



# THE VOICE

THE NEWSLETTER OF ST. MATTHEW LUTHERAN CHURCH, AVON, CT May 2018

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St. Matthew Lutheran Church  
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Website: [www.stmatthewavon.org](http://www.stmatthewavon.org)

Sunday Worship Services at 8:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

## DATES TO REMEMBER:

**May 3** - National Day of Prayer 12:00.

**May 5** - Spring Clean-up Day.

**May 6** - Reception of New Members at both services.

First Communion at 11:00.

**May 13** - Mothers' Day.

**May 19** - Quilt Project at 10:30 a.m.

**May 20** - Confirmation at 11:00.

Last day of Sunday School.

Caring Network Info. Meeting at 12:00

## LOOKING AHEAD:

**June 10** - Church Picnic for ALL at 12:00.

**June 17** - Fathers' Day.

**June 24** - Last Sunday with 2 services before summer schedule.



## A LETTER FROM THE PASTOR

***"In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams." Acts 2:17.***

The apostle Peter quoted these words of the prophet Joel on the day of Pentecost nearly 2000 years ago, when the Holy Spirit came to believers in the rush of a mighty wind and tongues of fire. Peter saw that Joel's prophecy was being fulfilled before their eyes, and that a powerful new era was beginning. If you read the whole quote, you can see that central to this new era was that it included everyone: people from every known land, the old and the young, male and female, slave and free. People from different walks of life and different experiences were brought together by the Holy Spirit, and 3000 people were baptized that day.

One of the things I find intriguing about Peter's vision of what was happening through the Holy Spirit was that focused on young people. Children and youth were lowest on the pecking order of Roman and Jewish society; children were in fact seen as property. But in the book of Acts we see the Jesus movement reaching out to young people, as well as to others typically ignored: women, foreigners, people with physical differences. **The Holy Spirit's inclusion means everyone, but it focuses in on those who are underrepresented.**

I recently read a book entitled, Growing Young, which details practices of churches across denominations which successfully reach out to young people. One of the keys to success was to **prioritize young people everywhere**. Instead of relegating youth to a dusty room with old couches, churches successful in engaging youth and young adults make specific choices to put their needs and interests at the top of the congregational list. If there are leadership positions, these congregations mentor young people to fill them. If young people come up with an idea, the congregation finds ways to support it. In addition, these congregations get to know the young people in the area as well as those in their churches, to find out how to connect. It seems like a modern-day example of the Holy Spirit working on including everyone by focusing in on those who need an extra invitation.

St Matthew over the years has also prioritized young people. For decades the congregation has invested in interns and associate pastors who gave time, attention, and expertise to our children and young people. They recruited and trained lay leaders to join them. This work continues with our dedicated (continued...)

(continued...) Sunday school teachers, confirmation guide, youth advisor, and young adult leaders in our congregation. This month our congregation will celebrate the first communion for our 5th graders on May 6, and confirmation for five of our 8th/9th graders on May 20. And in the future, the new pastor or lay person that we call will continue to prioritize the needs and gifts of young people, knowing that as on the day of Pentecost, this work of the Spirit benefits all the generations.

The Spirit is working among us! Let us continue to pray together how we may prioritize young people everywhere and bless all the people of God at St Matthew and in our communities.

Pastor Julie

## SEARCH/CALL COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Search/Call Committee met for the first time on March 26th. There are ten of us - Melissa Bender, Margaret Byrne, Mark Coslett, Fred Fenn, Sheila Jarka, Kelly O'Connell, Joe Pelehach, Pr. Julie Reuning-Scherer, Kurt Saenger-Heyl, and Debbie Steinberg.

Rev. Paul Sinnott from New England Synod attended the meeting and talked with us about:

- ✚ the call process and the support he and Synod will give,
- ✚ the need to re-do our Ministry Site Profile (MSP) if we do wish to call an ordained pastor,
- ✚ the availability (not many!) of seminary grads and pastors with a few years' experience,
- ✚ and the openness of our congregation to all options and possibilities.

Rev. Sinnott cautioned us that the numbers of available Lutheran candidates are few. He said that ecumenical partners (Episcopal, Methodist, UCC, Presbyterian and Reformed) could be a possibility, and that a lay person as a full time hire plus part time pastor is a good option, as might be a job-sharing situation between two people for a full time equivalent. He told us that one third of first call candidates are LGBTQ.

After saying thanks and good-bye to Rev. Sinnott, the committee decided to continue to pursue both lay and ordained candidates concurrently. It seemed prudent to be open and prepared for both. The Search/Call Committee will cast its net widely and hire the lay person or recommend calling the pastor that best fits our needs.

We split into two groups and are working on both preparing the MSP to be ready for the call process and fine-tuning the job description to attract lay candidates. We are meeting next on April 23rd and our agenda includes going over the two groups' work. We hope to have both the MSP and the job description in the council's hands the last week in April — before the May 1st council meeting. The MSP must be voted on and approved by the council before it can be posted to the New England Synod and the ELCA.

- Submitted by Debbie Steinberg



## EVENING READERS

Join the Evening Readers on **Monday, May 14th at 7:30** (later start time) when we will discuss ***Dresden: Tuesday, February 13, 1945*** by Frederick Taylor. The contact person for Evening Readers is Debbie Steinberg at [deborahsteinberg@mac.com](mailto:deborahsteinberg@mac.com)

*"The thing to do, it seems to me, is to prepare yourself so you can be a rainbow in somebody else's cloud. Somebody who may not look like you. May not call God the same name you call God - if they call God at all. I may not dance your dances or speak your language. But be a blessing to somebody. That's what I think."* — **Maya Angelou**



## YOUNG ADULT LUNCHES

Meet other young adults (21+) every month! Enjoy camaraderie, good food, and a little Lutheran cheer. Contact Kurt Saenger-Heyl ([kurt@thekeds.org](mailto:kurt@thekeds.org)) or Jill Brunetti ([jtrick0@gmail.com](mailto:jtrick0@gmail.com)) for more information.

