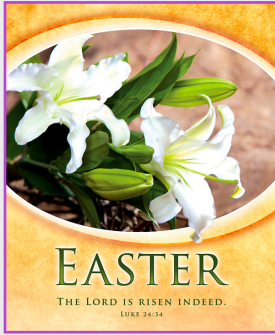

ST. MATTHEWS LUTHERAN CHURCH ESKO, MN

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 - stmattsesko@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

Is it wrong to be more excited about Good Friday than Easter? Why is it that I find Good Friday more meaningful than Easter? Don't get me wrong, I've always loved Easter, with its joyful celebration of new life and rebirth. It is the event, Jesus' resurrection, that is the basis for our life, hope and eternal destiny! Without Easter, we are "to be pitied" (1 Corinthians 15:19). But, there is something about Good Friday that 'moves' me like no other day, like no other worship service of the year.

As a child, our family observed Good Friday by not eating 'meat.' (Outside of tradition, I don't know why. We were Lutheran and no meat on Good Friday seems pretty Catholic.). Our 'traditional' Good Friday dinner was canned salmon, creamed corn (Yuck!) and scalloped potatoes. Good Friday was/is supposed to be dreary, no sun shining to fit the somber mood of the day. I remember the Good Friday that I got the great news that I had been accepted into the graduate program I had been hoping for and how guilty I felt at the Good Friday worship service that I was so happy and excited. Thankfully, God's work in my life is not based on how I feel at any given moment, including during a worship service.

I suppose Good Friday is so meaningful because it is the reality of Jesus' (God's) profound love for me, demonstrated in the brutality of that day and the death he died that was really meant for me. I've always been drawn to the reality that on the cross, in all of Jesus' passion, I can be honest with who I am. I also find comfort in seeing everyone else being honest that we are all poor miserable sinners. I don't know about you, but I am exhausted, constantly trying to tell others and convince myself that I'm ok, that I am 'fine.' It is an unrelenting job trying to be 'enough,' lying to myself and others that I've got it all together. In the violent judgment of Good Friday, I'm laid bare as the helpless sinner that I am. And it feels good, the honesty, met by the unrelenting, endless love of my Savior.

As I look upon Jesus hanging on that cross, he is looking at me, with all of my failures, selfishness and open rebellion, yet he looks at me with love and mercy in his eyes.

All of that would mean nothing, though without Easter. If he had not risen, he would be no better than any other person who has known me and pitied me. Easter means that Christ is enough and by virtue of my Baptism, I am enough! Being laid bare and

Good Friday and Easter continued on page 2

Good Friday and Easter continued from page 1

exposed for the sinner that I am, and knowing that Jesus died and rose for all of that, to take that away, changes everything.

In the words of one of my favorite podcasters, Dan van Voorhis, because of Good Friday and Easter (Resurrection) Sunday, “the rumors of grace, forgiveness, and the redemption of all things are true.... Everything is going to be ok.”

Happy(?) Good Friday and Happy Easter!

In His Love, PM

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**



DIVE INTO FRIENDSHIP WITH GOD AT VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL!



VBS
June 24-28

VBS at St. Matthews

June 24th - June 28th from 8:30-11:30 am

For children ages preschool through those going into 6th grade

Scan the QR code or click the link to register today!



<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeOXD-DVhKJwIA3HCn4-Br52EosKD-bc8BtmerpihvuomJHMA/viewform?usp=sharing>

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



**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.

Director of Christian Education and Family Ministry Update

The search committee has received names from the district, is evaluating 5 candidates, and will be deciding who they wish to interview. They hope to have interviews scheduled in the next couple of weeks.

The search committee volunteers are: Johnny Eng, Christy Rice, Kari Straub, Cherri Sykes, Matt Wisted and Pastor Marty. If you have any questions, please contact one of committee members.

Please keep this process in your prayers.

April 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**.

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



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.

The Twelve Steps

for Us All

By: Travis Collins

Grab a treat
& support
St Matthews
Youth



Dine in, carry out or
drive thru

Monday - April 8, 2024 is DQ Night

Visit the Cloquet DQ from 5-8 pm
and show this flyer or show it
on your phone

15% of your purchase will
go to St Matthews Youth



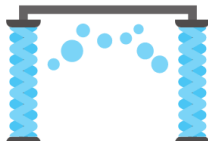
Kwik Trip Car Wash Cards Selling from April 1 to April 21

\$36 per card



1 Card = 5 washes

Order from youth or
the church office.



RUMMAGE SALE

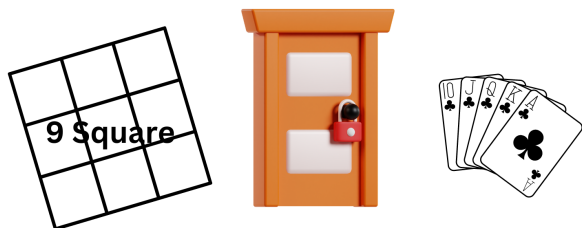
Mark Your Calendars!

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.



Lock - In

Grades 7-12

St Matthews Family Life Center



Drop off - April 19 @ 7 pm

Pick up - April 20 @ 6 am

Service Project



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



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

Apr 17th

May 8th

Supper, Games &
Devotion
In Family Life Center



Class of 2024 - Senior Breakfast

Wednesday, May 22

7 am

Graduates come enjoy breakfast with Pastor before school!



