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# ST. MATTHEWS LUTHERAN CHURCH ESKO, MN

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



## **ADDRESS:**

St. Matthews Lutheran Church  
Four Elizabeth Ave.  
Esko, MN 55733

## **CONTACT US:**

Church - (218) 879-3510  
Email - [stmattsesko@aol.com](mailto:stmattsesko@aol.com)  
Web - [www.stmatthewsesko.org](http://www.stmatthewsesko.org)

## **OUR PASTOR:**

Tom Brinkley, Pastor  
Cell - (218) 343-2080  
Email - [Brinkley57@yahoo.com](mailto:Brinkley57@yahoo.com)

## **OUR STAFF:**

Jennifer Keske  
Preschool Director/Teacher  
Sybil Halvorson  
Preschool Teacher  
Church - (218) 879-3510  
Email - [lelpreschool@gmail.com](mailto:lelpreschool@gmail.com)

Christina Walther  
Youth Coordinator  
Cell - (218) 391-3649  
Email - [waltherchristina@gmail.com](mailto:waltherchristina@gmail.com)

Johnny Eng, Deacon  
Cell- (218) 310-1385  
Email - [jemsoco@aol.com](mailto:jemsoco@aol.com)

Emily Krueger, Office Manager  
Rebecca Bauer, Secretary

## **The Peace That Surpasses All Understanding**

Whether we want to admit it or not, we are all looking for peace. Peace with those around us, peace with ourselves, peace with the world. Sometimes our thoughts lie to us that if things were just a certain way, then we would have that peace. Which brings us to the season of peace, the joy of Christmas.

Why is it that we talk about making it through the holidays? I mean we know why we say it, (all the cookies, pies, stuffing, did I mention pies) but is it really how we feel? Pent up anxiety about family gatherings and concerns of possible behavior issues. I have heard at different times that I just can't wait for this to be over. Or maybe we are waiting for the show to start as it does every year between two people who seem to be determined to spoil it for the other. Or this year not getting together is causing stress and anxiety as we struggle to figure out what to do. These among others are concerns we all seem to have, but we don't have any answers. And really, we as people on earth have been asking the question since the fall, when will there be peace?

My wife and I watched a really bad Christmas movie the other night. The script was really bad and the acting wasn't much better. But the message that it is free will, the option to choose did manage to come through. How do I want to handle this situation, this day? Do I want to continue grumbling and complaining that things sting, or do I let the light of Christ shine through? Really the whole movie was about choosing between what the world expects and values, and our own morality.

A lot of that has to do with perspective. How do I perceive things to be? That one is up in the air as we can ask 3 people how Thanksgiving Dinner was, and we will get 3 different answers. We as a society seem to be predisposed to see the negative. Or is it that the negative is just so much more striking? However it is, if that is where our focus is, then that is what we will see and remember.

***See "Peace" continued on page 2***

***“Peace” from page 1***

Luke 2:7 ESV *And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.*

That looked like a bad situation, and yet the Savior of the world was introduced in the flesh, right there in a stable. And God didn't try and hide this, He sent his angels to announce and share his arrival with shepherds, the wise men, and the world.

Right there in that stable our past and future hope arrived! The peace that surpasses all understanding. God's love is not of this broken world, He sent it to this world and the peace He offers is there waiting.

Isaiah 9:6 New King James *For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

God's love was made flesh, a part of this world, and that is the Christmas message, the gift. God is with us and for us. We are not left alone, He has given us everything.

In this crazy world may I suggest that we all take some time to enjoy the wonders of this world in the simple things all around us. A smile, a cup of hot chocolate, a campfire, the stars, a moment of peace, and let the love of God sink in for all that He has given us. Thank you God for the gift of your Son and in Him, your gift of Peace.

Deacon Johnny



**Emmanuel God With Us**

**Wednesday Advent Services at St. Matthews**

**December 2,9,16 at 6:30 p.m.**



## St. Matthews Lutheran Church

### WORSHIP:

1. Sundays -10:30 a.m. - Worship in the sanctuary and worship services online via Facebook
2. Sundays - 9:30 a.m. - "My Savior Lives" airs on television: Channel 6 (KBJR)
3. Wednesdays, December 2,9,16 - 6:30 p.m. -Advent Worship
- 4.Christmas Eve, Thursday, December 24
- 5.Christmas Day, Friday, December 25 - 9:00 a.m.
- 6.New Year's Eve, Thursday, December 31- 6:30 p.m.

