



# St. Matthew Lutheran Church Newsletter May 2020

## ***The Lutherans: Posting Vital Information Since 1517***

### [Letter from the Pastor](#)

Greetings and peace in the name of Christ

My life has been greatly shaped by the music surrounding all of us. I'm speaking about the great songs and hymns we sing as well as the sounds of nature. As warmer days have begun to arrive, I've turned off my heat at times and have opened up the house for the fresh air and sounds of creation to flood in. The use of music in the world surrounding us has been on my mind greatly over the last few days specifically this line from a well-known hymn. "Built on a rock the church doth stand even when steeples

are falling.” Music is like history; it has a funny way of becoming relevant time and time again. This last month has not been easy, if we are being completely honest with ourselves it has downright sucked at times. No matter how bad it has gotten though the church has remained steadfast. At our church specifically life continues on, albeit, completely different than what we’ve seen before. I know I joke around a lot about how many of you sit in the back of the church. At this time I’d give anything to see you all sitting in your pews no matter how far back you sit! Despite my desire to get back as soon as possible this is all for the best and this too shall pass. Despite our distance our mission to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ continues on. Every weekend we are reaching an average of 120 website hits that watch our service. To put it into perspective average attendance at services was around 80 people over the last few weeks we met. Our social media presence continues to grow and there is some organic interaction on the Facebook page as well, a sight I did not see

before. Long story short, the church is continuing to stand strong even though we cannot meet in person. The line of the hymn still rings true. With Christ as our center and our guide we are getting through this time of trial. Not only are we surviving, we are thriving. Stay strong, stay the course, and please reach out to me if you need anything.

In Christ

-Pastor Blake

Stay strong.  
Have faith.  
Trust God.  
Keep believing.



## A letter from your council president .....

Dear friends,

It has now been seven weeks since we were able to worship together at the church.

Pastor Shipman, Deb Hyland, Todd and Tanya Vanderlinde, together with the computer know-how of Roger Johnson, have made it possible for us to worship every weekend online. It has not been the same, but we are thankful that these faithful people have made this worship experience possible for us.

Jan and I were talking the other day and it struck us that this worshipping “at home” is not much different than many of our grandparents and great-grandparents experienced when they were children. Unless you lived in a large urban area, your hometown church may have had to share a minister with three or four other congregations, many miles apart. Your church may have only had a minister once a month. Home



devotions were the norm, not the exception. Growing up in Jan’s family, home devotions were often conducted at the conclusion of the evening meal. The family ate around the kitchen table and everyone remained seated until the end of the meal and they were excused.

We have noticed, on our walks on the trails along the Galena River, that more families are out there walking together or riding bikes. They are, hopefully, slowing down the pace of their lives a bit and noticing the beautiful nature the Lord has given us. While there is no denying that the pandemic has been a tragic event, the silver lining is that people are appreciating the other people in their lives a bit more. While we appreciate the doctors, nurses and other workers on the

front line of, we can also appreciate each other and the blessing we have just being able to come together to worship each week. This is something we may have taken for granted.

At the time of this writing, it is unclear if we will be able to worship together in the next couple of weeks, or if we will remain separated until June. Either way, the church calendar continues. On Thursday, May 21, we recognize the Ascension of our Lord into the heavens. In Luke 24: 51-53 Luke writes, "While he (the Lord) was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven. Then they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God." Then on Sunday, May 31, we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. The book of Acts, chapter 2, tells the story of Pentecost, when violent winds began to blow, tongues as of fire came to rest on the heads of the apostles and they began to speak in tongues. My hope is that we will be able to be together, to celebrate these amazing events!

Before I close, I want to wish Dale Knipshield quick healing of his right arm. A couple of weeks ago, Dale fell off a chair he was standing on and broke his arm. After living with Jan last Fall when her right arm was out of commission for two months, I can really appreciate the inconvenience this is for Dale.

I also want to acknowledge a friend of this congregation, Brad Aylesworth, who was burned in a fire that destroyed his shop/garage on Saturday, April 18. Brad is in good spirits but in the burn unit at the University of Wisconsin - Madison Hospital. He will remain there for a couple of weeks following skin graft surgery. Please keep both of these men in your prayers.

