

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

September 2022

St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church

I spent August 8-12 at the convention center in Columbus, Ohio, for the ELCA's 2022 Churchwide Assembly: "Embody the Word". This gathering of lay people, rostered ministers, Synod and Churchwide staff, and special guests are held every three years, and is the highest legislative body in the church. Over 800 voting members from each of the 65 synods of the ELCA are tasked with electing leaders (this year, the ELCA Vice President, along with a portion of the members of the ELCA Church Council and of various boards), approving the budget, considering memorials sent from various synod assemblies, and discussing other business raised from the floor of the assembly.

While I've attended many annual synod assemblies, this was my first time at Churchwide. In other years I might keep up with the movement of the week via Twitter or Facebook posts, or occasionally by watching the livestream of plenary sessions. It was so interesting (and, dare I say, exciting?!) to be on the other side of that this year, in "the room where it happened," as it were.

As with similar events, such as the ELCA Youth Gathering, I was left with a greater appreciation for the breadth and diversity of our church. It was good to be reminded that there were voting members whose first language was not English, and at certain points throughout the week, translation or bilingual worship and song were included. The moments where I didn't understand the language being spoken or sung helped me de-center myself and my own experience, and also allowed me to experience scripture in a new way, as I listened for cadences and repeated sounds. It was good to be reminded of the richness found in the variety of cherished traditions coming out of different locations and ethnic groups across the church. It was good to be reminded of both what we hold in common, and those things that are unique to each context. It was good to be reminded that the kingdom of God is so much broader than my limited experience of people who look or speak like I do.

This was, perhaps, most apparent in worship, which was absolutely a highlight of the week for me. Each day's worship service had a different style and feel, with a fantastic range of worship leaders, preachers, readers, and vocal and instrumental music - lament and celebration; organ and drum circle, strings and brass and electric guitar; light and fire and water; dance and fluttering ribbon; rich voices both deep and high. It was all amazing, and also - all of this would be quite difficult to replicate on a congregational or even synodical scale. This is definitely one of the gifts of this type of gathering - it allows us to be more fully "church together," and to experience and celebrate the rich and diverse talents of God's people!

In addition to COVID test kits and a reusable mug, the welcome bag we received at registration on Monday included a copy of *All Creation Sings*, a hymnal supplement released by Augsburg Fortress in Fall 2020. Throughout the week, we heard and sang about 30 hymns/pieces of liturgical music from that resource, some of which Sha Towers has already begun including in our worship. All of the worship services were streamed and remain available on the ELCA website, and I commend them to you.

While we worshiped together each day, most of our time was spent in seven plenary sessions. Synod groups were seated along one side of round tables, facing the stage, and there were six pairs of microphones staged in the aisles - each pair contained a red (speaking in opposition) and a green (speaking in favor) mic, staffed by volunteers. Around the edges of the room were spaces for various groups of non-voting members (Churchwide staff, synod staff, seminary presidents, visitors, congregational observers) as well as for members of the Church Council.

Lots of technology was involved, as the plenaries were all streamed live, plus speakers on the stage and at the floor mics were projected onto two large screens at the front of the hall, along with live captioning. Each voting member received a personalized voting card, which could be read by the Blackberry-like voting machines, as well as by the identical machines at the floor mics, which placed you in the queue to speak and allowed for the speaker's name, pronouns, and other identifying information to be projected on the screen.

There are several places to get an overview of the legislative decisions that were made: Religion News Service's "5 things you need to know from the ELCA Churchwide Assembly", and daily summaries from Living Lutheran are both good options. Needless to say, I am still in awe of the sheer volume of work we managed to complete during the week. The agenda was packed full, and - somehow! - we addressed it all, discussing, amending, and voting on a variety of issues. Though we sometimes got tangled up in parliamentary procedure and endured sluggish voting machines, there was a spirit of patience and graciousness throughout the week. This was due in part, I think, to the thoughtful prayers and songs woven through our plenary sessions.

Of course, it was not all work and worship. It was a joy to spend time with others from the synod, reconnect with seminary and camp friends, meet in real life the people whose names I see while scrolling through clergy Facebook groups, and make new connections with folks who share similar interests or mutual friends.

While this work was vitally important in the life of the ELCA, the fruit of that will be revealed in the months and years that follow. As a church body, we're so very good at words, and yet the call of scripture is to embody, flesh out, live out those words in ways that are tangible, and real, and good. So - that part remains to be seen. Will our decisions and actions make a difference in the lived experience of God's people? I certainly hope so. I don't know what the outcome of this work will look like, but I'm reminded that we're a church that is always reforming, that we are a church rooted in death and resurrection, and that we are a church that trusts the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Introducing Seminarian Jessica Nipp

St. Matthew is excited to be the ministerial fieldwork site for Jessica Nipp. Jessica will be here on Sunday mornings during the academic year to observe, learn, and participate during her first year of seminary. Throughout her time at St. Matthew, Jessica will take on different responsibilities in worship and in teaching to help develop her skills for ordained ministry.

