

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

November 2023

St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church

Gratitude. I feel like I write about, or talk about, this nine-letter word this time every year. And while I don't want to sound like a broken record, I whole heartedly believe that actively practicing gratitude is a hallmark of the Christian faith. Cultivating a life of gratitude takes time, energy, and practice, but when we do it, we open our eyes and see the world and our circumstances differently.

Gratitude, in its true essence, transcends mere appreciation for material blessings. It's an inner attitude that recognizes the inherent goodness in our lives, even amidst challenges. It sees the divine hand in the smallest of miracles, from the warmth of a shared smile to the serenity of a prayer whispered in solitude.

As Christians, our journey with gratitude is unique. We believe in a God who sees us, knows us, and loves us unconditionally. Gratitude, for us, is an act of faith. It's acknowledging that even when the path is rocky, God continues to walk with us, providing us hope and vision for the future.

The beauty of gratitude lies in its simplicity. Here are some ways to cultivate a grateful heart this November:

1. **Morning Thankfulness:** Start your day by listing three things you're grateful for. It could be as profound as your faith or as simple as the sounds of the birds playing in the autumn rain.
2. **Gratitude Journal:** Consider keeping a gratitude journal, noting moments, big and small, where you felt God's presence or were reminded of your blessings.
3. **Acts of Kindness:** Express your gratitude by extending kindness to others. It could be through words of affirmation, acts of service, or even just a listening ear. This seasons is often difficult for those in the service industry. Show gratitude for your server or clerk saying thank you, learning their name, and extending extra patience when things get busy.
4. **Evening Reflection:** At the end of the day take time to reflect with God. It can be as simple as saying "Thank you Jesus." Whichever way you pray (there is no wrong way), let the words nourish and guide your spirit.

Gratitude is also best when it is shared. This November, let's come together as a church community to celebrate our shared blessings. Whether it's during Sunday service, Bible study, circle meetings, or casual conversations, let's make it a point to share stories of gratitude. By doing so, we not only uplift ourselves, but also inspire others to recognize and cherish their blessings.

May this November be a reminder of the boundless blessings we receive daily and of our call to live with thankful hearts. As Psalm 9:1 says, "I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart; I will recount all of your wonderful deeds." May we, too, recount and rejoice in the wonders of our lives, echoing our gratitude along the way.

With Heartfelt Gratitude,  
Pastor Kelsey



### Council Notes

- The balance in the checking account at the end of September was \$179,413.73.
- Council leadership is working to form a nominating committee that will present nominees for council and synod assembly.
- Roof and Paint repairs are complete.
- Preparation is underway for Beer & Hymns and Oktoberfest.
- The annual meeting is set for Dec. 3, 2023
- The original altar is being redone and will go in the prayer room.



### W-ELCA NEWS

#### November Circle Bible Study

Please provide updated address, telephone number and email information at your meeting.

Mary Martha Circle	11/1 @ 5:30 p.m.
Grace Circle	11/13 @ 10:00 a.m.
Katherine Luther Circle	11/13 @ 4:30 p.m.

#### Monthly Circle Lunch

All Circle members are invited to meet for lunch and fellowship the **second Monday of the month at George's in Hewitt at 11:30**. If you are interested in attending please contact Kim Brown at 254-709-2417 to sign up. Thank you Kim for organizing these opportunities for us!

#### November General Meeting – 11/18 @ 10:15 a.m.

Please mark your calendar for this important meeting. We are electing officers for 2024 and voting on the 2024 budget. A very yummy lunch of **Chicken Tortilla Soup and sweets will be provided!** Our devotion will be provided by the Katherine Luther Circle. Our speaker will be Rachel Esquivel from Texas A&M Agrilife (Hill County). She will be giving us great ideas for holiday baking. Be sure to thank Betty Fornelius for arranging this speaker for our gathering.



#### NTNL – SWO Convention Update

Linda Heyde and Paula Jenson attended the convention along with approximately 40 other WELCA representatives. Officer and Board members were elected. Linda will continue in her position and Paula was elected as a member of the Board.

#### Mission Waco Annual Christmas Toy Drive

St Matthew will participate in this wonderful charity event again this year. Each year the Toy Store serves over 500 parents (2,000 children) **by providing gifts the parents can afford**. You will be able to volunteer to reprice and organize donated toys, set up the store location including decorating and gift-wrapping toys. **Last day for donations is 11/26**. The event will be held 11/28 – 12/2 at Central Presbyterian Church in Woodway. For additional information, please refer our church bulletin.

