires of your body. But if you fail in this, if you break your fast, you have not sinned. You have, though, learned something about how your flesh works, how difficult it is to fight against it, and how you need help from above in order to do it.

There is another example of this. It is alms-giving. This is an increase in giving to the church and its mission during this time. We all know that our flesh finds security in money and stuff. By committing to give more to the church, you are training your flesh. You are, by this outward discipline, training yourself to be content with what God gives. You are practicing saying "no" to your desires. Again, if you fail, you have not sinned. But you've learned just how powerful your flesh is in leading you instead of you leading it. You've learned how you need help from above in being content with what God gives.

This is why St. Paul instructs young Pastor Timothy in this way:

"But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into the world, and[a] we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs." (1 Tim 6:6–10)

Our sufficiency is not of ourselves; it is in God. Let us learn this without sin by training our flesh this Lenten season.

Members often ask how we are paying our bills when our offerings are often short of our budgeted needs. The short answer is that we need to budget for all expenses we are obligated to pay. At the end of each month, we will show how our offerings are actually being spent. Any surplus funds at the end of our fiscal year (June 30) will be used to pay down the church mortgage (\$785,239 on 1/31/20).

Church Operating Expenses Paid:	November	December	January	Total
Salaries	17,196	17,673	17,548	121,881
Benefits	6,246	7,186	9,911	53,246
Debt Payments	7,166	7,166	7,166	50,162
District/Synod Support	2,417	2,412	2,083	16,576
Electricity	899	1,007	1,201	6,115
Christian Education	200	121	169	2,176
Church Property	498	1,868	253	5,295
Office	1,043	1,563	1,516	9,034
Worship	100	515	1,377	3,701
Youth	-	111	-	573
HRA	170	339	474	1,495
Heating Fuel	641	855	1,269	3,547
Repair and Maintenance	-	75	116	3,503
Outreach/ Missions	-	200	-	1,153
Conferences	-	-	-	170
Insurance	-	-	-	(82)
Other	-	-	-	-
Total	36,576	41,091	43,083	278,545
Budgeted Needs	43,783	43,783	43,783	306,481

Memorial Fund

*Sincere thanks to each person who honored and remembered a loved one or a friend with a gift
to The Memorial Fund in January, 2020*

Gifts have been given in Memory of

Glenn Weber
Glenn Weber

Undesignated Fund
Building Fund for Capital
Improvements
Undesignated Fund
Undesignated Fund
Worship Improvement Fund
Choir/Music Fund
Church Mortgage Payment
Sunday School Fund

MaryAnn Duzan
Roland Uran
Roland Uran
Roland Uran
Roland Uran
Clifford Trevena

Memorial Funds were used to help with gas expenses for those driving to Texas for the Hurricane repair mission event.

Last month, a mistake was made. Glenn Weber's memorials were listed under the incorrect name. Above is the corrected information for these gifts.

Please notify the church if you do not receive a Thank you from the family or the church for your gift.

For more information on Memorial gifts, please call a member of the Memorial Committee: Winnie Anderson, Walt & Shirley Behm, Eileen Christopherson, Elaine Lindquist, Gene & Margaret Lindquist, Florence Maki, Judy Nelson, Marilyn Pykkonen, Don & Ardy Pykkonen, or Judy Uran

Anyone wishing to make a contribution to the **Memorial Fund** in memory of a friend or loved-one, is welcome to do so. Please include the following information. Memorial folders are also available at the Welcome Center and on the table in the Narthex of the church. Contributions may also be made from our church website at www.stmatthewsesko.org. Select *Giving and Fees* in the top menu bar.

Memorial Fund

In Loving memory of _____

In Honor of _____

Given to St. Matthews Lutheran Church by

Name _____ Address _____

Fund _____



**ST. MATTHEWS LUTHERAN CHURCH
LITTLE ESKOMO LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL
4 ELIZABETH AVENUE
ESKO MN 55733**

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Sundays - Worship 8:00 and 10:30 a.m.

**Wednesdays - Lent Worship, 6:30 p.m.
Come for Soup and Fellowship 5:30 p.m.**