In order for students to get to know their congregations, we are to show hospitality by treating Jessica to lunch twice a month. There will be a signup sheet outside the sanctuary to take Jessica to lunch following worship or learning on Sundays.

Jessica's first Sunday with us will be September 25. We will have an open forum during Sunday learning to get to know her better. In the meantime, here is a little more info about Jessica.

Jessica grew up in central Texas. She attended the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, where she met her husband, Nathan Nipp. They lived in Houston for five years, then moved back to Temple to be near family.

They have three children – Abigail who is 10, William who is 8, and Lizzie who is 6. Jessica has been homeschooling her children and enjoys reading

and learning alongside them. She grew up Baptist, but she and Nathan found their way to the Lutheran church and fell in love with the view of God and Christian life that they found there. Jessica started discerning a call to ministry in 2021 and is excited to be at St. Matthew as part of her education towards that call. Jessica enjoys travelling, knitting, puzzles, and the aquarium.



Regarding COVID 19:

As of Thursday, August 4th, the McLennan County Health District has indicated the community risk level for COVID-19 is **MEDIUM**.

We encourage you to wear a mask indoors and around others, especially around anyone high risk or unvaccinated. If you feel unwell stay home, and get tested if you notice symptoms of COVID-19



Council Meeting Highlights
August 8th 2022

- As of the end of July, the total of the church checking account is \$240,468.86.
- All pictures for the church directory have been taken and given to Nate, who is assembling the directory.
- Long tables for the fellowship hall have been delivered and round tables are back-ordered. Track, lights, and supplies for artwork to be displayed in the fellowship hall approved.
- The property committee is discussing the new pricing on the Church's electrical contract renewal, as well as the lack of smoke detectors.

Regarding group meetings...

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.



W-ELCA NEWS

The Women of St. Matthew had a wonderful General Meeting on Saturday, August 13th. Laynie Miller, a Master Gardener, gave a great informative talk on raised beds and herb planting. A delicious salad luncheon followed!

Peggy Tooker has led a team of ladies to sew the Lutheran World Relief school kit bags. Linda Heyde applied for a Thrivent Grant and received \$250.00 towards the school supplies. We were able to fill 37 school kits which will be shipped later on this year!


Our next BIG gathering will be the Synod Fall Retreat which will be held on October 7-8 at St. Matthew. Our Conference is hosting this event but much of the work will fall on the ladies of St. Matthew! If you would like to volunteer to help in some capacity, please let Linda Heyde know. Several ladies have already signed up at the last General Meeting.

The cost to attend is \$70.00 but **you can apply for a scholarship of \$50.00** towards it, so that means only \$20.00 for the entire weekend. The HOT Conference has **10 scholarships available!** Registration forms, scholarship forms and the tentative agenda for the weekend are available at church or from Linda Heyde. Meals will be catered and we are excited about our guest speaker, Karen Porter. She is well known throughout the Christian Women's Ministry. She is a publisher and will have her books for sale at the retreat. You don't want to miss this!



And don't worry - there is no Baylor football game that weekend!

Deadline for registration is September 21. Mark your calendar now!



Bible Study

The Bible Study group meets every Wednesday at 11:00 a.m. Currently, we are studying the book of Romans.

2022 Art As Worship

The Fine Arts Committee would like to announce that the theme for the 2022 Art as Worship exhibit will be WILDERNESS. More information about submitting your artistic response to this theme can be found at www.fineartsministry.blogspot.com. The opening gala is currently scheduled for Saturday, November 12 from 6:30 p.m.--- 9:00 p.m.

**Stephen Ministry Meetings**

Supervision and CE will resume on **September 15th at 6:00 p.m.**

If you have any questions or want more information, please ask Bill Abright, Peggy Tooker, or Carol Linda.

Fellowship for Single Women

We meet on the fourth Tuesday of every month. Our next meeting will be on September 27th at 10:00 a.m. at Cafe Cappuccino. For any questions, please contact Rosemary Fielder (fielderatwaco@aol.com).

women's
fellowship

Friday Quilters Meetings

Friday Quilters meet in the Fellowship Hall on Fridays at 9:00 a.m. We usually finish up around 11:00 a.m.



QUILTING GROUP

Come join us. If you can tie a knot you can help us assemble the quilts. We have a great fellowship time.

