

St. Matthew Lutheran Church

Sunday, November 2, 2025

All Saints Sunday

Optional Introduction: The book of Daniel was written in the second century BCE, when the Syrian king Antiochus Epiphanes was severely persecuting the Jews. Daniel's vision of the four beasts proclaims that human kings will come and go, but the kingdom will ultimately belong to God and to God's people.

First Reading: Daniel 7:1-3, 15-18

¹ In the first year of King Belshazzar of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head as he lay in bed. Then he wrote down the dream: ² I, Daniel, saw in my vision by night the four winds of heaven stirring up the great sea, ³ and four great beasts came up out of the sea, different from one another.

¹⁵ As for me, Daniel, my spirit was troubled within me, and the visions of my head terrified me. ¹⁶ I approached one of the attendants to ask him the truth concerning all this. So he said that he would disclose to me the interpretation of the matter: ¹⁷ "As for these four great beasts, four kings shall arise out of the earth. ¹⁸ But the holy ones of the Most High shall receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever—forever and ever."

The word of the Lord.

Optional Introduction: Sing the LORD's praise in the assembly of the faithful. (Ps. 149:1)

Psalm: Psalm 149

- ¹ Hallelujah! Sing to the LORD | a new song,
God's praise in the assembly | of the faithful.
- ² **Let Israel rejoice | in their maker;**
let the children of Zion be joyful | in their ruler.
- ³ Let them praise their maker's | name with dancing;
let them sing praise with tambou- | rine and harp.
- ⁴ **For the LORD takes pleasure | in the people**
and adorns the | poor with victory. R
- ⁵ Let the faithful re- | joice in triumph;
let them sing for joy | on their beds.
- ⁶ **Let the praises of God be | in their throat**
and a two-edged sword | in their hand,

⁷ to wreak vengeance | on the nations
and punishment | on the peoples,
⁸ **to bind their | kings in chains**
and their nobles with | links of iron,
⁹ to inflict on them the judg- | ment decreed;
this is glory for all God's faithful ones. | Hallelujah! **R**

Optional Introduction: After giving thanks for the faith of the Ephesians, the writer of this letter prays that they might understand the wisdom, hope, and power of God that is embodied in Jesus Christ.

Second Reading: Ephesians 1:11-23

¹¹ In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, ¹² so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. ¹³ In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; ¹⁴ this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

¹⁵ I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason ¹⁶ I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers, ¹⁷ that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, ¹⁸ so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may perceive what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. ²⁰ God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. ²² And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, ²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

The word of the Lord.

Please rise for the Gospel Acclamation.

St. Matthew Lutheran Church

Sunday, November 9, 2025

22nd Sunday after Pentecost

Optional Introduction: Job suffers the loss of children, wealth, and health. Accused by his companions of wrongdoing, he knows himself to be innocent. Here, in the midst of his suffering, Job clings to the radical hope that his vindicator, his redeemer, lives; and that one day he himself will see God.

First Reading: Job 19:23-27a

- ²³ “O that my words were written down!
O that they were inscribed in a book!
²⁴ O that with an iron pen and with lead
they were engraved on a rock forever!
²⁵ For I know that my vindicator lives
and that in the end he will stand upon the earth;
²⁶ and after my skin has been destroyed,
then in my flesh I shall see God,
^{27a} whom I shall see on my side,
and my eyes shall behold, and not another.”

The word of the Lord.

Optional Introduction: Keep me as the apple of your eye; hide me under the shadow of your wings. (Ps. 17:8)

Psalm: Psalm 17:1-9

- ¹ Hear a just cause, O LORD; give heed | to my cry;
listen to my prayer, which does not come from | lying lips.
² **Let my vindication come forth | from your presence;**
let your eyes be | fixed on justice.
³ Examine my heart, visit | me by night,
melt me down; you will find no impuri- | ty in me.
⁴ **I have not regarded what | others do;**
at the word of your lips I have avoided the ways | of the
violent. R
⁵ My footsteps hold fast to your | well-worn path;
and my feet | do not slip.
⁶ **I call upon you, O God, for you will | answer me;**
incline your ear to me and | hear my words.

