

# ST. MATTHEW'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Proclaiming the Love of God for All People

# THE MESSENGER

*Mission Statement:*  
Living in Christ through faith.  
Living for neighbor through love.

Serving the southwest Fort Worth area since 1953

DECEMBER 2021

St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, organized in 1953, is a Reconciling in Christ (RIC) congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).

**Sunday Worship**  
8:00 am & 11:00 am  
**Christian Education**  
9:30 am

**Church Staff:**

Lesley M. Radius  
*Pastor*

Adam Frame  
*Director of Music Ministries*

John Wolf  
*Organist / Pianist*

Kelly Riddle  
*Office Assistant; Go! Center Coord.*

Mary Nedde  
*Administrative Assistant*

Jocelyne Angeles, C.J. Waiters,  
Valerie Dyke  
*Nursery Attendants*

**Council Members:**

President: Faye Youngblood  
Vice-President: Charlie Schmidt  
Secretary: Marcia Boggs  
Treasurer: Aaron Droemer  
Financial Sec.: Gary Christensen  
Christian Ed.: Cindy Kohn  
Fellowship: Lisa Reed  
Outreach: Open position  
Property: K.C. Iversen  
Stewardship: Phil Beckman  
Worship: Karin Dunker  
Youth: Open position  
Youth Rep.: Katie Beckman

## ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS WORSHIP

### WEDNESDAY ADVENT WORSHIP

Holden Evening Prayer: 6:30 pm Dec. 1, 8 and 15  
Wednesday Dinners will begin at 5:45 pm

### DECEMBER 12 JOINT SERVICE OF CELEBRATION

10:00 am (No Sunday School) We will celebrate:  
Harper Frame's Baptism  
Confirmation of members of St. Christopher  
Recommitment to God's Ministry & Mission,  
including the Installation of Pastor Lesley

### CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

3:30 pm Joint St. Matthew's/St. Christopher Family  
Worship with Children's Christmas Program

6:30 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship  
Led by St. Matthew's

8:30 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship  
Led by St. Christopher

There will be receptions for everyone after the  
3:30 and 6:30 services, hosted by St. Christopher

### POST CHRISTMAS WORSHIP

Dec. 26 9:30 am Worship of Lessons and Carols  
Joint service with St. Matthew's/St. Christopher

Jan. 2 8:00 & 9:30 am Worship led by St. Christopher  
1 1:00 am Worship led by St. Matthew's  
(No Sunday School on Dec. 26 or Jan. 2.)

**St. Matthew's Lutheran Church**

5709 Wedgwood Drive, Fort Worth, TX 76133  
817-292-1338 | office@stmatthews-elca.org | www.stmatthews-elca.org  
We are Reconciling in Christ; welcoming to all!

## ***FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK(TOP)***

**Happy New Year**, new church year that is. As we enter December, we begin another new church year. Just like a new calendar year, it offers us a chance to begin anew and to continue to live into being a new creation in Christ. The things of the past are gone, and we look forward into God's future.

**So, I wonder what will we do differently for this new church year?** What new opportunities will we embrace as we hear God calling us forward into God's kingdom work? What things of the past will move forward with us, perhaps in the same way or in a new way? What new church year resolution will each of us make and what new church year resolutions will we make as a faith community?

I have so many questions as we move forward into this new year. However, there is one question that I don't have. That question is who is leading us. I am confident that our steadfast and loving God who is always present and always inviting us into God's new creation in leading us into God's preferred and promised future. The question is always, will I/We follow? Only time and our actions will give us that answer.

There are many opportunities to participate in the new church year and in living into God's new creation in December. I hope you will join us in person as you can. Our Joint St. Christopher and St. Matthew's **Advent Wednesday Family Faith Dinners (Dec 1, 8 and 15) start at 5:45 pm, with Holden Evening Prayer at 6:30 pm and Choir practice at 7:00 pm.**

Throughout Advent, our Sunday Worship services will focus on the theme of Advent-Waiting and Anticipating for the One who brings Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. On **December 12**, the Sunday we celebrate Joy, **we will have a special joint service with St. Christopher at 10 am.** It will be a **Celebration of Mission and Ministry these past 20 months.** The service will include giving thanks for the Sacrament of Baptism as Harper Frame receives Holy Baptism, the affirmation of Baptism as members of St. Christopher are confirmed, renewing our commitment to God's mission and ministry, including the installation of Pastor Lesley and celebrating the work that God is doing through our sharing of God's house and more with St. Christopher. Both Bishop Gronberg (NT-NL Synod, ELCA) and Bishop Mayer (Episcopal NWT Diocese) will be participating in the service. Afterwards, we will celebrate together with refreshments and continue to give thanks for all that God is doing among and through us. **Please come and be a part of the celebration.**