### BIBLE STUDY:

1. Sundays 9:15 a.m. - Adult Bible Study via Zoom
2. Tuesdays 7:00 a.m. - Men's Bible Study
3. Tuesdays 9:00 a.m. - "Coffee with the Pastors" online via Facebook

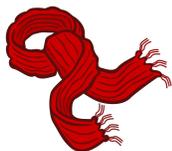
### YOUTH:

1. Sundays 9:15 am - Bible Study via Zoom
2. Tuesdays 3:15 p.m. - Bible Study via Zoom
3. Thursdays 6:00 pm - Youth Group



### Hat and Mitten Baskets

The hat and mitten baskets are available for donations. Requested items (new preferred) include: hats, mittens, gloves, scarves, slippers and socks. All donations will be brought to the Salvation Army in Cloquet for distribution.



St. Matthews will not be participating in the Sharing Tree Program this year. If you wish to donate to the Salvation Army, donations can be sent directly to them or put in their designated red buckets around town.

Thank  
you

## Thank You from Pastor Jeff's family

We would like to say thank you for your outpouring of love and support. It would have been so easy to forget to eat during this difficult time. The hotdishes, baked goods, soups, and other groceries you brought us helped give us the energy we needed. The phone calls, cards and prayers have been very comforting. We are so grateful for your care and friendship. God continues to be with us all.

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## Church Decorating

Help decorate the Church for Christmas on  
Saturday, December 5 starting at 9:00 a.m.

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## Interested in Bringing Others to Jesus?

The Great Commission is found in Matthew 28: 19-20 and it informs us, "...go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded..." This wonderful piece of scripture is at the center of what we do as a Christian Outreach Board at St. Matthews. Currently our Board is discussing and planning ways we can expand our ministry as a Board and a congregation in an effort to reenergize our attempts to live out the Great Commission. Would you like to be involved? We meet via Zoom once a month. Additional meetings may be held as our efforts gain traction. We would love to have another two to three members on our Board (we currently have five). Please pray about this for your consideration and that the Spirit will move others to consider joining us. Feel free to call Bob DeCaigny at (218) 879-2471 with your questions or to discuss any of this. Blessings to your day!



## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 1- Carly Larson, Ryan Guthrie
- 3- Jaxon Noordhoek, Drew Erickson, Ella McLeod, Keith Lennartson
- 4- Owen Carlson
- 5- Billy Ruhnke
- 6- Riggs Olson, Stacy Gerard, Sheila Kahlstorf
- 8- Judy Uran
- 9- Kim Towns, Isaac Abell
- 10- Tom Solomon, Katlyn Weber
- 11- Georgia Guite
- 13- Jim Christian
- 14- Norm Burshten, Darlene Hansen, Tom Hicks, Kathi Sturm, Matt Rengo
- 15- James Lovstad
- 17- Chris Pirila, Jodi Hakamaki, Orié Randall
- 19- Art Boline, Barb Boline, Lora Stodola
- 20- Evon Lawrey, Carol Trevena, Dion Hoeffling, Jackson Lackas
- 21- Robert Westerlund, Emmitt Johnsen, Vivian Halvorson
- 22- Caden Grayson, Kari Knutson, Riley Johnson
- 23- Coeltan Holshouser, Keone Anderson
- 25- Shirley Martinek, Tim Weber, Madison Vinje, Sybil Halvorson
- 26- Sarai Lick
- 27- Keyenna Bissonette
- 28- Debra Rahkola, Maryanne Eblom
- 30- Vernon Johnsen, Francis Warpeha, Blake Gerard
- 31- Ingrid Dohler

## October

### **Baptisms**

November 8  
Braxton Robert Frost  
Brinley Kay Frost

May God keep them in His grace  
unto life everlasting.



### **Funeral**

November 12  
Jennifer Harrison

May God comfort this family through the Living  
Lord Jesus.

## St. Matthews Offering Income

November 25, 2020

Month	Given	Budget	Difference
July	39,700	42,900	(3,200)
Aug	39,400	42,900	(3,500)**
Sept.	36,500	42,900	(6,400)
Oct.	34,000	42,900	(8,900)
Nov.	45,100	34,300	10,800*
	194,700	205,900	(11,200)

\*November 1- 25

\*\* 5 Sunday month

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love  
endures forever. 1 Chronicles 16:34



Please send contributions c/o:  
**Mt. Olive Lutheran Church**  
**2012 East Superior Street**  
**Duluth, MN 55812**

**LCMS Worship - every Sunday at 9:30 a.m.,KBJR Channel 6, Duluth**

My Savior Lives Northland is a locally produced, regionally recognized TV program with a message for the world. The service 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.). My Savior Lives Northland is broadcast every Sunday at 9:30 a.m. central time on KBJR Channel 6 NBC and cable and satellite systems carrying these stations.