⁷ Show me your marvelous | lovingkindness,
O Savior of those who take refuge at your right hand from those
who | rise against them.
⁸ **Keep me as the apple | of your eye;**
hide me under the shadow | of your wings,
⁹ from the wicked | who assault me,
from my deadly enemies | who surround me. **R**

Optional Introduction: This portion of the letter provides encouragement for the church at Thessalonica during a time of confusion and opposition, as some allowed their concern over Jesus' imminent return to divert them from the central teachings of the gospel.

Second Reading: 2 Thessalonians 2:1-5, 13-17

¹ As to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we beg you, brothers and sisters, ² not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as though from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord is already here.
³ Let no one deceive you in any way, for that day will not come unless the rebellion comes first and the lawless one is revealed, the one destined for destruction. ⁴ He opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, declaring himself to be God. ⁵ Do you not remember that I told you these things when I was still with you?

¹³ But we must always give thanks to God for you, brothers and sisters beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the first fruits for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and through belief in the truth. ¹⁴ For this purpose he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁵ So then, brothers and sisters, stand firm and hold fast to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by word of mouth or by our letter.

¹⁶ Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and through grace gave us eternal comfort and good hope,
¹⁷ comfort your hearts and strengthen them in every good work and word.

The word of the Lord.
Please rise for the Gospel Acclamation.

St. Matthew Lutheran Church

Sunday, November 16, 2025

23rd Sunday after Pentecost

Optional Introduction: Malachi, whose name means “my messenger,” warns that “the day is coming.” On that day, the evil will be destroyed like stubble in a fire, but the “sun of righteousness” will shine on those who honor God.

First Reading: Malachi 4:1-2a

¹ See, the day is coming, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble; the day that comes shall burn them up, says the LORD of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch.

^{2a} But for you who revere my name the sun of righteousness shall rise, with healing in its wings.

The word of the Lord.

Optional Introduction: In righteousness will the LORD judge the world. (Ps. 98:9)

Psalm: Psalm 98

¹ Sing a new song to the LORD, who has done | marvelous things,
whose right hand and holy arm have | won the victory.

² **O LORD, you have made | known your victory,
you have revealed your righteousness in the sight | of the
nations.**

³ You remember your steadfast love and faithfulness to the | house of
Israel;

all the ends of the earth have seen the victory | of our God.

⁴ **Shout with joy to the LORD, | all you lands;
lift up your voice, re- | joice, and sing. R**

⁵ Sing to the LORD | with the harp,
with the harp and the | voice of song.

⁶ **With trumpets and the sound | of the horn
shout with joy before the | king, the LORD.**

⁷ Let the sea roar, and | all that fills it,
the world and those who | dwell therein.

⁸ Let the rivers | clap their hands,
and let the hills ring out with joy before the LORD, who comes
to | judge the earth.

⁹ The LORD will judge the | world with righteousness
and the peo- | ples with equity. **R**

Optional Introduction: Some members of the Thessalonian community, because of their belief in the nearness of Christ's return, had ceased to work, living off the generosity of other members of the community. The writer of this letter warns them bluntly that if they want to eat, they need to work.

Second Reading: 2 Thessalonians 3:6-13

⁶ Now we command you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to keep away from every brother or sister living irresponsibly and not according to the tradition that they received from us. ⁷ For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us; we were not irresponsible when we were with you, ⁸ and we did not eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with toil and labor we worked night and day so that we might not burden any of you. ⁹ This was not because we do not have that right but in order to give you an example to imitate.

¹⁰ For even when we were with you, we gave you this command: anyone unwilling to work should not eat. ¹¹ For we hear that some of you are living irresponsibly, mere busybodies, not doing any work. ¹² Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living. ¹³ Brothers and sisters, do not be weary in doing what is right.

The word of the Lord.

Please rise for the Gospel Acclamation.

St. Matthew Lutheran Church

Sunday, November 23, 2025

Christ the King Sunday

Optional Introduction: Today's reading builds on the common, ancient Near Eastern metaphor of the king as shepherd. Judah's unjust rulers have caused their people, their "flock," to be scattered. Nevertheless, God will raise up a new and righteous shepherd who will rule a restored Judah.

