

*Thank
You*

Thank you for your generosity and prayers this Christmas season. The cards, prayers and gifts were all wonderful and very much appreciated. I pray you had a blessed Christmas and that God will provide for us all joy, peace, hope, and love for 2023. God's richest blessings and my thanks,
Pastor Lesley

*Notice of Congregation Meeting
February 5, 2023
after 11:00 a.m. worship*

*We will review and celebrate the year
2022 with our Annual Report*



REFUGEE SERVICES OF TEXAS

Open Hearts. Fresh Starts.

Come learn about the work of Refugee Services of Texas (RST) at our Coffee and Community time on Sunday, January 22 at 9:00 am

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

Attend the next RST **Volunteer Orientation!** There are two orientations in January. Sign up to attend an orientation on Zoom on **Wednesday, January 4th, at 12pm or Thursday, January 19th, at 5:30pm!**

You can also join RST staff for a one-hour Zoom call on Saturday, January 14th to hear about exciting RST updates, new volunteer opportunities, and unique ways you can be involved in RST! Our staff will share success stories, RST needs, and share our goals for the new year! Open to all volunteers, whether you serve with us weekly or have never done an event but are looking to be involved after completing orientation!

To read more about RST, or to register for an orientation on Jan. 4th or 19th, or the RST update on Jan. 14, please go to their website:

www.rstx.org and follow the links for volunteers

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK(TOP)

First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you because your faith is being reported all over the world. God, whom I serve in my spirit in preaching the gospel of his Son, is my witness how constantly I remember you in my prayers at all times. Romans 1: 8-10

One of the greatest privileges I have as Pastor of St. Matthew's is to pray with you, for you, for our neighbors near and far and for all of God's creation. It seems fitting, therefore, that my article for January 2023, as we begin a new year, be that of a prayer to give thanks to God for all we have and to ask for God's continued grace, mercy, and love. Let us pray.

God, thank you for the abundance of blessings you give us every day. Thank you for the abundant love you give us. Thank you for the reminder of this Christmas season that indeed **love has come down** and is the Light of the world. You promise that the Light will never be overcome by the darkness in the world. We give thanks for that promise and truth. Let us be your light of love, hope, peace, and joy in this dark world.

God, you know the needs and concerns of each one of your children. I ask that you hear the prayers of those that are facing challenges of any kind as we begin a new year. May they experience in a new way the peace that only you can provide, not as the world would offer. May they know and experience your promises of comfort and strength for each day and become a new creation in Christ. Luther reminds us that each night we die to the old one, and each morn, we are raised as a new creation in Christ.

God, bless us, the faith community of St. Matthew's, as we seek to discern how you continue to call us to do your work, with our hands. Continue to bless the visioning process as we move forward in 2023. Grant us your wisdom and your guidance. Help us to follow you faithfully.

God, be with your church on earth. Give us the courage to boldly proclaim and live the Gospel message of acceptance, forgiveness, grace, mercy, and love. God, let there be peace on earth and let it begin with us.

God, help us to boldly live out our baptismal covenant "to live among God's faithful people, to hear the word of God and share in the Lord's supper, to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed, to serve all people, following the example of Jesus and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth."

God, for these prayers and the prayers for "which the Spirit intercedes with groanings too deep for words" (Romans 8: 26), we lift them in the name of the one born in Bethlehem, the Savior of the world. Amen.

Wishing all a blessed New Year.

God's Blessings and my prayers,

Pastor Lesley



PRESIDENT'S PONDERINGS

*On the freeways and byways, in village and town, on this 21st century road we've traveled so far, but still look for the star. Don't you know, it's a heavy load. Hey Joseph (and God's people of St. Matthew's) keep walking. Hey Joseph (and God's People of St. Matthew's) keep walking to Bethlehem, **you are part of the plan.***

Peter Mayer, Hey Joseph! *Hey*

As we enter 2023, I wish for all of you a very healthy and happy New Year. It is amazing how quickly another year of God's grace has gone by. Now, we get to start anew for 2023. However, as a faith community, we won't be starting anew, instead we will be continuing what we have already begun in 2022.