New Dates for the Holy Land Trip

The Holy Land – A Biblical Seminar **Feb. 27- March 11 2023**

In partnership with St. Cecilia Tours, First Lutheran in Waco, and some friends at St. Paul Lutheran in Brenham, you will have an opportunity for something life changing, as together we take a trip to The Holy Land. The Bible will come alive as we spend time walking the streets of Jerusalem, take sail on the Sea of Galilee, and explore the humble town of Nazareth. St. Cecilia Tours provide an amazing experience in a way that is much more affordable compared to other tour companies. During our trip we will work with guide and scholar Aviv Herzlich, who is a native of Israel. Aviv is highly knowledgeable about Scripture, Christian doctrine, and the history and current situation of Israel. He is also a compelling communicator, who leads with kindness, compassion, and humor. If you've always wanted to visit the Holy Land, this would be a great trip to take.

There will be an information session on October 15th at 10:30am. Come, learn, and ask about any questions you may have. Below you will find a QR code to the full brochure.



To register go to <https://www.stcecilia.co/tours> and under registration select Lutheran Church Feb.27- March 11

If you have any questions or need help registering reach out to Pastor Kelsey.

Fall Book Study to begin - *Atlas of the Heart* by Brene Brown

The pandemic was trying on all of us for a variety of reasons, and many of us are still trying to process those feelings. Some of us have been through very difficult things in the past, or in are in the midst of difficulty right now. Brene Brown's *Atlas of the Heart* provides language and space to bring us back to ourselves. "If we want to find the way back to ourselves and one another, we need language and the grounded confidence to both tell our stories and to be stewards of the stories that we hear. In *Atlas of the Heart*, we explore eighty-seven of the emotions and experiences that define what it means to be human and walk through a new framework for cultivating meaningful connection."

Pastor Kelsey along with Jason O'Neal, from the NTNL Synod, will facilitate discussion. The book study will take place on Tuesday evenings at 7:00pm beginning on Oct. 4th. To encourage participation across St. Matthew and the synod, this study will take place on zoom. You will be encouraged to read during the week for the discussions on Tuesday that will last an hour. The book has 16 chapters and we will break the study into two 8 week sessions.

The first will begin in October 4 and will end November 22. We will pick back up in January and go until the end of February. The book is written in a way that you don't need to be at every session to explore and discuss. Info on signing up and registering will be available soon. We ask that you have the first chapter read by Oct. 4th. You can find the book at major and local bookstores, and it is also available on kindle and audible. If you have any questions please reach out to Pastor Kelsey.

Sunday Learning to Start September 11

Learning for all ages will begin on September 11. Classes will start around 10:45 and will be done by 11:30. There will be classes for pre-k, early elementary, middle and high school, and adults. Different instructors will lead the adult learning and topics will vary. If you have any questions reach out to Linda Stanford or Pastor Kelsey.

St. Matthew Axe Throwing Sept. 13

All are invited to Waco Axe Company on **Tuesday Sept. 13 at 6:00pm** (1526 Washington Ave). RSVP by signing up on the sheet in the gathering space outside the sanctuary, or send a message to Pastor Kelsey. Throwers must be 13+ and the cost is \$20 per person. Non-throwers are free. This is a great way to meet people in a casual setting, try something new, and get out any frustrations from the week. If the cost is prohibitive please let Pastor Kelsey know.

Save the Date

Oktoberfest 2022 will be in the evening on Oct. 2. This is a time to enjoy great food and fellowship. More details to come. As always, volunteers welcome for set up and clean up.

Thank you from Marcy Howell

Thanks to all who brought me goodies, all who sent me cards, and most of all everyone who came to Weldon's farwell party. I do appreciate your loving care.

- Marcy Howell

NT-NL Synod Mission Endowment Fund Fundraiser

On Saturday, October 1, there will be two in-person dinner fundraisers for our synod's grant-making ministry, the Mission Endowment Fund. Hosting the dinners are Faith Lutheran Church/Fort Worth and Christ Lutheran Church/Dallas.

The fundraising goal is \$30,000. The MEF hopes for strong support from congregations, but here are some ways you as individuals could help, too:

- Contribute individually to the MEF Grow the Good/Seeds that Change fundraiser. Send your check of whatever amount to Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod, 680 Copper Canyon Road, Argyle, TX 76226, memo line "MEF Grow the Good."
- Sponsor a table for \$300; you don't have to take up all 8 seats – you could even offer the whole table for others to sit at (same address as above). It would be fun to have a little competition between congregations, if you wanted to challenge folks you know at another congregation.