March

Baptism

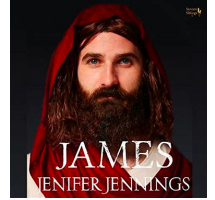
February 11, 2024

Elliott Josh Bailey

May God keep Elliott in His grace
unto life everlasting.

Book Discussion Group

Our group will read James
(Servant Siblings) by Jenifer
Jennings. We will meet
Thursday, April 18 at 1pm in
the Fireside Room. For
information, call Judy Nelson
218 590 1521.



St. Matthews Offering Income

March 13, 2024

	<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	\$31,951	\$38,200	(\$6,249)
March	14,445	\$38,200	(\$23,755)*
Total	\$298,427	\$343,800	(\$45,373)

* 2 out of 5 weeks ** 5 Sunday Month

Giving last year to date: \$302,397

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



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 31 Pastor Matt Kohl, Cloquet

April 7 Pastor Stafford Thompson, Munger

April 14 Pastor Arleigh VonSeggern Cable, Marengo

April 21 Pastor Robert Franck, Duluth

April 28 Pastor Brad Felix, Virginia & Chisholm

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



Preschool News

The preschool will hold its Spring open house Tuesday, April 9. This is typically when new students and their families have an opportunity to meet the teachers and see our classroom. While many of the visitors who attend the open house are already registered or are likely to register, all prospective students are welcome. If you know of any families with preschool-age children, please invite them to this event! The in-person visit will help families discern whether LELP will meet their preschooler's needs.

During April, the students will learn about pets, the letters Y and Z, and select New Testament stories. The students also learn a scripture verse every month; for April it will be John 3:16. Most likely, you already know this verse – consider memorizing 3:17 as well!

Fall marketing efforts will continue throughout this month. Watch for our ad in the Pine Knot News. However, the very best marketing tool is word-of-mouth. As an outreach program of St. Matthews, every member can help spread the word about LELP. Please share 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.

The final fundraiser of the year, Fig Tree hanging flower baskets, will begin later this month. Once again, certificates that can be redeemed for flower baskets can be purchased for \$37 from the preschool and/or the church office; LELP will receive \$8 for each basket. The fundraiser will run April 15-30. Please watch the LELP website page and the Sunday bulletin for more details.



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.

Stewardship Corner

Whose Is It Anyway?

If you have ever bought or sold a house, you are acquainted with the concept of a “title search.” Before you can sell your house, and before anyone else will feel comfortable putting down the money to buy it, you have to prove that you really own it. So a title company looks through the public records to ensure that you bought it from the person who really owned it, who bought it from the person who really owned it before that, all the way back to the earliest records of your state, including when your state was only a territory or colony of England.

Peak into a preschool classroom during playtime and you’ll see a simplified version of this. A child starts playing with a ball, but another child says, “That’s mine: I had it first.”

You can’t understand the Seventh Commandment without understanding this concept of ownership or title. As the Small Catechism puts it:

You shall not steal. What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not take our neighbor’s money or possessions, or get them in any dishonest way, but help him to improve and protect his possessions and income.

Your neighbor’s possessions are *his*: you don’t have a right to take them. And likewise, your possessions are yours. Ownership and property rights are foundational to any functioning society.

But there is something deeper to know about ownership, and that is the question of who has the title and ownership *to you*? Paul says, “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price” (1 Cor. 6:19–20).

If you yourself are owned by God, then of course everything that you own, you really only possess by God’s leave: all of it, at bottom, belongs to Him since *you* belong to Him. For you were bought with the blood of Christ.

This notion is the foundation of all Christian stewardship. It all belongs to God. It should all be used for things that bring honor to His name, blessings to our neighbors and the extension of His kingdom.

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 February 29 is \$21,692. 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:	September	October	November	December	January	February	Total
Salaries	12,619	12,887	12,872	13,533	12,734	12,856	100,112
Benefits	3,768	3,738	3,787	3,838	3,931	4,507	30,903
Debt Payments	513	6,884	6,883	6,883	6,883	6,883	48,695
District/Synod Support	2,417	2,417	2,417	2,417	2,666	2,666	19,834
Electricity	879	937	984	492	1,072	409	6,867
Christian Education	241	228	40	145	312	1,181	3,038
Church Property	456	1,289	1,441	989	881	1,631	8,123
Office	1,593	1,645	802	2,126	1,671	2,127	14,466
Worship	794	107	2,706	306	499	705	6,286
Youth	466	-	139		68		710
HRA		-	-				2,122
Heating Fuel	238	277	938	1,041	1,267	1,514	5,740
Repair and Maintenance							-
Outreach/Missions				139	91		494
Conferences	60	205					265
Insurance							(638)
Other							-
Total	24,044	30,614	33,009	31,909	32,075	34,479	247,017
Budgeted Needs	38,165	38,165	38,165	38,165	38,165	38,165	305,320
Non-Budgeted:							
Treasurer							862
Computer							
Sump pump cleaning	1040						1040
Retirement		2139					2139
Roof repairs			5000		1,221		6,221
Access Panel/			2766		3848		6614
Re-Keying							
FLC Window replacement				2665			2665



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

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO.16
ESKO, MN 55733