

**Good News**  
**From New Road**  
**St. Matthew Lutheran Church, God's Family in Service**

**August 2020**

St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church



Dear St. Matthew Family,

We are reminded in Ecclesiastes chapter three that there is a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance...a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing. We are experiencing a mix of all of these things these days. As we continue to remain physically distant from one another, and events and gatherings are postponed we grieve, we weep, and we sit in that disappointment. We also find places to laugh and experience hope, as we trust in Christ, that we will get through this together.

We still don't know what the case numbers are going to look like in Waco in the coming weeks, and so the council has not set a date for our return to in person worship. I continue to be in weekly conversation with leadership in the Northern Texas- Northern Louisiana Synod, and our own Heart of Texas conference. Their guidance, which is consistent with city, county, and state health departments, is that churches should not begin in person worship until our county sees a steady decline in new cases for at least 14 days. In addition, we are also monitoring the positivity rate which is still dangerously high at 19% (a safe rate is about 5% or below).

We know that other Texas ELCA churches are meeting again, but generally in areas that are seeing a decline or have not had many cases to begin with. I continue to admire the leadership of St. Matthew as decisions are made with the best interest of the entire community in mind, sometimes going against personal wants and desires.

With all of that said, I miss you. Those three words don't seem to transcend the weight of what it has been like to be a part these many months. Time keeps moving – slow some days, quick others, but I miss you. I miss seeing your faces, I miss learning with you on Sunday mornings, I miss the handshakes and the hugs, I miss making music with you, and I especially miss sharing in the most holy meal together.

Sunday March 8<sup>th</sup> was the last time we gathered around Christ's table together to share in this meal of grace. While it is still not safe for us to gather for worship in person, the Church council and I believe that offering Holy Communion in a special way, will give us the courage, strength, and hope we need to continue to get through these unique times.

**On Sunday, August 9, 2020 from 6:00pm-8:00pm**, a few leaders from this community, and I will be stationed at St. Matthew Lutheran Church to distribute blessings and everything needed for you to commune. Our plan for this evening will provide you not only with an opportunity to receive communion, but also for some needed check in time, all from a safe distance. Below you will find step by step instructions for attending this **Grace to Go** event.

Please follow these crucial instructions, since we are counting on one another to keep each other safe.

If you have any questions or are in need of anything, please don't hesitate to contact me 717-383-3399. We look forward to seeing you and sharing the body and blood of Christ in this way.

And remember, God loves you and so do I,  
Pastor Kelsey

**Details on Grace to Go – August 9**

1. Drive to St. Matthew Lutheran Church (800 N. New Road, Waco) anytime between 6:00pm and 8:00pm on Sunday, August 9, 2020.
2. Enter the parking lot at the designated entrance off of New Road, and follow the standard one way driving around the building.
3. Upon entering the parking lot, volunteers will direct and greet you. All volunteers will be masked. Please plan to properly wear a mask any time you put down your vehicle window to interact with anyone. If you don't have a mask, we will provide you and any passengers with them.
4. You will be directed, one vehicle at a time, to stop in front of the communion station. Please maintain appropriate distance with the car in front of you, and remain in your vehicle at all times.
5. Once you arrive at the designated communion station, please put your vehicle in park and leave it running. In addition to receiving a blessing from Pastor Kelsey, we will check in with you, address any concerns you may have, and receive prayer requests.
6. A volunteer, using safe practices for physical distancing and hygiene, will distribute the blessed communion supplies to your party. These communion supplies include individually wrapped grape juice servings topped with individually wrapped wafers. The entire kit is wrapped in one convenient package.
7. Do not open or consume communion at this time. We want to encourage you to wash your hands so the best place to consume the elements is at home. This will also help prevent traffic backups in the parking lot.
8. When your turn is over at the communion station, you will then exit the parking lot onto New Road, as you go in peace to love and serve the Lord!

**Church Council will be meeting weekly by Zoom****Council Highlights – July 21, 2020**

Members present: Stephanie Abright, Sally Engelbrecht, Sharon Gripp, Shelly Jasek, Paula Jenson, Pastor Kelsey, Kirk Krause, Linda Stanford, Cynthia Tingle and Jeremy Wallace

Members absent: Paul Larson

- The amount in the checking account is \$214,008.02 as of June 30, 2020. The dedicated account balance, included in the checking account, is \$114,683.14.
- Thank you to John Taylor for agreeing to audit the church's 2019 financial records. John completed the 2018 audit, so this is his second year to perform the audit.
- The new air-conditioning unit has been installed and work on one of the existing units has been completed.
- The scholarship checks have been issued. Congratulations to the six recipients!
- Due to the Coronavirus, Briarwood is sustaining a loss of summer income and prayers are requested.