First Reading: Jeremiah 23:1-6

¹ Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! says the LORD. ² Therefore thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who shepherd my people: It is you who have scattered my flock and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. So I will attend to you for your evil doings, says the LORD. ³ Then I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the lands where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. ⁴ I will raise up shepherds over them who will shepherd them, and they shall no longer fear or be dismayed, nor shall any be missing, says the LORD.

⁵ The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. ⁶ In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will live in safety. And this is the name by which he will be called: "The LORD is our righteousness."

The word of the Lord.

Optional Introduction: I will be exalted among the nations. (Ps. 46:10)

Psalm: Psalm 46

- ¹ God is our ref- | uge and strength,
a very present | help in trouble.
- ² **Therefore we will not fear, though the | earth be moved,**
and though the mountains shake in the depths | of the sea;
- ³ though its waters | rage and foam,
and though the mountains tremble | with its tumult.
- ⁴ **There is a river whose streams make glad the cit- | y of God,**
the holy habitation of | the Most High.
- ⁵ God is in the midst of the city; it shall | not be shaken;
God shall help it at the | break of day.

⁶ **The nations rage, and the | kingdoms shake;
God speaks, and the earth | melts away. R**

⁷ The LORD of | hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob | is our stronghold.

⁸ **Come now, regard the works | of the LORD,
what desolations God has brought up- | on the earth;**

⁹ behold the one who makes war to cease in | all the world;
who breaks the bow, and shatters the spear, and burns the | shields
with fire.

¹⁰ **“Be still, then, and know that | I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted | in the
earth.”**

¹¹ The LORD of | hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob | is our stronghold. **R**

Optional Introduction: An early Christian hymn praises the mystery of the political, personal, and mystical Christ, the one who was present at creation and is eternally reigning with God.

Second Reading: Colossians 1:11-20

¹¹ May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from his glorious power, so that you may have all endurance and patience, joyfully ¹² giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light. ¹³ He has rescued us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation, ¹⁶ for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. ¹⁷ He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. ¹⁹ For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰ and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

The word of the Lord. Please rise for the Gospel Acclamation.

St. Matthew Lutheran Church

Sunday, November 30, 2025

1st Sunday in Advent

Optional Introduction: The visionary message presented in this reading focuses on a future day when God establishes a universal reign of peace. Divine decisions will make war obsolete, and the worshiping community responds: "Let us walk in the light of that Lord now!"

First Reading: Isaiah 2:1-5

¹ The word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

² In days to come
the mountain of the LORD's house
shall be established as the highest of the mountains
and shall be raised above the hills;
all the nations shall stream to it.

³ Many peoples shall come and say,
"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,
to the house of the God of Jacob,
that he may teach us his ways
and that we may walk in his paths."
For out of Zion shall go forth instruction
and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

⁴ He shall judge between the nations
and shall arbitrate for many peoples;
they shall beat their swords into plowshares
and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation;
neither shall they learn war any more.

⁵ O house of Jacob,
come, let us walk
in the light of the LORD!

The word of the Lord.

Optional Introduction: I was glad when they said to me, “Let us go to the house of the LORD.” (Ps. 122:1)

Psalm: Psalm 122

- ¹ I was glad when they | said to me,
“Let us go to the house | of the LORD.”
- ² **Now our | feet are standing
within your gates, | O Jerusalem.**
- ³ Jerusalem is built | as a city
that is at unity | with itself;
- ⁴ **to which the tribes go up, the tribes | of the LORD,
the assembly of Israel, to praise the name | of the LORD. R**
- ⁵ For there are the | thrones of judgment,
the thrones of the | house of David.
- ⁶ **Pray for the peace | of Jerusalem:
“May they pros- | per who love you.**
- ⁷ Peace be with- | in your walls
and quietness with- | in your towers.
- ⁸ **For the sake of my kindred | and companions,
I pray for | your prosperity.**
- ⁹ Because of the house of the | LORD our God,
I will seek to | do you good.” **R**

Optional Introduction: Paul compares the advent of Christ to the coming of dawn. We live our lives today in light of Christ’s coming in the future.

Second Reading: Romans 13:11-14

¹¹ Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is already the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; ¹² the night is far gone; the day is near. Let us then throw off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; ¹³ let us walk decently as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in illicit sex and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. ¹⁴ Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

The word of the Lord. Please rise for the Gospel Acclamation.