December 6, 2020  
Rev. Don Stauty  
Gloria Dei Lutheran Church  
Virginia

December 13, 2020  
Rev. Mark Peske  
Our Redeemer, Cohasset, MN

December 20, 2020  
Rev. Tim Yearyan

December 27, 2020  
Rev. Brad Felix  
Trinity Lutheran Church  
Virginia



Check out [mslnorthland.com](http://mslnorthland.com)  
and MSL Northland on  
Facebook. Devotions are  
available.

ST. MATTHEWS YOUTH GROUP

# SILENT AUCTION



THIS YEAR WE ARE DOING THINGS A LITTLE DIFFERENT...WE ARE GOING VIRTUAL ON FACEBOOK!!!

JOIN US ON THE FACEBOOK GROUP "ST. MATTHEWS YOUTH GROUP SILENT AUCTION" OR COME CHECK OUT THE BASKETS IN THE FAMILY LIFE CENTER AFTER CHURCH ON DECEMBER 2ND OR DECEMBER 6TH & HAVE A YOUTH MEMBER HELP YOU MAKE A BID.

IT'S A PERFECT WAY TO SUPPORT THE YOUTH AND GET SOME CHRISTMAS SHOPPING DONE!

**BIDDING STARTS DECEMBER 2ND AT 6:00 pm  
AND ENDS DECEMBER 6TH AT NOON**

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR ANY DONATIONS WE RECEIVE. CONTACT JEN PRACHAR (218)391-0503 WITH ANY QUESTIONS.

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1st Annual

# TOUR OF LIGHTS

**DECEMBER 10 & 13**

JOIN THE FUN & LIGHT UP YOUR HOUSE FOR A CHRISTMAS LIGHTS TOUR & WIN A HOLIDAY PRIZE PACKAGE!

To register your lights display, send your name, address, phone # & \$10 to: St. Matthews Youth 4 Elizabeth Ave, Esko, MN 55733 by December 1st

FAMILIES...DON'T FORGET TO PICK UP YOUR MAP, SOME TREATS AND VOTING INSTRUCTIONS ON DECEMBER 10 & 13 FROM 6:30-8:30 PM IN THE ST. MATTHEW'S PARKING LOT!

**SPONSORED BY ST. MATTHEW'S YOUTH**

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Call the church office to pre-order your lunch by December 5th.

# BBQ LUNCH

DONATIONS ACCEPTED TO SUPPORT THE YOUTH GROUP

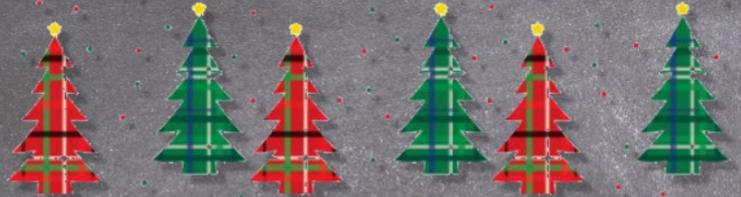
**SUNDAY  
DECEMBER 6TH**



**PULLED PORK SANDWICH OR HOTDOG  
BAG OF CHIPS & BEVERAGE  
DESSERT**

Grab & go take out

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GRADES 7-12

# YOUTH CHRISTMAS PARTY

**WEAR SOMETHING PLAID!**

COME HELP WITH THE TOUR OF LIGHTS & ENJOY SOME CHRISTMAS FUN!

**DEC  
13**

6:30 - 8:30 pm

BRING A \$5 GIFT FOR A GIFT EXCHANGE

DRESS WARMLY - WE WILL BE OUTSIDE!!

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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 (\$751,370 on 10/31/20).