- Within the next month, the Finance Committee will begin the budgeting process and a Nominating Committee will be formed. Please begin preparing for your committee's 2021 budget and prayerfully consider serving on the St. Matthew Lutheran Church Council. If you are interested, let one of your Council members know so your name may be given to the Nominating Committee.
- The Council will continue to watch the Coronavirus statistics for a decline in numbers. We are wanting a safe return for all of us.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sally Engelbrecht, Secretary

*This format is to provide highlights of the Council Meeting. A copy of the minutes will be available from the church office no later than the end of each month.*



### W-ELCA News

The combined circles meeting and potluck lunch scheduled for August 22 has been cancelled. The next scheduled W-ELCA Board meeting will be October 14, 2020 at 1:30 p.m.



Pastor Kelsey will be out of the office August 12-19, as she and her husband Jon take a road trip to PA to visit family.



### **Bible Study**

Bible study led by Pastor Kelsey will continue on zoom on Wednesdays at 11:00 a.m. Bible study will not meet on

August 12<sup>th</sup>, and 19<sup>th</sup> since Pastor Kelsey will be traveling to and from Pennsylvania.

### **Happy Hour**

Join members of this community for fellowship online, Thursday nights at 5:30 pm. This is a great way to connect with those we have been missing these last couple of months. If you need information on how to participate email or call Pastor Kelsey

Congratulations to our **2020 Bracken Scholarship Recipients!** Each year deserving students from our congregation are awarded college scholarships from the Alabell T. and W. Earl Bracken, Sr. Scholarship Fund. Our recipients this year are:

Henry Beard  
Andrew Dittmann  
Paul Dittmann  
Hallie Hafer  
Aaron Jasek  
Ryan Taylor



### **Notes of Gratitude**



**Thank you** all so much for your prayers and thoughtfulness through Mother's illness and death. Your many memorials, cards, phone calls and visits meant so much to our family. She's an angel in heaven now and I'm sure God and loved ones surround her.

God bless, Jones', Cryes', and Pietzschs'.

**Thank you** so much to the scholarship committee and to the congregation for not just this most recent Bracken Scholarship award, but also for supporting me throughout my whole education. Unless my life takes a drastic turn, this should be my last semester of college - I'll be moving on to exciting places soon. It's been an honor to be your friend and occasional sound booth engineer.

- Andrew Dittmann

**Thank you** to the St Matthew congregation, the church council, and the Bracken Scholarship Committee. My appreciation for the community that I've been a part of for so many years also comes with the knowledge that I'm not alone in my next steps in life. Thank you all for being a part of my life.

- Paul Dittmann

### **Art as Worship Update**

In response to the highly unusual circumstances of 2020, the St. Matthew Lutheran Church Fine Arts Committee would like to announce a change to this year's plans for Art as Worship. We had intended to celebrate our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary by revisiting all the themes from previous years, but have decided to put that plan on hold until 2021. Instead we are announcing a fully-online gallery show to be held in November with a new theme of VIGIL.

The theme of VIGIL was inspired by Pastor Kelsey Fitting-Snyder's suggestion of framing our experiences around the atmosphere of Holy Saturday. That day is full of the almost, but not yet; the tension of holding the pain, disappointment and doubt. It is a day that grasps the hope that tomorrow will come.

Holy Saturday services are often called Easter Vigil, the Paschal Vigil, or the Great Vigil of Easter. It is a liturgy held in traditional Christian churches as the first official celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus.

### **vigil**

vig·il | \ 'vi-jəl \

Definition of vigil

1: the act of keeping awake at times when sleep is customary

2: an event or a period of time when a person or group stays in a place and quietly waits, prays, etc., especially at night

3a: a watch formerly kept on the night before a religious feast with prayer or other devotions

b: the day before a religious feast observed as a day of spiritual preparation

c: evening or nocturnal devotions or prayers — usually used in plural

The 2020 gallery will be an online visual experience rather than an in-person gathering in the hallways of our church gallery. Photos will need to be submitted by artists by November 9 so that they can be collected into an online show, which will be premiered on November 21 (the original date of our gallery opening).