#### November Fund Raiser

**Taco Soup Fund Raiser** is planned for 11/5 and 11/12. Linda Heyde has obtained another Thrivent Grant (\$250) which will pay for the ingredients. **If you are interested in helping with the cooking (at Home – we need 5 volunteers) please contact Linda Heyde**. Soup will be sold in quart containers for \$12 each. Please thank Sandi Peterson for obtaining the donation of the quart containers for our soup. We appreciate you Sandi!

Thank Offering Sunday

**November 12<sup>th</sup> is Thank Offering Sunday.** The sign-up sheet will be available so that you can select what you would like to volunteer to do for the service. If you have any questions please contact Carol Linda at 254-772-0280 or use the sign-up sheet at the podium in the Narthex. Thank Offering donation envelopes are available in the WELCA mailbox in the workroom.

Altar Flowers Ministry

Our altar flowers are taken to shut-ins to help brighten their day. If you would like to brighten someone's day please contact Rosemary Fielder at 254-776-4472.



**Election Day  
November 7th**

Save the Dates

**Dec. 3** Advent Choir Cantata & Congregational Meeting

**Dec. 6, 13, 20** Midweek Advent Worship

**Dec. 10** Combined Youth Group

**Dec. 17** Edible Mangers

**Dec. 21** Blue Christmas Service

**Dec. 24** Advent 4 (morning) Christmas Eve (evening)



**Daylight Savings ends – November 5th**



Art As Worship

Art as Worship is this month! **Please join us on Saturday, November 11 from 6:30-9:00 p.m.** for our 13th annual opening gala. Art will be responding to the theme of **{in}finite** — art will remain in the gallery spaces until January. **Refreshments will be served — please let Beth Pristash know if you want to help prepare the food. Live music will be played — by our house musician Max Towers and friend(s).** Donations — food or monetary — will be accepted for Food for Families.

Please bring your friends and join us for the evening!

Combined Youth Eventh November 19<sup>th</sup>

We will gather at St. Matthew for lunch around noon (after our partnering congregations are out of worship). After lunch we will learn about the history and importance of the Advent season, and make our own Advent wreaths. Please let Pastor Kelsey know if you plan to attend so we can have enough supplies and if there are any dietary restrictions.

Thanksgiving Dinner

Do you want a delicious **Thanksgiving meal**, but don't want to fix all that food? Come join your **St. Matthew Family** for dinner at the church on Thanksgiving Day. **We will meet 1:15(ish) p.m. on Thanksgiving Day for a wonderful meal!**



Turkey will be provided, but the sides and desserts will be potluck style.

**Sign up** on the sheet on the table in the Gathering Area. Let us know what side and/or dessert you will bring and the number of people. If people are interested after the meal, we can enjoy board or card games.

If you have any questions, please contact Beth Pristash at 254-666-8173.



**November 11th**

**Book Study Continues**

*Inspired* book study continues on Nov. 7 & 21.

**Toy Drive Donations**

St. Matthew will be partnering with Mission Waco and other local churches in their annual Toy Store **toy drive**. The Christmas Toy Store gives parents the opportunity to pick out toys and gifts for their families, serving over 2,000 kids in Waco. **We will continue to collect toys through the end of November.** On November 26th St. Matthew will be on the annual Biker Toy Run route to deliver the toys to Central Presbyterian. **You can find suggestions for toys below, or check out their Amazon Smile wish list.**



SCAN ME

**Riding Toys – Toddlers**

Musical Instruments, Keyboards, Guitars

Kitchen Dish Sets, Cooking Sets

Outdoor Sports Sets & Sports Balls

Earbuds / Headphones / Portable Speakers

Remote-Control Toys

Educational Or Instructive Toys

Cars, Trucks, Assorted Toys

Baby-Dolls, All Sizes. Boxed Doll Sets

Lego & Building Sets (Boxed)

Table-Top Sports & Games

Razors-Scooters, Youth Ages

Batteries, All Sizes

**Biker Toy Run Nov. 26**

Toys for the annual drive will be picked up the morning of Nov. 26 by Riders of the Son. They plan to be here around 9:05am (last year they came early). Plan to come to church around 8:50am to thank the motorcyclists and cheer them on along their route.

**Work Day Every Third Thursday**

**Every third Thursday** of the month there will be a small **work-day** led by the property committee for anyone interested in helping with small projects around the building. They **will gather Thursday, November 16th from 9:00 a.m. - noon.** If you are interested or have any questions please reach out to Michael Frey [theyerfs@aol.com](mailto:theyerfs@aol.com).

**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. **Water and hygiene products are always needed.**

**Weekly Bible Study**

Wednesday Bible meets every

Wednesday at 11:00 a.m.

**Stephen Ministry Meetings**

The Stephen Ministry meeting times have **changed**, we will meet on the third Thursday every January, April, July, and

October. Our **next meeting** will be on **January 18, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.**

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



women's  
fellowship

**Fellowship for Single Women**

We meet on the fourth Tuesday of every month. Our next meeting will be

November 28<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. at Cafe Cappuccino. For any questions, please

contact Rosemary Fielder ([fielderatwaco@aol.com](mailto:fielderatwaco@aol.com)).