Contribute an item to the silent auction. For instance, if you have Dallas Cowboys season tickets, but there will be a game you won't be able to attend, that would make a great silent auction item, and you could get a tax write-off. Or, an exquisite crafted item. Or a gift card you don't plan to use.

Blessing Box

Thank you for your continued **donations** to the **Blessing Box**. It is often the case that we fill it one day and it is nearly empty the next. We are certainly filling a need in the community. As we endure the heat of the summer months, please be mindful of food selections for in the box. Water and hygiene products are also always needed.

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

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. If you have questions please contact Pastor Kelsey or Linda Stanford, Council President.



Members with Prayer Concerns: Steve Jenson, Clydine Arthur, Lauren Roller, Elnora Schwake, John Linda, Ty Henrichs, Larry Henrichs, Tammy Vickrey, Stephanie Partin, Rita Bruer, Jan Richter, Cora Gillespie, Jean Moeller, Florence Anderson, and Denise Self, Cameron, Nathan, and Liam Kirks



Those for whom prayer is requested:

- Melanie, Charlotte Sperfslage (Beth Pristash)
- Rodney Roller, Patrick Dalton, Kylie Kubicki, Ralph Sparks, Wanda Brinegar, Lorraine Mclane, Elaine Mclane, Betty, Matthew, James Hurst, Carolyn Hurst, Janice Byrd, Rich Buchner, Barbara Bradshaw, Clint Hancock, Jerry Mars, Jim Guest (Terry Roller)
- Roger Sanders (Clydine Arthur)
- Jimmy Moore, Laura Burney (Ross & Kim Browne)
- Philip Reyna (Mary Koon)
- Lou Brazile (Jean Moeller)
- Joann Bottoms, Jeff Mcneff, John P. Collier (Mary Herring)
- Ty Croford, Billy Stanford (Linda Stanford)
- Vicki Terry (Carol Linda)
- Kathy Neill (Bradley Linda)
- Bill Mosley, Rodney Castilleja (Paula Jenson)
- Dale Pommer (Sharon Peterson)
- Paula Barfield Unger (Rilla Vieregg)
- Pastor Kenneth Moerbe, Dusty Engelholm, Jason Lees Copeland (Elnora Schwake)
- Tricia Fabiani (Doris Akard)
- Lee Family (Anna Steggerda)
- Patsy & Curtis Forrester (Bill & Diane Jones)
- Frank Simons, Ruthie Simons, Kris Braswell, (Colleen Early)
- Don Carlson (Farrel Bolte)
- Marilyn Michalka (Meridith Sellers)
- Leonard, Janell, and Rose Janke (Arlene Schwarz)
- Daniel Cockrell (Denise Masters)
- Rhonda Owens, Terry Humphrey, Linda Burkett, Mark Alexander (Denise Self)
- Colter Clenents (Abrey Garret)
- Saul Guajardo (Ashley Jenson)



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.

September Birthdays

James Stokes	9/02
Karl Aho	9/07
Meghan Grip	9/07
Peggy Tooker	9/07
Meredith Ronnevik	9/07
Jean Melzer	9/16
David Hafer	9/19
Robert Krienke	9/10
Karen Mullens	9/22
Arlene Schwarz	9/23
Bill Abright	9/25
John Jasek	9/25
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
Rita & Luddean Bruer	9/09
Del & Sue Hensel	9/10
Terry & Janet Roller	9/13
Eva & Randall Woods	9/13
Michael & Cynthia Frey	9/18



The monthly newsletter deadline is the 3rd Sunday of each month. Please send submissions to

cvanauken@grandecom.net or place your handwritten information and thank you notes in the wooden box near the entrance of the workroom. Thank you!

September 2022

◀ August

October ▶

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1		2 9:00am Quilters	3
4 9:30am Worship Service	5	6	7 11:00am Bible Study 5:30 pm Mary Martha Circle 6:00pm Choir	8	9 9:00am Quilters	10 9:00am Calligraphy Guild
11 9:30am Worship Service 11:45am Sunday Learning	12 10:00am Grace Circle 4:30pm Katherine Luther Circle	13 6:00pm Axe Throwing	14 11:00am Bible Study 6:00pm Choir	15 6:00pm Stephen Ministry Supervision 6:30pm Stephen Ministry CE	16 9:00am Quilters	17
18 9:30am Worship Service 11:45am Sunday Learning	19	20	21 11:00am Bible Study 6:00pm Choir	22	23 9:00am Quilters	24
25 9:30am Worship Service 11:45am Sunday Learning	26	27 10:00am Fellowship for Single Women	28 11:00am Bible Study 6:00pm Choir	29	30 9:00am Quilters	