I am excited about us continuing our visioning process in 2023, listening for how God is calling us forward to do God's work, with our Hands. Pastor Lesley mentioned on the fourth Sunday of Advent about Joseph's faithfulness, captured in a song written by Peter Mayer, entitled Hey Joseph! Some of the lyrics really seem to apply to us as a congregation during the visioning process. I especially resonated with **keep walking, you are part of the plan.**

Joseph, even though his plans certainly changed, kept walking, and adjusting to God's plan. Our visioning process will require that we keep walking, being faithful, flexible and adaptive as we adjust to God's plan, because we know we are part of God's plan and work.

Also, thank you for your generous response to the President's challenge. Some of you choose to give directly to the President's challenge. Some of you choose to increase your regular giving. All of these resources go to doing God's work with our hands. Thank you, thank you for making this mission and ministry possible.

Blessed New Year,

Faye Youngblood,
Council President





Wedgwood Arts Presents

An Evening of Chamber Music



Eugene Cherkasov
Violin

Assistant Concertmaster
Fort Worth Symphony



Larissa Cherkasov
Piano



Allan Steele
Cello

Principal
Fort Worth Symphony

Piano Trios
by Beethoven, Dvorak and Part

Tickets \$25 | Students \$10

Sunday, January 29, 2023 | 7:00pm

St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

5709 Wedgwood Dr, Fort Worth, 76133

COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS - DECEMBER 2022

PASTOR'S REPORT – (Pr. Lesley Radius, written report submitted.)

Rev. Irma Bernales, DEM, NT-NL Synod will be meeting with Pastor Lesley on 12/13 to discuss a new revised Congregational Vitality program offered by the ELCA.

Thanks to all who helped adopt 42 angels from Catholic Charities.

Sunday and Wednesday Advent services continue as well as online mid-week service.

Attended the joint Thanksgiving Eve service at Faith Lutheran.

Outreach work continues with Wedgwood Arts series.

Confirmation class with 3 students.

Work in progress on marketing pieces focusing on St. Matthew's events.

Assisting Jacob Martella in updating website with new pictures and calendar.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT (Faye Youngblood, written report submitted.)

Collaboration with St. Christopher Episcopal on Advent services and church usage going well.

St. Christopher's 2023 contract has been prepared.

New video camera equipment to be installed Monday, December 12th.

Facility Use Agreement with Indemnity Insurance requirements was drafted for the Wedgwood

Concert Series: Usage fee is \$200 per performance.

Commission Annual Reports for 2022 due in church office January 17, 2023.

Thanks expressed to the 2022 Council Members for their leadership and sharing of talents.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT (Charlie Schmidt)

Mutual Ministry - Staff reviews to be conducted late January.

TREASURER'S REPORT (Aaron Droemer; written report submitted)

Total cash balance at end of November 2022 was \$173,665 compared to \$178,130 at end of October, 2022.

Total adjusted income for November 2022 year-to-date was \$285,568. Total adjusted expenses of \$308,676 resulted in a deficit: expenses over income of (\$23,108) compared to deficit of (\$20,676) at end of October 2022.

Will soon be using money from savings to pay for repair to one of the A/C units at the Montessori School: compressor replacement in amount of \$3,882.56 total.

FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S REPORT (Gary Christensen; written report submitted)

Contribution Detail Composite Nov. 1, 2022 – Nov. 30, 2022, presented.

President's Challenge and Wedgwood Art Series income were highlighted.

COMMISSION REPORTS:

Christian Education (Cindy Kohn)

Monthly Commission meetings will be held last Thursday of the month via Zoom.

VBS meetings start in Feb. Article requesting volunteers will be sent out in January.

Highlights continued on next page

Outreach (Phil Beckman, Absent)

Creating marketing pieces to promote upcoming Wedgwood Art Series events that will include additional St. Matthew's programs

One-on-one mentoring at Woodway Elementary continues

42 Christmas Angels given to Catholic Charities

Property (K.C. Iversen)

New video camera equipment to be installed on December 12th

Compressor equipment for A/C Unit at Montessori School to be replaced in near future.

Worship (Karin Dunker, written report submitted)

Sunday evening and mid-week Advent services continue through December 21st.

St. Matthew's Wednesday evening schedule:

Dinner at 5:30, Holden evening prayer at 6:30, Choir or Bible Study at 7:00

Christmas caroling December 18th

Christmas Eve 4:00 p.m. Joint Service: St Matthew's & SCEC. Children's pageant , 6:30 p.m. St. Matthew's service, 7:30 Joint Reception, 8:30 SCEC Service, 10:30 p.m. Joint Service

Christmas Day No 8:15 a.m. service, 9:30 a.m. Joint service. SCEC preaching and presiding.

