



St. Matthew

Lutheran Church

Newsletter

MARCH 2022

The Lutherans: Posting Vital Information Since 1517

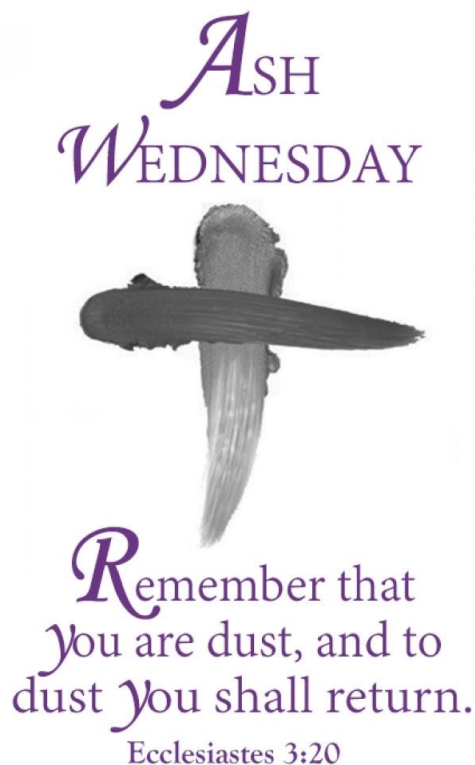
Letter from the Pastor

Greetings in the name of Christ Jesus our Lord

“Remember you are dust and to dust you shall return.” These are the words I spoke to those who attended Ash Wednesday service as I made the sign of the cross on their forehead reminding them of their mortality. We are in the throes of yet another Lenten journey and I am reflecting on the promises of this journey this year. We know we are dust and shall return from where we came, yet we also know that depending upon God alone leads to eternal life. We are sinful and broken yet are forgiven our sins through God’s grace. This season was made for Lutherans, it is full of both! I find myself looking at the world through both as well. We are both still learning to live with Covid-19 and are gradually going back to some of what we had left behind, while also reexamining that which we left behind to see if it needs to come back. Amid

all of this God guides the church. We are blessed with God's grace at St. Matthew Lutheran Church. This past month alone church attendance has seen an uptick so much so that we've nearly ran out of communion two weekends in a row (a great problem to have in my book!), I've officiated over one baptism and look forward to baptizing another beloved child of God on Easter Sunday, and the Alpha course is starting out strong with a great group of people already signed up. All of this is only possible through God's guiding hand leading us every step of the way. While it is true, we are dust and to dust we shall return, there is much to live for as God's people who stand defiantly in the face of sin and death. Remember this Lenten season that the resurrection follows three days after the passion, that which we await is surely coming. We are dust and to dust we shall return. We are loved and to God's all loving embrace shall we return. Respectfully yours in Christ Jesus

- Pastor Blake W. Shipman



President's Letter March 2022

Greetings to all!

The last week of February members of the Council met for three hours on a Saturday afternoon to review the church's Strategic Plan that the congregation approved in January 2018. To prepare the Strategic Plan, members of the original committee performed a self-evaluation of our church as it existed in 2017 in the following areas:

- Discipleship and Ministry
- Leadership
- Financial and Stewardship
- Physical Conditions and Meeting of Needs

The committee then proposed action items to accomplish in order to achieve what we wanted to be as a congregation 3, 5, and 10 years into the future. As we reviewed the plan last week, we were pleasantly surprised at how much progress we have made over the last four years. With the intervention of the COVID-19 pandemic two years ago, we recognized we have been limited in our ability to work together as planned to achieve other goals. The consensus of the Council coming out of the review is to renew and refocus our efforts on discipleship and ministry areas of the Strategic Plan, while building on the significant progress achieved in the other areas. The Council will start this review with our March meeting, and we have committed to increasing our communication with the congregation as we move forward. We encourage any member with comments or suggestions on any of the areas covered in the Strategic Plan to please contact a member of the Council. We are always looking for additional input.

As a reminder, each Wednesday during this Lenten season we will be hosting a simple meal followed by a presentation of the Alpha Course, a program to reintroduce us to the Christian faith. We encourage everyone interested to attend, enjoy the fellowship with our church family and friends, and participate in the discussion as we renew our faith and discipleship. You are certainly invited to attend

any one or all of the Wednesday programs even if you were unable to sign up in the church's Welcome Center. The meal starts at 5:30 with the program to begin shortly thereafter.

With that, looking forward to seeing all of you in church again soon.

Bryan Daniel
President



OUR MISSION OF THE MONTH

Malaria Bed Net Project

Your donations are used by Lutheran World Relief to purchase mesh bed nets that are distributed to those in need. Bed nets keep mosquitos, that can carry malaria, off of people while they sleep.

If you would like to give to our mission of the month, please put your donation in an envelope marked MONTHLY MISSION and place in the basket in the welcome center.

"When God Blesses You Financially,
Don't Raise Your Standard Of Living. Raise Your
Standard of GIVING"

IS THERE MORE TO LIFE THAN THIS?

Why Should I Read The Bible?

Who Is Jesus?

How Can I Have Faith?

Got Questions??????

TRY THE ALPHA COURSE

The Alpha course returns for Lent this year. Wednesdays at 5:30. We will start with a meal, followed by an Alpha talk and discussion. This program, used by millions, introduces and re-introduces the Christian faith. We hope you join us and bring a friend!



Gary Appel
John Carlson
Bruce Etzel
Harold Moser
Blake Shipman



Bill & Elaine Fitch
Andrew & Nadia Plumb

February Financial Information



Income \$14,416.49

Expense \$12,386.60



St. Matthew Lutheran Church

127 South High Street,

Galena, IL 61036

815-777-1134

www.stmat.net

Service Times:

Saturday at 5:30 pm

Sunday at 10 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!