Art as Worship is open to artists working in all media. Entries must be your own original artwork. Each applicant may submit up to two works with up to two photos of each; additional photos or video of any three-dimensional work (sculpture, books, etc.) may be submitted. The St. Matthew Fine Arts

Ministry reserves the right to reject work that is deemed inappropriate. The full artist's application can be found at [www.fineartsministry.blogspot.com](http://www.fineartsministry.blogspot.com)

### **Prayer Requests and Concerns**

Pastor Kenneth Moerbe touched many lives during his time here at St. Matthew. Pastor Moerbe and his wife Paula live in Brenham not too far from other folks connected to St. Matthew (one of whom being Pastor Pat Dietrich). Paula has recently moved into memory care. It has been a trying time for both of them. If you wish to reach out to Pastor Moerbe with a card or a note at this time his address is: 138 Ahrens Ave, Brenham, TX 77833-5139

While we remain apart, we continue to pray for one another and those close to us. Since we have not been together for worship, the prayer list has not been updated regularly. If you have an update or a concern, please call the office and leave a message or reach out to Pastor Kelsey directly.

**Members with Prayer Concerns:** Ron Knobel, Alfred Gstattenbauer, Steve Jenson, Agnes Decker, Clydine Arthur, Ron & Stephanie Lambring, Lauren Roller, Bill & Elnora Schwake, Ron Peterson, Eunice & John Linda, Ty Henrichs, Tammy Vickrey, Stephanie Partin, Irene Erickson, Melba Hafer, Henry & Mary Ann Lippe, Toni Barnum

### **Those for whom prayer is requested:**

Amanda Burke, Allen Fields (Beth Pristash)  
 Carlos Remedios, Rodney Roller, Patrick Dalton,  
 Brenda Light, Blake Griffin, Lou Brazil (Terry Roller)  
 Roger Sanders (Clydine Arthur)  
 Jimmy Moore, Laura Burney (Ross & Kim Browne)  
 Philip Reyna (Mary Koon)  
 Melva Williamson (Donna & Bobby Zimmerman)  
 Larry Warenke (Jean & Bill Moeller)  
 Jo Bob Gough (Mary Herring)  
 Melva Williamson (Donna Zimmerman)  
 Jerry Murphy (Peggy Tooker)  
 Ty Croford (Linda Stanford)  
 Janice Richter (Meridith Sellers)  
 Peggy Ricketts, Vicki Terry (Carol Linda)  
 Patsy Forrester (Bill and Diane Jones)  
 Clinton Damron (Cora Gillespie)  
 Kenneth and Paula Moerbe

### **Our Christian Sympathy for**

the family and friends of Abel Torres

Thank you for keeping members of the congregation, and their friends and family in your prayers. We know that situations change, and as we work to ensure best care of those in need of prayer, we will keep people on the list for a month at a time. Please contact the church office with any additions or removals.

## NEWSLETTER

The **monthly newsletter deadline** is the **3rd Sunday of each month.**

Please send submissions to [cvanauken@grandecom.net](mailto:cvanauken@grandecom.net) or place your handwritten information and thank you notes in the wooden box near the entrance of the workroom. Thank you.

### **August Birthdays**

DeAnna Beard	8/2
Daniel Evans	8/3
Donna Gustafson	8/4
Chelsea Smith	8/5
Meredith Sellers	8/7
Elisabeth Vanderkinter	8/7
Amy Koester	8/11
Jerry Cureton	8/14
Allie Schmedthorst	8/15
Cynthia Frey	8/22
Ray Baker, Jr.	8/24
Lauren Roller	8/24
Bill Gillespie	8/25
Alison Herzberg	8/25

### **August Wedding Anniversaries**

Joe & Cindy Hutyra	8/1
David & Deborah Evans	8/2
Gus & Donna Gustafson	8/3
Steve & Paula Jenson	8/8
Phil & Carolyn Van Auken	8/11
Jerry & Darlene Cureton	8/18
Gary & Alison Herzberg	8/18
Kevin & Jane Reiske	8/24
Larry & Helen Henrichs	8/26
Ron & Stephanie Lambring	8/30
Ray & Heather Baker	8/31

### **Online Calendar Updates**

As we work to keep our **online calendar** up to date, please contact Sally Engelbrecht, [sengel1918@yahoo.com](mailto:sengel1918@yahoo.com), for any additions or corrections.



### **Offering Giving Option**

 Simply Giving is offered through the church office for automatic withdrawal from your checking or savings account to give to St. Matthew Lutheran Church. In addition, you can give from your phone using the GivePlus+ app and entering zip code 76710 to find St. Matthew.