



December 31, 2023  
9:30 AM

**“LIVING GOD’S LOVE”**

**St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church**

400 North Broadway Street † Medina, Ohio 44256

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[www.stmatthewmedina.org](http://www.stmatthewmedina.org)

## **St. Matthew invites you to join us in celebration of Holy Communion!**

The Lord's table is open to all who believe and are baptized.

Please join us as we receive the means of grace, where Jesus promises to meet us in the bread and the wine.

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*"Pages" are in the front of the hymnal.*

*"Hymns" are located toward the back of the hymnal.*

\*Please stand as you are able.

## **Gathering**

**Prelude**

*Now Sing We, Now Rejoice*

arr. Paul Manz

**Welcome and Announcements**

**\*Gathering Song**

*O Come, All Ye Faithful*

Hymn 283

**\*Dialog**

D: Who are these angels who come to earth,

**C: bearing the news of the Christ child's birth?**

D: Who are these shepherds who run to see,

**C: and worship the babe on bended knee?**

D: Who is this child, so small, so slight,

**C: of whom the angels sang that night?**

D: Who is this king, a manger his throne,

**C: who humbles himself to make us his own?**

D: Who is this God who sends a Son

**C: Into our midst, the promised one?**

**\*Greeting**

D: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C: And also with you.**

**\*Prayer of the Day**

D: Let us pray.

**C: All-powerful and unseen God, the coming of your light into our world has brightened weary hearts with peace. Call us out of darkness, and empower us to proclaim the birth of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

# Word

## Who Are These Angels Who Come to Earth?

Lesson

Luke 2:8-14

<sup>8</sup>In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup>But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see — I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: <sup>11</sup>to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." <sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, <sup>14</sup>"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

*Following a brief silence for prayer and meditation:*

R: Glory to God in highest heaven,

**C: who unto us the Son has given.**

Carol

*Angels We Have Heard on High*

Hymn 289

## Who Are These Shepherds Who Run to See?

Lesson

Luke 2:15-20

<sup>15</sup>When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." <sup>16</sup>So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup>When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; <sup>18</sup>and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

*Following a brief silence for prayer and meditation:*

R: Glory to God in highest heaven,

**C: who unto us the Son has given.**

Carol

*Infant Holy, Infant Lowly*

Hymn 276

## Who Is This Child, So Small, So Slight!

Lesson

Hebrews 1:1-4

<sup>1</sup>Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, <sup>2</sup>but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. <sup>3</sup>He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains

all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, <sup>4</sup>having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

*Following a brief silence for prayer and meditation:*

R: Glory to God in highest heaven,

**C: who unto us the Son has given.**

**Carol**

*Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming*

Hymn 272

**Who Is This King, a Manger His Throne!**

Lesson

Isaiah 9:2-7

<sup>2</sup> The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
those who lived in a land of deep darkness —  
on them light has shined.

<sup>3</sup>You have multiplied the nation,  
you have increased its joy;  
they rejoice before you  
as with joy at the harvest,  
as people exult when dividing plunder.

<sup>4</sup>For the yoke of their burden,  
and the bar across their shoulders,  
the rod of their oppressor,  
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

<sup>5</sup>For all the boots of the tramping warriors  
and all the garments rolled in blood  
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

<sup>6</sup>For a child has been born for us,  
a son given to us;  
authority rests upon his shoulders;  
and he is named  
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

<sup>7</sup>His authority shall grow continually,  
and there shall be endless peace  
for the throne of David and his kingdom.

He will establish and uphold it  
with justice and with righteousness  
from this time onward and forevermore.  
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

*Following a brief silence for prayer and meditation:*

R: Glory to God in highest heaven,

**C: who unto us the Son has given.**

**Carol**

*Away in a Manger*

Hymn 278

## **Who Is This God, Who Sends a Son?**

Lesson

John 1:1-14

<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup>in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

<sup>6</sup>There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup>The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

<sup>10</sup>He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup>He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup>But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup>who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

<sup>14</sup>And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

*Following a brief silence for prayer and meditation:*

R: Glory to God in highest heaven,

**C: who unto us the Son has given.**

**Carol**

*Good Christian Friends, Rejoice*

Hymn 288

## **Service of Healing**

P: God, our creator,

**C: your will for us and for all people is health and salvation.**

P: Jesus Christ, Son of God,

**C: you came that we might have life and have it in abundance.**

P: Holy Spirit, dwelling within us,

**C: you make us temples of your presence.**

P: For all who are in need of healing:

*Silence*

P: Lord of life,   **C: hear our prayer.**

P: For all who are suffering from injury or illness:

*Silence*

P: Lord of life,   **C: hear our prayer.**

P: For all who are troubled by confusion or pain:

*Silence*

P: Lord of life,   **C: hear our prayer.**

P: For all whose increasing years bring weariness:

*Silence*

P: Lord of life,   **C: hear our prayer.**

P: For all about to undergo surgery:

*Silence*

P: Lord of life,   **C: hear our prayer.**

P: For all who cannot sleep:

*Silence*

P: Lord of life,   **C: hear our prayer.**

P: For all who practice the healing arts:

*Silence*

P: Lord of life,   **C: hear our prayer.**

P: For all the joys of living and healing:

*Silence*

P: Lord of life,   **C: hear our prayer.**

P: For our sisters and brothers here and throughout the world:

*Silence*

P: Lord of life,   **C: hear our prayer.**

*Those who wish to receiving laying on of hands (and anointing) come to the altar and, if conditions permit, knee.*

P: I lay my hands upon you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, beseeching him to uphold you and fill you with grace, that you may know the healing power of his love.

