
ST. MATTHEWS LUTHERAN CHURCH ESKO, MN

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



ADDRESS:

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

CONTACT US:

Church - (218) 879-3510
Email - stmatthesko@aol.com
Web - www.stmatthewsesko.org

OUR PASTOR:

Pastor Marty Mably
Cell- (763) 259-8168
Pastor.marty@stmatthewsesko.org

OUR STAFF:

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

Jen Prachar, Office Manager
Rebecca Bauer, Secretary

Sybil Halvorson,
Little Esko Lutheran Preschool Director
Mae Garson, Assistant Teacher
Church - (218) 879-3510
Email - lelpreschool@gmail.com

I remember a conversation years ago with a church organist about the irony amongst church workers, including musicians, that it is at the end of the busiest, most grueling seasons of the year that they need to be at their best, their sharpest. Christmas and Easter, those days when the most people come to church and you have great opportunities to share the Good News of Jesus Christ, are the days that you want everything to be perfect so as to present the best impression to your 'guests,' hoping that they'll be 'moved' to attend more often; the perfect bulletin and newsletter with no typos and mistakes, every note played to perfection, the best sermons of the year, both informative and inspiring, touching the hearts of every person in the pew. Yet, Christmas and Easter are preceded by the seasons of Advent and Lent, which are wonderful times, but also very busy and tiring, with extra services, sermons, special events, etc. So, when we want to be at our best, we often find ourselves exhausted, a little overwhelmed and worn out.

This isn't only experienced by church workers, though. Students, athletes, people in every profession and walk in life know what it's like to expect the best when one feels the worst. We've all felt the expectation and hope of being at our best, the top of our game, and for many and various reasons, just could not. There are times when the wrong note is played, the sermon is "meh," your play is lackluster, your job performance is subpar, you're distracted from the important things and people around you. You have given your best already and the proverbial tank is empty.

Yet, work, school, life demands that you keep going, you do your best with what you got. You get up and keep going, the service still is coming, the newsletter article still needs to be written, the game continues, expectations still need to be met; life goes on.

And in the midst of it all is Jesus, the one who was exhausted, beaten and crucified at his most important moment of his earthly ministry. From the outside observer, he was a total failure, failing to *rise* to the occasion (pun intended), conquer the world, win the day. He died and disappointed a lot of people closest to him. Yet, in that defeat and failure, the Father worked and had planned to work the greatest victory and moment of history. Through Jesus' defeat and resurrection, came victory over sin, death and the devil.

Lent continued on page 2

Lent continued from page 1

That is the irony of the cross, Jesus' birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension, means that his best, given at his worst, is our best, despite how much or little we have to give, no matter our success and failure.

Tired, overwhelmed, feeling like a failure, like you could have done better. ***In Jesus, you are enough!***

Happy Lent?! Here's to a joyous celebration and Jesus' victory for you!

In His Love, PM

Midweek Lenten Worship and Soup Suppers

March 6, 13, 20

Suppers at 5:30 pm. Stay for Worship at 6:30 pm.

Wednesday, March 6 “Strike the Rock!” (Exodus 17:1–7)

Wednesday, March 13 “Mine!” (Exodus 20:1–17)

Wednesday, March 20 “Digging Ourselves into a Hole” (Exodus 32:1–14)



Holy Week Services

Sunday, March 24 – Palm Sunday Worship 8 & 10:30 am

Thursday, March 28 – Maundy Thursday Worship with Holy Communion 6:30 pm

Friday, March 29 – Good Friday Worship 6:30 pm

**Sunday, March 31 – Easter Sunrise Worship with Holy Communion 6:30 am
Easter Sunday Worship with Holy Communion 8 & 10:30 am**





Pull Out Your Favorite Recipe!

ST MATTHEWS YOUTH FUNDRAISER

Prizes Hotdish Prizes

COOK-OFF &

Bean Bag Tournament

Everyone welcome to participate!!

March 17th

Hotdish Cook-Off @ 11:45 PM

Bean Bag Tournmant @ 12:45 PM

Sign up sheets on youth board

Practice Your Throwing!

Additional Staff Update

A search committee has been formed to find full-time staff to oversee Christian education/ministry at St. Matthews. The search committee volunteers are: Johnny Eng, Christy Rice, Kari Straub, Cherri Sykes, Matt Wisted and Pastor Marty. If you have any questions about the upcoming hire of additional staff, please contact one of committee members.



