



St. Matthew Lutheran Church Newsletter January 2021

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[Letter from the Pastor](#)

Greetings and peace to you in the name of Christ Jesus!

Every time I leave my office I am greeted by two signs. One is a simple wooden sign that says, “peace begins with me”, that I purchased from the Galena Center for the Arts and the other is this plaque that has the serenity prayer printed upon it. “God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change things I can and wisdom to know the difference.” Most

days I just walk by it and don't read it's words, but as of late I've been stopping to read it every day I leave the office.

As we enter 2021, I offer this prayer to you. The previous year has not been the one we expected, yet 2021 is here and is a blank canvas. We've been invited by God almighty to write another year's worth of stories. Let this be the year we write the chapter of how we came back stronger from the midst of a pandemic. With the serenity to accept that which we cannot change in the world around us, the courage to make positive change happen, and the wisdom to know when either are needed, we have all we need to continue serving our community as well as the greater tri-state community.

The church has been reopened for in person worship and while we will still offer our virtual worship, if you feel safe enough to come back you are welcome within the sanctuary. For the time being, in order to ensure safe worship spaced far enough apart, once we hit 30 worshipers we will be restricting entry, as the hall

can't fit much more while sticking to social distancing guidelines.

We shall be following the same COVID protocols as before. Hand sanitizer will be at the door; please use it. Masks will be required; please wear them over your whole face and nose for the entirety of the service. If you must take your mask off we understand, they are not the most comfortable things. We simply ask, if you must take it off that you step outside till you are comfortable enough to wear it once more. Temps will be taken at the door as well and once this is done you will come down the main aisle and notice a pew might be roped off. If your traditional pew is roped off we humbly ask you to find a new spot to sit, socially distanced from other parishioners.

As 2021 continues on and as vaccination continues to be more widespread, your council will review the protocol. I look forward to a day when we do not have to implement these safety precautions. Until then, let us live unto the serenity prayer and accept the courage that we have in changing how we go about

safely worshiping for the sake of those who are most vulnerable to this devastating virus.

Your ever faithful servant

-Pr. Blake W. Shipman



January, 2021 President's letter -

As the New Year chimes in, we say farewell to the past year. As of January 1, I can honestly say that hindsight is literally 2020! (A little new year's humor!)

A year ago, we could never have imagined that a virus we had never heard of would have such an impact on our lives. I never thought there would be a time when we would not be able to attend worship for fear of getting sick.

With the dawn of the new year we are now hopeful for a vaccine that could keep us from contracting Covid 19. With the onset of the vaccine, we look forward to reopening the church for worship services starting January 3 at 10:00 am. The council takes this step very seriously. You will be required to wear a face mask, have your temperature taken, and be seated at a socially acceptable distance from one another. The services will also continue to be recorded and available on the

church website. Please be patient as we put these practices into action.

Sunday, January 17, marks the date of St. Matthew's annual meeting. The meeting follows the worship service at 11:00. We will need a quorum to pass the budget, ratify the new Constitution, and vote on new council members. If you are unable to attend in person, we are planning a way for you to be zoomed into the meeting. If you would like to use the zoom option, contact Pastor Shipman at blkshipman.stmat@gmail.com and he will get you on the zoom list.

Several of our members are in the process of moving out of the area. Colleen and Ron Stephens are moving to the Chicago area to be nearer to their children. Likewise, Sam and Deanna Gross are moving to the Quad City area to be nearer their children. We wish you all the best. Please come back and visit us when you can.

This will be my final letter to you as your president. I thank you all for allowing me to serve you in this capacity. I thank the council for being there for me and helping me conduct the business of this congregation. I look forward to continuing to serve you as a council member.

God bless you all and I'll see you in church!

In His service,
Bruce Etzel



Offering Envelopes for 2021

The offering envelopes for 2021 have been delivered to the church. Since it would cost over \$5.00 per box to mail them, we have decided against mailing them. You can continue to use any previous envelopes you still have at home. The donations are credited on the day they are deposited so it doesn't matter what the date is on the envelope.

The number in the upper right hand corner identifies it as yours. You can also mail a check to the church and write your envelope number in the note field. We can look up your envelope number by name at the accountants office when the deposit is being prepared. We will try to have the new boxes labeled and available in the welcome center soon.

Thank you for your continued support of our church. Our giving almost matched our expenses last year, so we start the new year with close to the same account balances as we did in 2020. That says a lot about our support of St Matthew Lutheran Church even during a pandemic.

Connie Consedine

Treasurer





January 01

Jean Prellberg

January 15

Kris Korte

January 16

Kim Miller

Thomas Vanderlinde

January 18

Gordy Montgomery

January 19

Cindy Laity

January 20

Jane Klinkner

January 24

Chuck Korte

January 26

Fred Baltz

January 29

Bill Fitch



January 25

Logan and Lydia Vanderbush



Income \$8,875.25 Expense \$14,434.79



St. Matthew Lutheran Church
127 South High Street,
Galena, IL 61036
815-777-1134
www.stmat.net

Service Times: Sunday at 10:00 am
Recorded Service Available On Our Website After 12:30
pm

Where God's work happens 7 days a week.
A First Century Church for the Twenty-first Century
Look for us on Facebook!

