

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

September 2021

St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church



Our Normal

As I sit to write this, it has been exactly two years to the day, since our journey began together. Two years of walking with Christ together, two years of discerning and trusting the nudge of the Holy Spirit together, two years of worshipping and praying together. In the midst of all of that, all I can say is that I am truly grateful to be the pastor of St. Matthew Lutheran Church.

I wouldn't describe my first two years as a solo pastor as "normal," but is any ministry really normal? We could have never anticipated that these two years of ministry would be as difficult as they were unique. As we were trying to get to know one another it shifted from coffee dates and lunches, to phone calls and zoom meetings. Who knew my cat would become a fun part of my ministry? We have lost together and grieved together. We also have laughed together and hoped together.

If I could put a word on these past two years it would be resilient. The dictionary defines resilience as being able to withstand or come back from difficulty quickly. St. Matthew has done this and more. But it is the community, and the work of the Holy Spirit that makes this possible. It is the focus on loving one another as Jesus has first loved us. We have been bent and stretched in ways we didn't know we would be, but the other part of resilience is coming back into shape afterwards. We have sprung back with a renewed sense of energy that is felt in worship, in service towards others, and time spent in community.

I don't know what the Holy Spirit has in store for us as we begin year three, but I am looking forward to finding out. Perhaps that is what is normal about all of this, not knowing exactly what is going to come next, but trusting that God is moving among us in the meantime.

In the Hope of Christ,
Pastor Kelsey

An update regarding group meetings...

As we begin to move our worship indoors and allow groups to meet inside the church we will also begin updating the website calendar to organize when groups will be meeting. If you wish to hold a group meeting at the church, call the church office to add your group to the list to be added to the calendar.

From the CDC:

"To maximize protection from the Delta variant and prevent possibly spreading it to others, wear a mask indoors in public if you are in an area of substantial or high transmission." According to the CDC and the local health district, McLennan and many other Texas counties, have been identified as high transmission areas. To help prevent the spread to the most vulnerable in our community, masks are recommended indoors for worship and group gatherings, but not required at this time.

**Council Meeting Highlights****August 9, 2021**

Members present: Stephanie Abright, Linda Stanford, Pastor Kelsey, Kirk Krause, Cynthia Tingle, Terry Roller, Denise Masters, Ashley Jenson, & Beth Pristash

Members absent:

- The balance in the checking account at the end of the month was \$277,681.
- Working to get a time set up to get basic CPR and first aid training on our AED machine.
- Education committee is set for their plan for the fall, and have a few teachers lined up.
- Work around the property continues with various projects outside such as landscaping (removing dead trees) and smaller inside projects (such as light replacements).
- Continued Vigilance around COVID-19 in our community, especially with rising concerns with the Delta variant.

- Discussion about establishing a free pantry.

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**

Circle meetings for the Mary Martha Circle will resume in September once a month on the **First Wednesday** at 5:30 p.m. in the Parlor; our first meeting back will be Wednesday, **September 1st**. Circle meetings for the Katherine Luther Circle and the Grace Circle will meet at their own scheduled times.

Gathering Together event at Briarwood

NTNL Fellowship at Briarwood: Join us for fun for all ages at Briarwood on Saturday, September 11! We will gather together for lunch, worship, remembering and reflecting, fellowship, games and activities, and treats! Briarwood facilities will be staffed and available for family fun. There will be worship, fun and games for all ages! Lunch will also be served. If you are interested in going, please see the sign up sheet outside the sanctuary. We will try to arrange a carpool if we have enough people interested in going! If you have any questions, please contact Jeremy Wallace at jwallace@harmonytx.org.

LWR Health Kits

The in-gathering of quilts and health kits for Lutheran World Relief is in November. **Now is the time to start planning and gathering supplies.** LWR health kits help children and adults with hygiene as people find themselves in difficult and unpredictable situations. Items needed for the health kits include: One bath-size towel 52"x27" (dark color), two bath-size bars of soap 4-5 oz. in original packaging, one toothbrush in original packaging, one comb packaging removed, nail file and or clippers with file attached removed from packaging.

God's work. Our hands.

“God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday is September 12, 2021. This day is an opportunity to celebrate who we are as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America – one church, freed in Christ to serve and love our neighbor.

Service activities offer an opportunity for us to explore one of our most basic convictions as Lutherans: that all of life in Jesus Christ – every act of service, in every daily calling, in every corner of life – flows freely from a living, daring confidence in God’s grace.

There are a few ways you can participate on September 12.