**Amen.**

P: Compassionate God, you loved the world so much that you sent us Jesus to bear our infirmities and afflictions and to share in our joys. Through acts of healing, he revealed you as the true source of health and salvation. For the sake of your Christ who suffered and died for us, conquered death, and now reigns with you in glory, hear the cry of your people. Have mercy on us, make us whole, and bring us at last into the fullness of your eternal life.

**C: Amen.**

### **\*Prayers of Intercession**

D: Gracious God, you come from heaven above into the midst of our world.

**C: Fill our hearts with the joy of the angels at your birth.**

D: You come from heaven above to the lowliest of human conditions.

**C: Watch over those in need, the sick, the hungry, the grieving.**

D: You come from heaven above to walk the way of the cross.

**C: Guide us to follow your path of forgiveness, mercy, and peace.**

D: You come from heaven above to become flesh and live among us.

**C: May we see your glory, full of grace and truth. Amen.**

### **\*Peace**

D: The peace of Christ be with you always.

**C: And also with you.**

## **Meal**

**Offering**

*I Ponder*  
Martin/Courtney

Luther Choir

### **Offering Prayer**

P: God of abundance, receive and bless these gifts we have offered. Join our hearts with the song of the angels, and gather us at your table of celebration. Strengthen us to share with all the world the abundance of your grace upon grace, poured out in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh

**C: Amen.**

### **Great Thanksgiving**

P: The Lord be with you. **C: And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts. **C: We lift them to the Lord.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C: It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

### **\*Preface**

### **\*Eucharistic Prayer**

**\*Lord's Prayer**

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen.

**Communion Songs**

*It Came Upon the Midnight Clear*  
*Love Has Come*

Hymn 282  
Hymn 292

**\*Prayer After Communion**

P: O Lord our God, we give you thanks for the gifts of bread and wine, the body and blood of your Son, Jesus Christ. Send us out into your world to proclaim with joy:  
C: **Glory to God in highest heaven, who unto us the Son has given. Amen.**

## Sending

**\*Blessing**

P: May the God who comes from heaven above be born in your hearts and lives this day and always.  
C: **Amen.**

**\*Sending Song**

*Go Tell it On the Mountain*

Hymn 290

**\*Dismissal**

D: Christ the Savior is born! Go in peace. Proclaim the good news.  
C: **Thanks be to God.**

**Postlude**

*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

arr. Harold DeCou

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## PRAYERS

**Prayers for Healing:** Ingrid Schaller, Judy Weir, The Naysmith Family, Joyce, Melanie, Brenda Disbrow, Elizabeth, Jerry Jakovcic, Peg Huber, Darine Prok, Todd Costello, Stevie, Tom Thornton, Logan, Adam and Family, Sandi, and Steve Combs.

## TODAY'S WORSHIP & EVENTS

**First Sunday of Christmas,** we worship in person and via livestream at 9:30 a.m. with Lessons & Carols, litany of healing, and holy communion.

**No Sunday School.**

## NEXT SUNDAY, JANUARY 7, AT ST. MATTHEW

**Next Sunday, Baptism of Our Lord,** we will worship in person at 8:30 & 11:00 a.m. with Now the Feast and holy communion. Livestream at 8:30.

**Sunday School** for all ages at 9:45 a.m.

**The church office will be closed:**  
Monday, January 1, 2024

## WORSHIP SERVANTS

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| Acolyte:           | 9:30 - Reagan Stuchal                       |
| Reader:            | 9:30 - Judy McLaughlin                      |
| Communion Servers: | 9:30 - Delores Ivan<br>Kristin Weight       |
| Ushers:            | 9:30 - Todd & Melody Costello<br>Bruce Reed |
| Sound:             | 9:30 - Larry Mohler                         |
| Video:             | 9:30 - Rick Sullivan                        |
| Altar Guild:       | Kelly Obermeier                             |

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Altar Guild** will be taking down the Christmas decorations on Saturday, January 6, beginning at 10 a.m.

**Annual Reports** - Executive Council members and Five-Star Ministry Chairs, please have your annual reports in to the office by January 15, 2024 so that annual report can be completed and available for the February Annual Meeting.