On Christmas Eve, we will begin our celebration of the Birth of Christ with a joint Lutheran and Episcopal **Family Service at 3:30 pm.** Bring your children, grandchildren, neighbors' children, and your child-like imagination and participate and hear in a new way the Christmas story. (I promise there will be plenty of sheep ears for anyone who wants to actively participate.) There will be a reception after the service for all. Come and wish one another Merry Christmas. **At 6:30 pm, we will have our Candlelight Christmas** service and at 8:30 pm St. Christopher will have their Candlelight Christmas Eve service. **On December 26<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 am, we will have a joint St. Christopher and St. Matthew's Lessons and Carols** worship service. Come and join us to sing all those wonderful Christmas songs and hear the story of God's amazing gift of love once again. This is the greatest gift and greatest story. We can't hear it too often.

*(Continued on p. 3)*

***Pastor Lesley, continued***

Also, this past week, you received **President and Stewardship Commission challenges for ending this year and heading into 2022.** This new church year has so many opportunities to be about God's work with our hands. I hope you will take the time to prayerfully and carefully read both letters and then respond boldly by your actions indicating, "Here I am, Lord!"

I look forward to celebrating this new church year with you as together we sing with the chorus of Angels, "Joy to the World, the Lord is come!"

**Blessed New Church Year, Pastor Lesley**



## **WOMEN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY SATURDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2:00 PM**

### **ST. MATTHEW'S FELLOWSHIP HALL**

#### **Let's join together for:**

- \* Fun fellowship, good food and drink
- \* Secret prayer partners revealed
- \* New secret prayer partners chosen for 2022
- \* White elephant gift exchange (bring a wrapped inexpensive Christmas decoration/ornament)

**PLEASE COME! NO NEED TO RSVP.**



## **ELCA GOOD GIFTS TREE - DECEMBER GOSPEL ALIVE**

In the entryway, you will find a tree stocked with gift ideas that you may donate to the ELCA Good Gifts program. These gifts help grow the church around the world, fight hunger and transform lives. The gifts are depicted on the ornaments on the tree - the ornaments are in pairs: please take one ornament home for your tree, and sign the other ornament and leave that one on the tree in the entryway. Pick up an order form, mark your gift(s) and make your donation through the mail, by phone, or online as stated on the order form. Some of the gifts you may choose are shown below.





## ***POINSETTIAS FOR CHRISTMAS***



*Poinsettias have been ordered for our sanctuary for Christmas. The 6-inch plants are \$10 each. If you wish to purchase one or more, **please sign up in the narthex by Dec. 15.** Include your name, the number of plants you would like, and for each plant please print in whose honor or memory. Payment may be made by check to St. Matthew's Lutheran Church.*



## ***PROPERTY WORK DAY SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11 8:30 AM TO NOON***



Bring your work gloves, rakes, cleaning supplies, etc. to help us spruce up our property for our big celebration on December 12 and for the holidays. Things to be done: Clean the entryway windows inside and out (we have a ladder!)

Clean the Meditation Garden

Tidy up our main garden areas

Other chores that we may notice need to be done

Many hands will make light work!

## ***CALLING ALL CAROLERS***

*On Sunday, December 5 at 6:00 pm, a group of carolers will be visiting some of our church members to bring them cheer through song.*

*Please join us in your  
festive sweaters.  
All levels of singers  
welcome!*

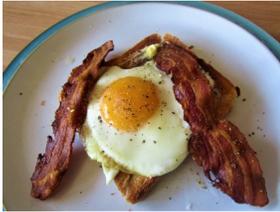


## **MEN'S/WOMEN'S BREAKFAST RETURNS**

Our Men's/Women's Breakfast has returned! **Join us at 8:00 am at Dixie House Café (southeast corner of Hulien St. and South Dr.) on the first and third Tuesdays of the month.**

**In December we will only meet on Dec. 7.**

No need to make a reservation with anyone, just come and enjoy fellowship and good food for about an hour.



## **TAX DEDUCTION FOR 2021**

Recent legislation includes a provision to help individuals who give to charity. The new law generally extends a temporary tax change through the end of 2021. Here's an overview of this change...

### **Deduction for individuals who don't itemize**

Usually taxpayers who take the standard deduction cannot deduct their charitable contributions. The law now permits taxpayers to claim a limited deduction on their 2021 federal income tax return for cash contributions they made to certain qualifying charitable organizations.

These taxpayers, including married individuals filing separate returns, can claim a deduction of up to **\$300 for cash contributions** to qualifying charities during 2021. The maximum deduction is **\$600 for married individuals** filing joint returns.