**Friday Quilters Meetings**

Friday Quilters meet in the Fellowship Hall on Fridays at 8:30 a.m. We usually finish up around 10:30 a.m.

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

**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 to, 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 envelope or write it in the memo line of your written check. If you have questions please contact Pastor Kelsey or Robert Cotner, Council President.

**Members with Prayer Concerns:**

Rita Bruer, Cora Gillespie, Ty Henrichs, John Linda, Jean Moeller, Stephanie Partin, Jan Richter, Elnora Schwake, Denise Self, and Tammy Vickrey

**Those for whom prayer is requested**

Melanie, Charlotte Sperflage, Elizabeth Dale (Beth Pristash)  
Rodney Roller, Patrick Dalton, Kylie Kubicki, Ralph Sparks, Wanda Brinegar, James Hurst, Carolyn Hurst, Janice Byrd, Rich Buchner, Barbara Bradshaw, Jerry Mars, Jim Guest, Emma Cox, Datre, Ralph Sparks (Terry Roller)  
Jimmy Moore, Laura Burney (Ross & Kim Browne)  
Philip Reyna (Mary Koon)  
Lou Brazile (Jean Moeller)

Gloria Atkins, Shirly Owen (Mary Herring)  
Ty Croford, Wanda Stanford, Cory Stanford (Linda Stanford)  
Rhonda & Shane Owens (Denise Self)  
Vicki Terry (Carol Linda)  
Kathy Neill, Jeff Ford (Bradley Linda)  
Bill Mosley (Paula Jenson)  
Dale Pommer (Sharon Peterson)  
Paula Barfield Unger (Rilla Vieregg)  
Pastor Kenneth Moerbe, Dusty Engelholm, Jason Lees Copeland (Elnora Schwake)  
Lee Family (Anna Steggerda)  
Patsy & Curtis Forrester (Bill & Diane Jones)  
Frank Simons, Ruthie Simons, Kris Braswell, (Colleen Early)  
Don Carlson (Farrel Bolte)  
Marilyn Michalka, Tonya (Meridith Sellers)  
Janell, and Rose Janke (Arlene Schwarz)  
Daniel Cockrell (Denise Masters)  
Colter Clenents (Abrey Garret)  
Debbie Evans  
Jeremy Cox (Cynthia Frey)  
Renlee Montgomery, Glen Howell (Marcyl Howell)  
Russell, Bryan, and Zoe Cruse (Lee & Marilyn Cruse)  
Sherlon Dyer (Del & Sue Hensel)  
Jerry Murphy (Peggy Tooker)



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.**

**November Birthdays**

Lyle Gripp	11/02
Terry Roller	11/05
Ziggy Sellers	11/06
Gracie Beard	11/14
Aaron Jasek	11/14
Hope Cotner	11/16
Lee Cruse	11/18
Barbara Johnson	11/18
Tim Pristash	11/23
Stacey Vanderkinter	11/24

**November Anniversaries**

Paul & Norma Swanson	11/06
Clay & Meredith Sellers	11/08
Bobby & Donna Zimmerman	11/10
John & Carol Linda	11/17

Newsletter

The **monthly newsletter deadline** is the **3<sup>rd</sup> 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!

*Now Thank We All  
Our God*



November 2023						Dec 2023 ▶	
◀ Oct 2023	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 11:00am Bible Study 5:30 pm Mary Martha Circle 6:30pm Choir	2	3 8:30am Quilters	4
5 9:30am All Saints Sunday 10:45am Sunday Learning	6 6:30pm Finance Meeting	7 6:00pm Aggie Moms 7:00pm Book Study Week 4	8 11:00am Bible Study 6:30pm Choir	9	10 8:30am Quilters	11 9:00am Waco Calligraphy Guild 6:30pm Art As Worship	
12 9:30am Thankoffering Service 10:45am Sunday Learning	13 10:00am Grace Circle 4:30pm Katherine Luther Circle 6:30pm Church Council	14	15 11:00am Bible Study 6:30pm Choir	16	17 8:30am Quilters	18 9:00am WELCA General Meeting	
19 9:30am Worship Service 10:45am Sunday Learning	20	21 7:00pm Book Study Week 6	22 11:00am Bible Study 6:30pm Choir	23	24 8:30am Quilters	25	
26 9:30am Worship Service/Toydrive 10:45am Sunday Learning	27 11:00am WELCA Bible Study Leaders	28 10:00am Fellowship for Single Women	29 11:00am Bible Study 6:30pm Choir	30			