Stay well my friends, we will be together again soon!

Bruce Etzel

## CELEBRATIONS IN MAY

### BIRTHDAYS

02	Ken Voigt
16	John Klinkner
18	Howard Klauer
25	Carolyn Stork
26	Laurelyn Vanderline
27	Elaine Fitch

### ANNIVERSARIES

09	Jim & Marie Moser
17	Fred & Cindy Baltz
21	Dan & Connie Consedine
24	Howard & Nancy Klauer



## APRIL FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Income. \$15,819.08

Expense \$7,467.78

A letter from your treasurer

“Call upon me in times of trouble and I will answer you” Ps 50:15

The verse above is both appropriate and comforting during this troubled time. Since the shelter in place order has been extended through May 30<sup>th</sup> in Illinois, we continue to worship and pray at home as individuals or families and via the internet. Last month we experienced our first Easter without being able to gather together in the sanctuary. It certainly did not feel like the joyous Easter we usually experience. Maybe we can have a belated Easter celebration when we are finally allowed to sit in the pews of St Matthew Lutheran again. There will be so many reasons to rejoice then.



We have been blessed with strong financial support during the last two months. We want to say a big THANK YOU to the many members who have mailed in donations. During that time we took in almost \$25,000 which is \$5,500 more than budgeted. Expenses were \$3,450 below budget for the same two month period. Year to date we are over \$4,200 ahead of our projections. Thanks to many member's help we do not need to worry about our bank balance.

Until we can be together in person we'll pray for everyone's health and ask God's guidance for all who are making tough decisions for medicine and society. The council has lots of projects that we are eager to resume including upgrading the A/V system and finding a permanent musician or musical team.

Another big THANK YOU must go out to the team who make the online worship services possible, both in front of and behind the camera. Every week they have worked to improve the process and our worship experience.

In His service,

Connie Consedine, Treasurer

# NEW TESTAMENT WORDSEARCH

Find the books of New Testament in the wordsearch below. Then, use the left over letters to find the reason that John wrote the Gospel of John. Use the letters from the left to right, starting on the top line and working down.



m a r k b r e l i e v e t  
 h a e t j o g e s p u s i  
 s p v t h m a t t h e w s  
 t h e s s a l o n i a n s  
 i i l t e n a c e l a j h  
 m l a u e s t t p i c u r  
 o e t i k r i i h p t d s  
 t m i t s e o t e p s e o  
 h o o n g o n u s i d y o  
 y n n u m i s s i a j a y  
 l h e b r e w s a n o i f  
 c o l o s s i a n s h e h  
 i s c n j a m e s a n m e

- Matthew
- Mark
- Luke
- John
- Acts
- Romans
- Corinthians
- Galatians
- Ephesians
- Philippians
- Colossians
- Thessalonians
- Timothy
- Titus
- Philemon
- Hebrew
- James
- Peter
- Jude
- Revelation

"...but these are written so that you may \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_, and that by believing \_\_\_\_\_



have \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_."

John 20:31 (ESV)

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# NEW TESTAMENT WORDSEARCH

## Church Office News

If you need to contact Kim Miller, Church Clerk or Tom Staver, Financial Secretary, please call the church office at 815-777-1134 or email [contact.stmatt@gmail.com](mailto:contact.stmatt@gmail.com). There is an inbox on the desk in the office for messages, receipts, etc. Please include your name, phone number and

Please submit articles, pictures or information for the newsletter to [contact.stmatt@gmail.com](mailto:contact.stmatt@gmail.com) no later than the 28<sup>th</sup> of the month.



St. Matthew Lutheran Church 127 South High Street, Galena [www.stmat.net](http://www.stmat.net)  
815-777-1134

Service Times: Saturday at 5:30 pm  
Sunday at 10:00 am

Where God's work happens 7 days a week. A First Century Church for the Twenty-first Century. See our website for our full calendar of events and follow us on Facebook!

