



St. Matthew Lutheran Church Newsletter December 2020

The Lutherans: Posting Vital Information Since 1517

Letter from the Pastor

Greeting and Peace to You!

This time of year I listen to music playing in my car quite a bit. Usually, it is the upbeat hits such as the rat pack's Christmas classics, but this year I've been listening more to the introspective pieces such as I'll be home for Christmas by Michael Bublé. The line that strikes me the most is, "I'll be home for Christmas if only in my dreams." Again, this year is different. No matter how much we try to make it normal the fact of the matter still stands, 2020 is different and because of this we have to do things differently. Christmas is not immune to this as much as we hate to hear it. To be completely honest, the excitement I feel when Christmas gets close is not coming so easy this year. Nevertheless, Christ comes. He is within our lives, he is within our church, he is within our world bringing about every good thing. While so much has

already been taken for us there is one constant, Jesus Christ, and because of him we can face the day without fear while taking the precautions needed in order to keep ourselves and our neighbors safe.

This Advent season and this coming Christmas tide is a moment for the church to point back to Christ at the center of it all. Pastor Emeritus Baltz is doing a wonderful daily Advent devotional video you can find on our website or at the church Facebook page. I, too, am leading a Wednesday evening advent prayer service and book study that you can find on the website or you can attend live via the zoom video platform. If you haven't emailed me asking for the link yet but are planning to, please drop me a note so I can get you on the eblast list. May God's blessings continue to dwell in you richly this holiday season.

Respectfully yours in Christ-

Pr. Blake W. Shipman



President's Letter - December, 2020

Dear church friends,

While listening to "Mary Did You Know" by Pentatonix on YouTube, it made me think of how great a responsibility the young girl, Mary, had in the raising of our Lord and Savior. If you read Luke 1:46 -55, "Mary's Song of Praise: The Magnificat", you find a beautiful statement of thanksgiving from a young girl who has willingly agreed to a very complicated, but amazing, future for herself and the baby she will have. She had no idea how this event would impact the world into the future.

This brings me to the point I wish to make. Thank you to all the women at St. Matthew's, you who quietly go about the different ministries of the church; making quilts, working with Helping Hands, visiting and supporting the Ixtapa Mission, collecting and shipping school supplies to children within our community and around the world, teaching Sunday School, serving on different committees, praying, etc. What a blessing these women are to their husbands and St. Matthew Church. Their strength and wisdom is a blessing to every household and the body of Christ at St. Matthew Lutheran Church.

As we enter the month of December, we remember we have already begun a new year within the church. The church year begins with the season of Advent and the waiting for the Christ child to be born. Any of us who are parents can relate to that feeling of "waiting" as you waited for that child in your life to be born. You had an anticipated due date, but the exact day or moment for that event was, for most of us, a waiting game.

This year, probably more than any other, we can all relate to "waiting" for The newest Covid vaccine to be made available to all of us. Thus far, most of us have been spared the brutal effects of this illness. Thank you to all of you for your patience in coming together for Sunday worship. This will happen again when it is safe to do so.

Speaking of worship, the council has made the difficult decision to plan the Christmas Eve service as a virtual service that will be available for you to view online. ***There will be no service on Christmas Eve service at the church.*** The Christmas Eve service will be available for you to view on the church's website at www.stmat.net as of December 24. Please view this service with your family and friends in the safety of your homes. God willing, we will all be able to worship together again sometime in 2021.

From Jan and myself, we wish you all a very blessed and healthy Christmas. May God guard and guide you all until we can worship together again.

In His service,

Bruce Etzel





December 07

Dan Consedine

December 15

Ron Lawson

December 18

Mike Hyland

December 22

Andrea Grass

December 28

Mazin Plumb



December 26

Bernadine & Dave Anderson



Income \$17,751.99 Expense \$6,801.51



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!