Opportunity to Serve

We are looking for a Praise Team Leader for some Sunday morning services.

If you have an interest in this opportunity to serve, please contact Pastor Marty.

Office Hours:
Monday 8AM-3PM
Tuesday 8AM-3PM
Wednesday 8AM-5PM
Thursday 8AM-2:30PM
Friday 8AM-3PM



Help us beautify the church to celebrate this Easter! Order flowers (Easter Lily, Begonia, Hydrangea, or Hyacinth) for Easter Sunday (or bring others). The deadline to order flowers is **Sunday, March 10th**.

Order forms can be found on the welcome table. Please make checks payable to LWML and put with order form. Orders can be left with the church office. Thank you!



Experience Recovery

For Every Hurt, Habit, or
Hang Up
Thursday Evenings at 6 pm

Please contact Deacon Johnny Eng at (218) 310-1385 with any questions.

New Series!

Beginning March 7

The Twelve Steps for Us All

By: Travis Collins



Train children in the way they should go;
when they grow old, they won't depart from it.
Proverbs 22:6

Thank you to every St. Matthews member who supported the preschool's Butter Braid fundraiser last month. Remember, Butter Braids will be available for pick-up on Monday, March 18. If you are unable to pick up your purchase that day, please let Sybil or Mae know so your items can be placed in the church freezer.

During March, the students will learn about simple machines, and three select New Testament stories including when Jesus washes the disciples' feet. The students also learn a scripture verse every month; for March it will be Psalm 56:3. Will you join LELP in this memory work? This will be a short month for LELP as the preschool will be closed March 25-29 for Spring Break (LELP follows the Esko school calendar).

LELP will begin marketing efforts for fall enrollment later this month. Once again, the preschool will mail postcards to all three- and four-year old children in the Esko, Carlton, Cloquet, Wrenshall and Proctor zip codes. The LELP board is grateful for St. Matthews member Emily Krueger, who designed the marketing postcard. Additionally, LELP will run ads in the Pine Knot News.

However, the very best marketing tool is word-of-mouth. As an outreach program of St. Matthews, every member is asked to help spread the word about LELP. Please consider sharing information about our church preschool with all young families that you know. Direct any prospective families to the church website where the preschool has a page full of information.

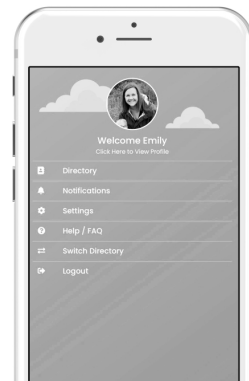
Biannual Directory Update!

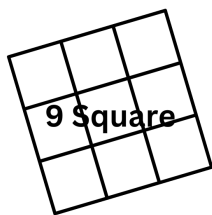
Every October and April we will issue a new in-office print out of the church directory.

Update your own photo and contact information through the app or send to SMLCdirectory2022@gmail.com.

Easter gatherings will be a great time to take a new family photo!

Everyone included in the directory has access to the directory app, contact the office or SMLCdirectory2022@gmail.com for instructions on logging in!





Lock - In

Grades 7-12

St Matthews Family Life Center



Drop off - April 19 @ 7 pm

Pick up - April 20 @ 6 am

Service Project

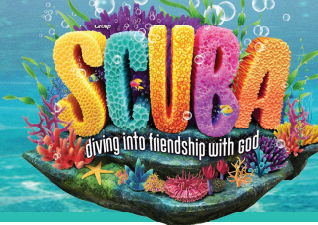


make a splash
this summer!

VBS

June 24-28

Watch for the
registration link on our
website - March 1st!



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RUMMAGE



Mark Your Calendars!

Rummage Sale at St. Matthews

Thursday, May 16 - 9 am to 7 pm

Friday, May 17 - 8 am to 5 pm

We will be accepting donations the week of May 12th. No electronics please.