Church Operating Expenses Paid:	July	August	September	October	Total
Salaries	16,779	16,684	19,234	13,961	66,658
Benefits	7,118	7,110	9,835	7,220	31,283
Debt Payments	6,883	6,883	6,883	6,883	27,532
District/Synod Support	2,417	2,417	2,417	2,417	9,668
Electricity	622	846	693	713	2,874
Christian Education	340	1,014	100	125	1,579
Church Property	438	862	513	816	2,629
Office	1,367	1,598	1,317	1,416	5,698
Worship	292	617	303	920	2,132
Youth	-	-	-	-	-
HRA	945	49	-	-	994
Heating Fuel	170	169	168	401	908
Repair and Maintenance	-	611	526	3,802	4,939
Outreach/ Missions	-	600	204	-	804
Conferences	-	50	-	-	50
Insurance	(81)	-	-	-	(81)
Other	1,933	-	-	-	1,933
Total	39,223	39,510	42,193	38,674	159,600
Budgeted Needs	42,916	42,916	42,916	42,916	171,664



The combined groups of the LWML met Tuesday, November 10, at 6:30 pm in the Family Life Center. Six members were present. Pat Johnson opened with prayer.

There were no minutes from the October meeting, and the treasurer's report was reviewed.

Old Business: The poinsettias are being sold by the youth for their fund raising. It was decided to buy a poinsettia from the Circle in memory of Pastor Jeff.

Joy passed around the Christmas shut-in list for any additions or corrections anyone would have. Cards are being sent this year since we are not doing in-home visiting.

New Business: We will do church decorating on Saturday, December 5, starting at 9 am. We will have out a basket for the collection of hats, mittens, and scarves to be given to the Salvation Army. Placement of the Giving Tree is still in question.

Officers for 2021 will remain the same with the exception of the visitation coordinator. Reta Baxley has volunteered to step in to that position.

Our annual Christmas Giving list from last year was reviewed; some items were deleted and others added. A total of \$1200 was given to national organizations, and \$3300 was given to Minnesota recipients.

Joy Skifstad led the Mite Devotion "LCMS School Leadership Development". Mites were collected.

Joy led us in prayer and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,  
Pat Johnson

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### **LOOKING FOR CHURCH TREASURER**

Joy Eskuri, who has graciously served as St. Matthews Treasurer for 21 years, will be resigning from this position January 31st. If you are interested in filling this position or have any questions, please contact the church office at 879-3510. Thank you!

### **LOOKING FOR PARISH NURSES**

Anyone interested in helping as a St. Matthews Parish Nurse? Gerry Paulson, who was our Parish Nurse, has moved out of the area. If you are interested or have questions, please contact the church office at 879-3510. Thank you!

## Stewardship Corner

Christmas is coming. It is a joyous time of feasting. The Church feasts upon the Word of God in sermon, song, and sacrament.

We hear the proclamation of the message of the angels: “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord” (Luke 2:10-11). We mingle our voices with theirs as we sing, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased” (Luke 2:14)! We receive the proclaimed Savior, Christ the Lord, not wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in manger but wrapped in bread and wine placed into our mouths for the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. We feast in great joy indeed because of this great blessing from our Lord and God.

God’s people in ancient Israel also feasted with great joy. The Lord showered His abundant blessing on His people. And He commanded them to feast upon it (Deuteronomy 16). The people were to go to the place appointed, where the Lord would make His name dwell, and give offerings, each man as he was able, according to the blessing of the Lord that He had given them (Deut. 16:10, 15, 17).

And there the Lord would bless them with joy as they feasted upon what the Lord had provided. They ate of the choice parts of their offerings. They enjoyed the company of all the people of God as they together heard His promises of blessing, sang of His bountiful goodness, and partook of what He gave.

We feast on the Word who became flesh to dwell among us, not just during Christmas but throughout all the year. We feast not just on the salvation He has wrought for us in His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, but we feast also on all the temporal blessings that God gives out of His fatherly divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in us. We enjoy the rich bounty that God provides, not only in Word and Sacrament, but also in house and home, property and income, family and friends.

Let us then, as did our brothers in the faith from ancient Israel, give as we are able, according to the blessing of the Lord our God that He has given us. Let us, like them, give generously of the first fruits of our income, which He gives, so that all may know and enjoy the salvation He gives and the joy we have in the Savior born in the city of David, who is Christ the Lord.

# 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 October, 2020*

## Gifts have been given in Memory of

Ardy Pykkonen	My Savior Lives TV Ministry
Ron Semereau in honor of his birthday	Undesignated Fund
Robert Stokes	Undesignated Fund
Robert Stokes	My Savior Lives TV Ministry
Clifford Trevena	Sunday School Fund

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, 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](http://www.stmatthewsesko.org). Select *Giving and Fees* in the top menu bar.

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## **Memorial Fund**

In Loving memory of \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor of \_\_\_\_\_

Given to St. Matthews Lutheran Church by

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

Fund \_\_\_\_\_

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

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