**We Want You!** If you are interested in learning more about Communication, Social Media, Audio-Visual, and/or working with the church website., please consider joining our team! The Communication Evangelism Committee will meet in the library at 5:15 on Monday, January 8. **YOU ARE INVITED!**

**2024 Altar Flowers** - The 2024 Altar/Memorial Flowers charts are displayed in the narthex and available for you to pick your preferred dates. When you sign up for altar flowers, please fill out a form for the office with the information you would like printed in the bulletin. The forms are available at the bottom of the Altar Flowers chart. *Place the postcard and payment in the office administrator's mailbox. Checks made payable to St. Matthew Lutheran Church.*

**Are You A Thrivent Member?** - Thrivent members receive grant funds each year in the amount of \$250 (or more) based on their Thrivent products. These funds can be used for community projects or necessities in the church. In 2023, our members were able to: purchase coffee for our coffee bar; help with Rock the Block and Operation: HOMES; provide needed items and postage for our care packages to college students; purchase turkeys and hams for Feeding Medina County; help 4 families with Christmas wish items; yarn to make hats; purchase supplies for the senior Thanksgiving Dinner; and baptismal gifts. These grants totaled \$2,000! Ideas are in the works for projects and how Thrivent members can help in 2024. We have a list of individuals who are members, but is your name on it? Please contact Melody Costello (330) 461-1149 or Pastor Steve if you're a member, so we can add your name to the list and call upon you to apply for projects or needs. \*Grants turn over every year, but do not accumulate if not used.\* If you're interested in becoming a Thrivent member, see Pastor Steve or Melody; they can connect you with a local representative or visit [thrivent.com](http://thrivent.com).

**“Getting to Know You”** - St. Matthew started featuring a St. Matthew family in our weekly Shout-Outs as a way to get to know our fellow St. Matthew members. We would love to feature your family! Go to your most recent Shout-Out to access the link to complete your profile. If you have any questions, please send a text to Beth Johnson (Communication Evangelism) at 301-501-0473. We look forward to **GETTING TO KNOW YOU!**

**Renovation Project Recap for November** - No identified renovation expenses. Recap for November: No identified renovation expenses. \$280 reno restricted giving in November. Balance as of November 30, 2023 is \$66,745.63.

## Finance Report Update for October, November & Year-to-Date St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church

|                               | <i>Month of<br/>October, 2023</i> | <i>Month of<br/>November, 2023</i> | <i>Year-to-Date<br/>January-Nov., 2023</i> |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| General Offering Unrestricted | \$ 34,897.12                      | \$ 70,983.97                       | \$ 344,675.33                              |
| 2023 Approved Mission Plan    | \$ 33,333.33                      | \$ 33,333.33                       | \$ 366,666.63                              |
| Budget Variance (Loss)        | \$ 1,563.79                       | \$ 37,650.64                       | \$ (21,991.30)                             |

**WOW MONTH!!! Financial Update:** St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church received the unrestricted offerings as compared to the 2023 approved Mission Plan objective shown for the months of October, November and 2023 year-to-date. Please prayerfully consider increasing your offering to support the church and its mission of Living God’s Love. Estate planning is for everyone, it is an opportunity to create your legacy at St. Matthew. Thank you for your continued generosity.

By setting up recurring donations online, you enable us to maintain financial stability and plan for the future of St. Matthew. St. Matthew has 60 (increase 3) member families that contribute through Vanco. Please increase our participation and consider signing up for Simply Giving at: <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-Z4MP/home>

**SPECIAL NOTE:** St. Matthew has set-up in Simply Giving Link easy access for donations directly to the Renovation / Refresh Project. Please select from a one-time donation or recurring donation and contribute as you are able. If you have any questions about your current account or setting up your account, contact our Financial Director Bruce Reed at (412) 848-0219 or email Bruce at [brucerreed@comcast.net](mailto:brucerreed@comcast.net) .



Pastor Steve and Deacon Lindsay want to make certain to say THANKS to all of you for your generosity and love leading up to Christmas. THANK YOU for remembering us: for the gifts of food, gift cards, books, concert invitations, beverages, homemade cookies, and the many other items you showered on each of us. It means so very much to us that so many of you thought of each of us during this special (and busy) time of the year!

## **St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church Staff**

|                           |                                       |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| The Rev. Steven Mahaffey  | Pastor                                |
| Deacon Lindsay Stertzbach | Director of Youth & Family Ministries |
| Cindy Piovarchy           | Organist                              |
| Deb Musil                 | Office Administrator                  |
| Joyce Davis               | Maintenance Supervisor                |
| Brenda Disbrow            | Parish Nurse                          |
| Nancy McNeal              | Luther Choir Director                 |
| Rachel Knaggs             | Kids of the Kingdom Director          |
| Kaitlyn Taraschke         | Nursery Attendant                     |

### **Pastor Steve's Contact Information**

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Cell Phone: 740-525-6149

### **Deacon Lindsay's Contact Information**

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Cell Phone: 440-376-8338



Hearing Loop  
System available.