New Year's Day No 8:15 a.m. service, 9:30 ELW Liturgy service. SCEC invited to join.

New Sanctuary Christmas Tree: Memorial funds provided in memory of Marjorie Rudolph. Decorated by Win & Sandy Heinrich, Daryl Hadfield, Nancy Teigen, Janice Kammer and Chris & Karin Dunker.

Did You Know . . .

Annasophia Reese is a long-standing member of our St. Matthew's family. Though she has resided in a nursing facility for several years, she has not lost her servant's heart, and is happy to find ways to do ministry. Last year, Pastor Terry Boggs expressed a need for prayer shawls for the parents of patients at Cook Children's Hospital. Learning of this need, Annasophia got busy with her crochet hook and yarn, and has now completed several shawls. After a service of blessing in the hospital chapel, the shawls provide comfort and warmth for families as they journey with their children toward healing. ***We thank God for Annasophia's gifts, and we thank her for sharing those gifts!***



ST. MATTHEW'S FOOD PANTRY

The SMLC Food Pantry is in need of some love. With the holidays fast approaching we will have more visitors to our pantry than usual. Although our food pantry is small it helps patrons "fill in the gap" when needed. Please consider grabbing a few extra items this week while at the store. Please note items such as granola bars, Vienna sausages, peanut butter crackers, and **any items with "pop tops" are helpful** to our homeless and transitioning folks. Suggested items:



- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Vienna Sausages | Canned Fruit | Hand Wipes |
| Cans of Tuna/Chicken | Boxes of Cereal | Pocket Tissues |
| Peanut Butter (plastic jars) | Canned Soups | Small Towels |
| Peanut Butter Crackers | Canned Chili | Deodorant |
| Granola Bars | | |

2023 FLOWER CHART

The 2023 Flower Chart is posted on the office window in the Fellowship Hall. When you sign up, you may designate the following:

Make a gift to ELCA Good Gifts/God's Global Barnyard <https://goodgifts.elca.org> This is a great 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 monetary 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.



PASTOR'S MONTH AT A GLANCE



Repeating meetings:

Staff meeting - Mondays from Noon-2:00 pm; joint meeting
with St. Christopher staff once/month

Clergy Pericope Study - Tuesdays on Zoom from 11:00 am-Noon

- Jan 1 Lead joint worship at 9:30 am
- Jan 3 Breakfast Fellowship 8:00 am at Dixie House Café
- Jan 9-13 Vacation
- Jan 14 Wedding at St. Matthew's Noon-4:00 pm
- Jan 17 Annual Report Submission
- Jan 19 Council Meeting on Zoom 6:45 pm
- Jan 22 Wedgwood Arts Series, Jin Ah Kwon, Concert Pianist 4:00 pm
- Jan 29 Mutual Ministry Thank You Dinner
- Jan 29 Wedgwood Concert Series, Chamber Orchestra 7:00 pm



Survey Interviewers Needed!

*As a Field Representative for the U.S. Census Bureau,
you collect data for your community.*

- People Person Job!
- Flexible Schedule, about 20 hours per week (day, evening, weekend)
- \$15.47 - \$17.04 Hourly (depending on location), plus 62.5¢ per mile driven
- Work from your home base driving to housing units to interview
- No Experience Needed, training and laptop provided

Email Name, Phone, Address, County to:
denver.fr.applications@census.gov

Must be a U.S. Citizen, have a driver's license and reliable vehicle.
The U.S. Department of Commerce is an Equal Opportunity Employer. This agency provides
reasonable accommodations to applicants with disabilities and will assist with the application process.



Thank You!

A note from the parents of Anita Bodak's great niece:

Thank you for your prayers for baby Josie; her surgery was a success!

Merry Christmas and God bless you all!

Love, Michael, Jaclyn and baby Josie Guerra

Council/Staff Charades (left)

Caroling (below)



Festive Carolers



Tommy & Diane hosts after caroling



Catholic Charities Angel Tree



Catholic Charities picking up Angel Tree gifts



Children's Choir in worship



Women's Christmas Party