1) We will be collecting items for **The Family Abuse Center of Waco.**

- **Cleaning Supplies** (disinfectant, bleach, paper towels, laundry soap, etc.)
- **Hygiene Supplies** (ethnic hygiene products, toilet paper, toothpaste, deodorant, shampoo, etc.)
- **Diapers** (all sizes)

2) Writing **cards** and collecting **snacks** for **frontline workers**

- **Individually wrapped snacks** (crackers, granola bars, cookies, chips) any pick me up snack to help them get through their day
- **Cards** will be provided at church, but if you have thank you cards you wish to use feel free to bring them along, we will write and sign cards after worship.

3) **Neighborhood Cleanup** (weather permitting)

- After worship we will clean up trash in and our neighborhood.

There will be a signup sheet in the gathering area to sign up for specific activities and donations. For any questions reach out to Pastor Kelsey.

Pastorkelsey@stmattwaco.org

Blessing of the Animals

St. Francis is the patron saint of animals and his feast day is Oct. 4th. In remembrance of him, we will have a short blessing of the animals service on the evening of Oct. 3rd.

Bible Study

Join Pastor Kelsey for Bible Study on **Wednesdays at 11:00 a.m.**

Save the Date

- ✚ Blessing of the Animals Oct 3rd
- ✚ NT-NL Synod Day at Briarwood September 11th
- ✚ God’s Work. Our Hands. Sunday September 12th

Stephen Ministry

Stephen Ministry supervision **meets the second Sunday of each month at 8:30 a.m.** for about 45 minutes prior to the church service. Please plan to attend as we have much to catch up on after not meeting for over a year.

**Sunday Learning at St. Matthew**

Sunday Learn will include classes for children and adults and take place after church on Sundays from 10:45a.m. through 11:30 a.m.

The **Spark All Kids** class will be for kids pre-school through high school. Spark All Kids will help learners explore Bible story themes from the Old Testament, Creation, to Jonah and the Big Fish in class and on their own with creative activities, interesting facts, and stories including:

- A leaflet for each lesson in the curriculum.
- Fun, thoughtful activities help kids see how the story relates to the world around them.
- Active learning including hands-on activities, interactive games, and buddy activities and Includes facts and stories about history, and modern-day issues that relate to Bible stories.

The Adult Learning Class will continue the Bible Project that we started last year and cover a book of the Bible each week.

- The class will start with a video and end with a picture that illustrates the happenings of the books.
- While the information of the Bible Project is an overview, you will learn basic facts about each book of the Bible.
- The art is captivating and the information is comprehensive.
- Pastor Kelsey will teach this class.



Sound Volunteers

Help during worship doesn't always look like reading or serving up front, sometimes it means helping in the back behind the scenes. If you are interested in learning how to run our sound and help with the live-stream please reach out to Pastor Kelsey or call the church office. A guide is being prepared to help to make it as simple as possible.



Fellowship for Single Women

The September meeting for the fellowship for single women will be held Tuesday, September 28th at 10:00 a.m. at Cafe Cappuccino. For any questions, please contact Rosemary Fielder.

Domino Meetings



Domino meetings have resumed and meeting in the afternoon on the first and third Tuesday of each month.

Friday Quilters Meetings

Friday Quilters **are meeting again** in the Fellowship Hall on Fridays at 9:00 a.m. We usually finish up around 11:00 a.m. Come join us. If you can tie a knot you can help us assemble the quilts. We have a great fellowship time.



Dear friends,



We are hopeful for the future, while we also acknowledge that there is much healing to be done as we move forward together. With this in mind, **we are pleased to announce that this year's theme for Art as Worship will be HEALING.**

Please consider responding creatively to this theme, while perhaps finding healing for yourself in that very response. And please share this invitation with the creative people in your life.

Our intention is to host **our opening gala in person on Saturday, November 13 from 6:30 - 9:00 p.m.** at St. Matthew Lutheran Church in Waco. We also plan to host an online gallery again this year in order to share this experience with a wider audience.

<http://fineartsministry.blogspot.com/2021/06/2021-art-as-worship-theme-announcement.html>

Emergency Fund

Through your generosity, St. Matthew now has an Emergency Fund available to members of the St. Matthew community for up to \$250 per year. This fund is to assist individuals/families with immediate needs related, but not limited to, food, housing medical costs, job loss, and other emergent situations. Hard copies of the applications are available in the church office. If you would like to contribute to this fund you may do so by indicating "emergency fund" on your offering envelop or write it in the memo line of your written check. Any questions please contact Pastor Kelsey or Stephanie Abright, Council President.