## Adult Forum

In May we will continue our study of Bishop Hazelwood's document:  
*The Church is not dying but being Born Again.*

We will follow that with a **Bible Study** based on a book by Rev. Dr. Ruel Howe, "The Miracle of Dialogue" where he invites lay people to become active listeners of their pastors as preachers AND pastors to become better listeners to the hearts of those they preach to at Sunday Worship.

We will study the texts for the next Sunday and talk about what it is like to hear the word preached after studying it together.

**Please Join us at 9:40 in the Hall of the Evangelists**

May 6 - Session 3 *The Church is not dying but being Born Again*

May 13 - Session 4 *The Church is not dying but being Born Again*

May 20 - Bible Study: The Miracle of Dialogue – Trinity. John 3:1-17

May 27 - Bible Study: The Miracle of Dialogue – Pentecost 3. Mark 2:23-3:6

June 3 - Bible Study: The Miracle of Dialogue – Pentecost 4. Mark 3:20-35



### STEWARDSHIP

MAY MADNESS IS HERE!

During the first three Sundays of May, Sunday morning worshippers will vote on favorite charities!

May 6 – Vote 32 charities down to 16

May 13 – vote 16 down to 8

May 20 – vote for the final 4!

The final 4 charities will receive generous gifts from St. Matthew Lutheran Church.



### THE QUILT PROJECT

Let's make a quilt together in one session to give to a veteran! Join us **on Saturday, March 19 at 10:30 a.m.**

Materials and equipment will be provided. Non-sewers also needed to help with prep work. Ages 10 and up are welcome! \$10 donation.

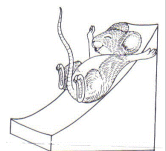
Sign up in the Carter Gathering Space. Contact: Beth Wilson 860-404-0708



### THE MOUSE

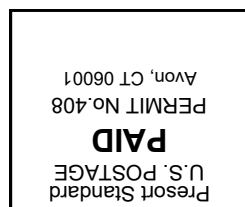
The Alleluia is back! I saw it on the front windows of the church, and on the paraments on the altar. Alleluia! I'm just a mouse, so I wasn't sure what alleluia meant, and I was too shy to ask Pastor Julie, so I did what all mice do – I googled it! It means "God be praised". Of course, we should always praise God...there are also people at St. Matthew Lutheran Church that need praise: If you were here on Good Friday (*and if you weren't – why not?*) – I thought I witnessed a miracle when the sanctuary lights turned off,

then back on again, until I saw Ernie Jaschinski at the breaker switches. Deb Brodeur and Ellen Ericson lovingly placed the Easter lilies on the altar for a beautiful and fragrant display on Easter morning. After Easter, Deb Brodeur (again), John Jarzbek, and Jacob Fitts gave their time to set up a table in the Carter Gathering Space and moved all the Easter lilies from the altar, so people can easily pick them up. Gayle Murphy used her free time to help in the office recently while Jude Murphy was busy at an activity elsewhere. This place is always full of activity; on one Monday back in April we had 4, count them 4, meetings all overlapping in the late afternoon; Stephanie Montminy had it all under control when she made a big white board sign directing all the committee members to their meetings. Everyone found their places that night. Thank goodness Michelle Parker has found her place here; she deserves our praise for bringing the grand piano to its new home in our sanctuary. It arrived as the Sanctuary Choir bass section, David Betsch, Jack Pietrick and Roy Zurell waited with great anticipation. Michelle was instrumental (*see what I did there*) in acquiring that beautiful piano so we may all enjoy its rich sound and sing out "God be praised" ...Alleluia!



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Notes:		1  6:30 Bible Bowl 7:30 Church Council	2 9:30 Bible Study 10:30 Staff Meeting 7:00 Sanctuary Choir 7:00 GHC Assembly in East Hartford	3  12:00 National Day of Prayer	4	5 Property Committee Spring Clean-Up Day
6 8:30 Worship w/Reception of New Members 9:40 Sunday School & Adult Forum 11:00 Holy Communion w/First Communion & Reception of New Members	7  11:30 Stewardship Committee	8  6:30 Confirmation	9 10:30 Staff Meeting  7:00 Sanctuary Choir	10  10:00 Office Helpers	11	12
13 MOTHERS' DAY 8:30 Holy Communion 9:40 Sunday School & Adult Forum 11:00 Worship	14 1:00 FAVARH Student 5:30 Technology Cmtee 6:30 Evangelism Cmtee 7:00 Altar Guild 7:30 Evening Readers	15  6:30 Confirmation (wrap up)	16 9:30 Bible Study 10:30 Staff Meeting  7:00 Sanctuary Choir	17 12:00 Prayer Shawl Ministry	18	19 10:30 Quilt Project
20 PENTECOST 8:30 Worship 9:40 Sunday School (Last classes) & Adult Forum 11:00 Holy Communion with Confirmation 12:00 Caring Network Info. Meeting	21	22  7:00 Property Committee	23 10:30 Staff Meeting  7:00 Sanctuary Choir	24	25	26
27 8:30 Holy Communion 9:40 Adult Forum 11:00 Worship	28 MEMORIAL DAY  -- Office Closed --	29	30 10:30 Staff Meeting  7:00 Sanctuary Choir	31	<b>May 2018</b>	

Electronic Service Requested  
May 2018



Non-Profit Organization

SAINT MATTHEW LUTHERAN CHURCH  
224 Lovely Street, Avon, Connecticut 06001-4018