What's Up 4 Youth @ St Matthews

Totally Terrific Tuesdays
NOW OPEN

Grades 7-12

Join us after school

Every Week
from 3:30-5 in youth room

Visit - Play games -
Do homework -
Have a Snack -
Hang Out



Be Strong &
Courageous
Joshua 1:9



Sunday Bible Study
Grades 10-12
9:15 am

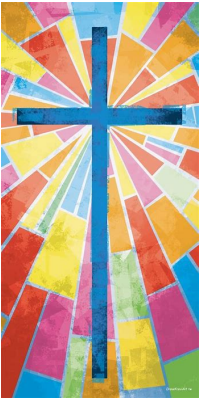
Join us in the FLC
for Bible Study on
Revelations
Grades 7-9 Meet in the Cave

Youth Group
5:00 - 6:30
Grades 7-12

Mar 6th
Apr 10th
May 8th

Supper, Games &
Devotion
In Family Life Center

February



Baptisms

February 11, 2024

Elliot Josh Bailey

February 25, 2024

Justin, Landon, Asher Jones

May God keep Elliot, Justin, Landon and Asher in His grace unto life everlasting.

Funerals

February 4, 2024

Margaret Colberg

February 16, 2024

Lillian Biebl

May God comfort Margaret and Lillians's families.



St. Matthews Offering Income

February 21, 2024



**LCMS Worship - Sundays 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 area LCMS pastors. 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.

March 3 Pastor Marty Mably, Esko

March 10 Pastor Matt Kohl, Cloquet

March 17 Pastor Caleb Weight, Hermantown

March 24 Pastor Tim Ludwig, Hermantown

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

	<u>Given</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Over/(Under)</u>
July	\$36,100	\$38,200	(\$2,100)**
August	\$30,884	\$38,200	(\$7,316)
September	\$35,710	\$38,200	(\$2,490)
October	\$37,030	\$38,200	(\$1,170)**
November	\$34,236	\$38,200	(\$3,964)
December	\$45,061	\$38,200	\$6,861**
January	\$33,010	\$38,200	(\$5,190)
February	\$26,509	\$38,200	(\$11,691) *
Total	\$278,540	\$305,600	(\$27,060)

* 3 out of 4 weeks ** 5 Sunday Month

Giving last year to date: \$277,754

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

Stewardship Corner

Cherish What God Has Given

In the Small Catechism, Luther follows a pattern when explaining the Ten Commandments. With each commandment, there is something prohibited, and something commanded. There is something wrong which must be avoided, and there is something right which must be done.

The one time this pattern is not followed is with the Sixth Commandment.

“You shall not commit adultery. What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we lead a sexually pure and decent life in what we say and do, and husband and wife love and honor each other” (SC I).

Here, the catechism focuses solely on the positive: we should live in a chaste and decent manner in both word and deed, and husbands and wives should cherish and honor one another.

Keeping this commandment, and all of the commandments, is a lot easier if you see your chastity and your spouse as a gift from God that is to be protected and cherished. In the same way, you will find keeping the Fourth Commandment easier if you see your parents and other authorities as a gift from God, given to you for your blessing.

This is the key stewardship insight that runs through all of the Christian life: Everything that we have has been given to us by God. We deserve none of it. All of it comes to us by God’s fatherly kindness and open-handed generosity. If I know that everything I have — every possession, every relationship, every ability — is a gift from God, then my perspective changes. All of these things are both gifts to be cherished, and things that I should direct towards God’s purposes. My possessions should be shared generously according to how God has called me in my family, church and community. My spouse should be cherished, loved and encouraged in faith. My children are on loan from my own Heavenly Father, and I have but a brief time to show them the path of righteousness. My neighbor is a gift from God so that I can imitate His kindness toward me.

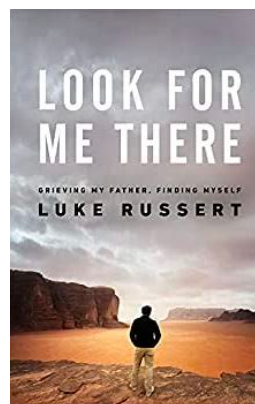
No matter the gift, everything has been given to me by God so that I may participate in His own goodness and open-handed generosity.

Book Discussion Group

The March meeting of the Book Discussion Group will be Thursday, March 21 at 1 pm.

We will be reading "Look for Me There: Grieving My Father, Finding Myself" by Luke Russert.

In April, we will read "James" (Servant Siblings) by Jenifer Jennings. For information, call or text Judy Nelson 218 590 1521.





The LWML group met Tuesday, February 13, 2024 at 1:00 pm in the Fireside Room

Three members were present.

Pat Johnson opened with prayer.

The meeting was called to order by Pat Johnson.

There was correspondence - Thank You letters from Orphan Grain Train, MN Adult & Teen Challenge, Lutheran Bible Translators, and church members.