## **“I BELIEVE”**

**Prayerfully respond with your commitment to how you will give of your time, talent and treasure for 2022. Time and talent forms and 2022 Pledge cards were e-mailed the week of Thanksgiving. What happens in your life after you say, “I Believe”?**

## **YOUNG ADULTS IN CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY (aka YACC)**

**Ages 18 to 35-ish**

YACC will meeting on the following date at 6:30 pm

December 19 - Dirty Santa Gift Exchange (place to be determined)

**Contact Kristin Klade for more information: [k.r.klade@gmail.com](mailto:k.r.klade@gmail.com)**



Dear People of God,

After 40 plus years of dedicated service as Director of the Sounds of Exaltation, Kathy Challgren has announced her retirement. She and George have decided this so that they can have time to enjoy retirement together.

Please join me in showing our appreciation and thanks to Kathy for faithful, talented, and gracious leadership of the Bell Choir. She is a model of servant leadership who has so generously shared her God given talents with St. Matthew's. Early in 2022, we will be celebrating Kathy and showing our utmost gratitude for her many years of faithful service. We hope you will join us for that upcoming celebration, tentatively in February.

God's Blessings,  
Pr. Lesley



## 8:00 am WORSHIP SCHEDULE

We are sharing the leadership of the 8:00 am worship service with St. Christopher Episcopal Church. The schedule for December is:

December 5 Pr. Lesley Presiding

**December 12 One Worship Service at 10:00 am**

December 19 Pr. Lesley Presiding

**December 26 One Service of Lessons and Carols at 9:30 am**

January 2 Fr. Bill Presiding



Our adult Sunday School class on Sunday meets in person and on Zoom at 9:30 a.m. Children and high schoolers also meet at 9:30 a.m. **NOTE: No Sunday School on Dec. 12, Dec. 26 or Jan. 2.**

## DECEMBER LECTIONARY READINGS

### December 5

Malachi 3:1-4  
Luke 1:68-79  
Philippians 1:3-11  
Luke 3:1-6

### December 12

Zephaniah 3:14-20  
Isaiah 12:2-6  
Philippians 4:4-7  
Luke 3:7-18

### December 19

Micah 5:2-5a  
Luke 1:46b-55  
Hebrews 10:5-10  
Luke 1:39-55

### Christmas Day December 25

Isaiah 62:6-12  
Psalm 97  
Titus 3:4-7  
Luke 2:1-20

### December 26

1 Sam. 2:18-20, 26  
Psalm 148  
Col. 3:12-17  
Luke 2:41-52

## December 2021 NT-NL Synod Prayer List:

*During this month we pray for the following  
NT-NL Mission Area congregations and entities:*

- Dec. 5** Messiah, Weatherford / Christ the Servant, Denton / Metroplex West Conference
- Dec. 12** Grace, Abilene / Beautiful Savior, Amarillo / NT-NL Candidacy Committee
- Dec. 19** Zion, McGregor / Preston Meadow, Plano / Upbring Foster & Adoption Agency
- Dec. 26** Emanuel, Dallas / New Life in Christ, Duncanville / ELCA Ministry Teams

**We especially pray for a faithful celebration of the Advent and Christmas seasons.**

*For NT-NL News, go to [www.ntnl.org](http://www.ntnl.org)*

*For ELCA News, go to [www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org)*

## THANK YOU!

*Thank you to Valerie Dyke, our newest Nursery Attendant. She volunteered to deep clean the nursery shelving and all the toys, including items that needed to be washed at home. It took her at least 4 afternoons to complete this task. Much appreciated, Valerie!*



Wedgwood Middle School and Southwest High School Choirs singing for our November Wedgwood Arts Series

## ALTAR FLOWERS or OTHER GIFTS FOR 2022

The 2022 Flower Chart is posted on the office window in the Fellowship Hall. As in 2021, you may designate the following when you sign up:

**Make a gift to ELCA Good Gifts/God's Global Barnyard** <https://goodgifts.elca.org> This is a wonderful way for children or grandchildren in your family to be involved in picking out an animal that will help a family earn extra income, or giving towards school supplies for children who don't have the ability to buy their own supplies, or any of many other giving opportunities through the Good Gifts campaign.

**Make a gift to Neighborhood Needs** There is always a need for food and personal supplies for this organization that serves people in need in southwest Fort Worth.

**You still need to sign up on the flower chart**, (call or e-mail the church office), but note that you are donating to one of the above options. All the monies, with a donation of \$40, would be given through St. Matthews with a designation of where the gift is going. The treasurer will send the gifts quarterly to each charity.

Your Good Gifts or Neighborhood Needs donation will be noted in the bulletin and you will receive a reminder of your donation the week before your Sunday.

If you would like to give flowers in memory of or in honor of someone or an event, that is still possible with a donation of \$40.00 - just sign up on the chart or call the office with the date(s) you wish to host the flowers.

Thank you for your continued support of this ministry of St. Matthews.

