



December 17, 2023

9:30 a.m.

Youth Christmas Program

An Envelope Nativity: Messages from God

“Living God’s Love”

St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church

400 North Broadway Street ☩ Medina, Ohio 44256

330-725-8885 ☩ office@stmatthewmedina.org

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

Antioch
arr. K. Varner

Jane Irvine

Welcome/Announcements

Gathering Hymn

People Look East

Hymn 248

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

**Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to
the words of your prophets, that, anointed by your Spirit, we may
testify to your light; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who
lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and
forever. Amen.**

Advent Candle Song

Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah
(verses 1-3)

Hymn 240

***Advent Candle Prayer**

Praise to you, O God, who holds our joy and sorrow. You bring water to
parched ground and life out of death. Bless us as this light grows, and send
sorrow and sighing to flee away. Give us strength and patience, trusting that
you are true to your promises. Transform the lives of all who suffer with your
wonders near at hand. Amen.

WORD

Message

An Envelope Nativity: Messages from God
written by Mary Hawes

St. Matthew Youth

*The congregation is invited to join in singing all of the hymns,
which will be projected.*

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

D: With hope and expectation, we offer our prayers for the church, the world
and all who await God's day of restoration.

A brief silence.

D: Fill our mouths with laughter and our tongues with shouts of joy as we
bear witness to the great things you have done. Give your church a spirit
of gladness as we gather and as we are sent. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

D: Let the trees of the field sing your praise. Protect forests, orchards,
rainforests, and all wooded areas from disease and deforestation. Keep
us grateful for their gifts of oxygen, food, shade, and shelter. Merciful
God,

C: receive our prayer.

D: You love justice and promise your favor to those who are oppressed,
brokenhearted, and incarcerated. Grant wisdom and compassion to
those who work for public safety and all who work within prisons, jails,
and courts, that mercy may increase and violence wither away. Merciful
God,

C: receive our prayer.

D: Give us strength to pray for our world without ceasing and provoke us
toward love and good deeds for all who are in need, especially Ingrid,

Judy, the Naysmith Family, Joyce, Melanie, Brenda, Denny, Elizabeth, Jerry, Peg, Darine, Todd, Stevie, Tom, Logan, Adam and Family, Sandi, Steve, and those we now name aloud or hold tenderly in our hearts. Provide for all without adequate housing, food, employment, or access to health care. Empower us as helpers and advocates. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

D: Open our hearts to those who serve as truth-tellers in our church and in our society. Bless leaders in church and society in their task of proclamation. Amplify voices of peacemakers, advocates, and especially those whose voices are ignored or marginalized. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

D: With gratitude we rejoice in the saints who witnessed to your life in all circumstances, in whom your Spirit was not quenched, even in death. Through them, teach us always to hold fast to what is good. Merciful God,

C: receive our prayer.

D: Listen to these and all our prayers, O God of hosts, and restore us with your great and everlasting mercy.

C: Amen.

***Sharing of the Peace**

D: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

MEAL

Offertory

Who Would Send a Baby

Kids of the Kingdom

Offering Prayer

P: God our provider, by your merciful hand abundance springs up from the earth. Receive and bless these gifts of your own bounty. Let them be a sign of your steadfast love and faithfulness for all people, through Jesus Christ our Savior.

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.

***Words of Institution**

***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.

***Invitation to Communion**

P: In this meal, righteousness and peace meet together. Come, take your place at the table.

Lamb of God

Page 154

Communion Hymn

He Came Down

Hymn 253

***Prayer after Communion**

P: Generous God, in bread and cup you have revealed your glory for all people to see together. Nourished by this meal, send us out to proclaim your good news of liberation and release, brought to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior.

C: Amen.

SENDING

***Blessing**

P: The God of peace bless you, the love of Christ sustain you in hope, and the anointing of the Spirit + remain upon you now and forever.

C: Amen.

***Sending Song:**

Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers

Hymn 244

***Dismissal**

D: Go in peace. Keep awake.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers
P. Manz

Jane Irvine

WORSHIP SERVANTS

Ushers:	Luther League
Communion Servers:	Luther League
Sound:	Joe Obermeier
Video:	Brian Harris
Altar Guild:	Sandy Andrews
Advent Candles	The Thompson Family

THANK YOU to our Luther Littles, Luther Middles, and our Luther League for leading worship today! We are grateful for all of the ways you share your gifts with your St. Matthew family.



Oh, Come let us adore Him

**Christmas Eve
Candlelight Services**

7:00 p.m. & 9:00 p.m.

7pm Livestream at www.stmatthewmedina.org

St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church
400 N. Broadway Street, Medina
Rev. Steven Mahaffey
330-725-8885 • www.stmatthewmedina.org

PRAYERS

Memorial Flowers this morning are given to the glory of God in memory of Joy and Tony Bonfiglio's 50th wedding anniversary by the Linden Family.

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

TODAY'S WORSHIP & EVENTS

Today, Third Sunday of Advent, we worship in person and livestream at 9:30 a.m. with our Youth Christmas Program and Holy Communion.

Welcome and Thank you to Jane Irvine, our guest accompanist this morning.

No Sunday School this week.

MIDWEEK ADVENT WORSHIP

Wednesday, we will worship in person at 7:00 p.m. with Holden Evening Prayer (no communion). Soup supper in the fellowship hall at 6:00 p.m.

NEXT SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24, AT ST. MATTHEW

Next Sunday, Fourth Sunday of Advent, we will worship in person and livestream at 9:30 a.m. with ELW 4 and holy communion.

No Sunday School.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Services, we will Worship at 7:00 and 9:00 p.m., *The Eve of the Nativity of Our Lord* with Holy Communion. Children's sermon and Livestream at 7:00 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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.*

Update from Our Parish Nurse - Greetings to all. As I continue to recover at home, I am grateful to everyone at St. Matthew Lutheran Church for all the thoughts, prayers, and many cards that have been sent my way for healing. Your support is truly appreciated. Brenda Disbrow, Parish Nurse

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.

“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!*

How can you help with the Renovation Project? *Mail a check to St. Matthew OR Simply Giving Link* - Go to www.stmatthewmedina.org, Click on “Give”, At the bottom of the page under “Online,” click “Give Here”, Select “St. Matthew Refresh/Renovation”, Choose from a one-time donation or recurring donation. Recap for October: 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.

Pull Tabs - We continue to collect all types of pull tabs for Ronald McDonald House. Collection bins are located in the Narthex and the Room of the Cross.

The Don Hodek Memorial Library has many books on a variety of Christian topics, and is located in the hallway down the stairs by the elevator entrance. Please stop by and take as many books as you would like, and share with friends.

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

	<i>Month of October, 2023</i>	<i>Month of November, 2023</i>	<i>Year-to-Date January-Nov., 2023</i>
General Offering Unrestricted	\$ 34,897.12	\$ 70,983.97	\$ 344,675.33
2023 Approved Mission Plan	<u>\$ 33,333.33</u>	<u>\$ 33,333.33</u>	<u>\$ 366,666.63</u>
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.



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

Email: pastorsteve@stmatthewmedina.org

Cell Phone: 740-525-6149

Deacon Lindsay's Contact Information

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Hearing Loop
System available.