Members with Prayer Concerns:

Steve Jenson, Agnes Decker,
Clydine Arthur, Ron Lambring,
Lauren Roller, Elnora Schwake,
John Linda, Ty Henrichs, Larry Henrichs, Tammy
Vickrey, Stephanie Partin, Melba Hafer, Darlene &
Jerry Cureton, Lee Cruse, Rita Bruer, Weldon
Howell, Joanne Zuch.

Those for whom prayer is requested:

Archer Frank, Melanie (Beth Pristash)
Rodney Roller, Patrick Dalton, Kylie Kubicki, Ralph
Sparks, Wanda Brinegar (Terry Roller)
Roger Sanders (Clydine Arthur)
Jimmy Moore, Laura Burney (Ross & Kim Browne)
Philip Reyna (Mary Koon)
Larry Warenke (Jean Moeller)
Joann Bottoms (Mary Herring)
Ty Croford (Linda Stanford)
Vicki Terry (Carol Linda)
Larry Leshikar (Debbie Evans)
Kathy Neill (Bradley Linda)
Bill Mosley, Rodney Castilleja, Chris Mosley, Greg
Woodul (Paula Jenson)
Dale Pommer (Sharon Peterson)
Paula Barfield Unger (Rilla Vieregg)
Phil Bancale, Reba Widmer (Bancale Family)
Pastor Kenneth and Paula Moerbe, Candice
Vonasek, Debbie Vonasek, Dusty Schwake (Elnora
Schwake)
Tricia Fabiani (Doris Akard)
Patsy & Curtis Forrester (Bill & Diane Jones)
Brittany Roach (Ashley Jenson)
Rhonda & Shane Owens (Denise Self)
Glen Wood, Brandi McDonald (Sue Hensel)
Frank Simons (Colleen Early)
Wes Ledbetter (Sally Engelbrecht)
The people of Haiti (Jon & Chirs Anderson)

September Birthdays

James Stokes	9/02
Michael Pareya	9/06
Karl Aho	9/07
Megan Grip	9/07
Peggy Tooker	9/07
Abel Pederson	9/08
Branden Love-Stone	9/13
Gary Herzberg	9/16
Jean Melzer	9/16
David Hafer	9/19
Robert Krienke	9/20
Karen Mullens	9/22
Arlene Schwarz	9/23
Bill Abright	9/25
John Jasek	9/25
Lashana Hatfield	9/26
Larry Henrichs	9/26
Kaylee Landon	9/26
Tammy Vickrey	9/26
Lee Nordt	9/27
Marilyn Cruse	9/30

September Anniversaries

Jay & Jean Dittmann	9/03
LuDean & Rita Bruer	9/09
Del & Sue Hensel	9/10
Terry & Janet Roller	9/13
Eva & Randall Woods	9/13
Michael & Cynthia Frey	9/18
Jeff & Kaylee Landon	9/19

Mobile Giving

On **September 30th**, the **GivePlus Mobile App** will be shut down and will no longer be used to give offerings, instead, the **Vanco Mobile App** will be used for mobile gifts. Any recurring offerings on the app will automatically be transferred to the new app, and we encourage you to download the new app for any mobile gifts you wish to make.



Thank you for keeping members of the congregation, and their friends and family in your prayers. Please contact the church office with any additions or removals.



Join us and folks from around the synod at **Briarwood Leadership Center** (Argyle, TX) on **Saturday, September 11, 11am – 4pm**, for lunch, worship, rock climbing, zipline, archery, field games, and a frozen treat! A great day for the whole family to enjoy!

The Rev. Christopher Otten, ELCA Director of Chaplaincy, will be present with us to preach. **All ages are welcome.**

NEWSLETTER 

The **monthly newsletter deadline** is

the **3rd Sunday of each month**. Please send submissions to cvanauken@grandecom.net. Thank you.

September 2021

◀ Aug 2021	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	▶ Oct 2021
				1 11am Bible Study 5:30pm Mary Martha Circle Meeting 6pm Choir	2	3 9am Quilters	4	
5 9:30am Worship Service 10:45am Sunday Learning	6	7 12pm Dominoes	8 11am Bible Study 6pm Choir	9	10 9am Quilters	11 9am Waco Calligraphy Guild		
12 9:30am Worship Service 10:45am Sunday Learning	13 10am Grace Circle	14	15 11am Bible Study 6pm Choir	16	17 9am Quilters	18		
19 9:30am Worship Service 10:45am Sunday Learning	20	21 6:30pm Stephen Ministry CE	22 11am Bible Study 6pm Choir	23	24 9am Quilters	25		
26 9:30am Worship Service 10:45am Sunday Learning	27	28 10am Fellowship For Single Women 12pm Dominoes	29 11am Bible Study 6pm Choir	30				