The Secretary's report was reviewed.

The Treasurer's report was reviewed.

Old Business:

- a. We will serve Sausage Lentil Soup on Ash Wednesday 2/14.
- b. Bingo at InterFaith Wednesday, February 21, at 3 pm.

New Business:

- a. Easter is early this year, so we will give out our Spring cheer bags in May as "May Baskets".
- b. Two delegates needed for the MN North Biennial Convention June 3-5 at Cragun's

The Mite devotion, led by Joy Skifstad, was on the national LWML mission grant, "Forged by Fire Services, Sharing Jesus One Plate of Food at a Time".

Mites were collected.

The Bible Study was from "Love Rules; A Study of the Ten Commandments" chapter 36, "The Grass Is Greener under the Chicken Coop".

We closed with prayer.

The next meeting is Tuesday, March 12th at 1PM.

Judy Nelson, Secretary

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. The mortgage balance as of January 31 is \$28,459. Any surplus funds at the end of our fiscal year (June 30) will be discussed with the congregation at the annual budget meeting.

Church Operating Expenses Paid:	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	Total
Salaries	11,016	11,595	12,619	12,887	12,872	13,533	12,734	87,256
Benefits	3,645	3,689	3,768	3,738	3,787	3,838	3,931	26,396
Debt Payments	6,883	6,883	513	6,884	6,883	6,883	6,883	41,812
District/Synod Support	2,417	2,417	2,417	2,417	2,417	2,417	2,666	17,168
Electricity	1,077	1,017	879	937	984	492	1,072	6,458
Christian Education	40	851	241	228	40	145	312	1,857
Church Property	1,016	420	456	1,289	1,441	989	881	6,492
Office	2,110	2,392	1,593	1,645	802	2,126	1,671	12,339
Worship	1,128	41	794	107	2,706	306	499	5,581
Youth	-	37	466	-	139		68	710
HRA	-	2,122		-	-			2,122
HAS							417	
Heating Fuel	232	233	238	277	938	1,041	1,267	4,226
Repair and Maintenance	-							-
Outreach/ Missions	264					139	91	494
Conferences	-		60	205				265
Insurance	(638)							(638)
Other	-							-
Total	29,190	31,697	24,044	30,614	33,009	31,909	32,492	212,955
Budgeted Needs	38,165	38,165	38,165	38,165	38,165	38,165	38,165	267,155
Non-Budgeted:								
Treasurer		862						862
Computer								
Sump pump cleaning			1040					1040
Retirement				2139				2139
Roof repairs					5000		1,221	6,221
Access Panel/Re-Keying					2766		3848	6614
FLC Window replacement						2665		2665

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 December 2023.*

Gifts have been given in Memory of	To the
Shirley Behm	Memorial Fund
Susan Nelson and	
Donald & Ardeth Pykkonen	Cemetery Fund & Choir/Music Fund
Clifford & Carol Trevina	Sunday School Fund
Sue Wischnewski	Memorial Fund

The stained glass memorial for Pastor Jeff Walther has been started.

Sunday School Supplies were purchased with funds from the Sunday School Fund.

A donation for expenses for the Kentucky Mission Trip was made from the Undesignated 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, Dave Haugen, Elaine Lindquist, Gene & Margaret Lindquist, Florence Maki, Judy Nelson, Marilyn Pykkonen, Judy Uran.

Anyone wishing to contribute to the **Memorial Fund** in memory of a friend or loved-one, is welcome to do so. Memorial folders are available in the Gathering space 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.



Donations for those in need
Via Community of Hope

- Body wipes, body wash, shampoo, deodorant
- Facial tissues, toilet paper, bath towels
- Feminine hygiene products (thin maxi pads and light/super-size tampons)
- Band-Aids, antibiotic ointment
- Bottled water, protein bars, breakfast bars, hand warmers
- Motor oil (5W-30) and windshield washer fluid

St. Matthews has a collection box set up in the entryway by the mailboxes for donations for those homeless within our communities including, Esko, Carlton, Cloquet and Hermantown.

Community of Hope helps with the donations and is establishing connections with local churches and Kingdom Builders. This is a dedicated group of Christians comes from Cloquet, Esko and Carlton area.

Latest numbers from Carlton county are 115 homeless and counting. About 35% live in their vehicles.

If you would like to donate, your help is appreciated.



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

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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