



# THE VOICE

THE NEWSLETTER OF ST. MATTHEW LUTHERAN CHURCH, AVON, CT September 2019

*"In Christ, we are digging deep, reaching out, changing lives."*

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Website: [www.stmatthewavon.org](http://www.stmatthewavon.org)

Sunday Worship Services at 8:30 AM and  
11:00 AM

## DATES TO REMEMBER:

**September 2 - Labor Day: Church  
office closed.**

**September 8** - Fall Sunday worship  
schedule resumes. Sunday services  
held at 8:30 AM and 11:00 AM  
9:40 AM Sunday School teachers'  
meeting.

**September 9** - 7 PM Evening Readers

**September 15** - Rally Day and October  
VOICE submission deadline.

9:40 AM Adult Forum resumes.  
5:00 PM Youth Group resumes  
(moving to 3rd Sunday of each month).

**September 19:** Bible Study 10 AM & 7 PM

**September 22** - St. Matthew Day  
stewardship kickoff.

4:00 PM Grief Support Group  
informational meeting.

**September 27** - 5:00 PM Fourth Friday  
at Grace.

**September 29** - Healing prayer in Worship  
5:00 PM Family Pizza Night.

## LOOKING AHEAD:

**October 13** - November VOICE submission  
deadline.

**October 25** - Fourth Friday at Grace.

## A LETTER FROM THE PASTOR

### *"Follow Me"*

*"As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. 'Follow me,' he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him." Matthew 9:9*

This fall our congregation will have the opportunity to reflect and act on what it means to truly follow Jesus in our stewardship campaign. Our theme is "Follow Me," based on Jesus' invitation to Matthew. Matthew left his life of collecting taxes for Rome to travel with Jesus and learn from him. After Jesus' death and resurrection, Matthew became an apostle, sent out to share the good news and became an evangelist who wrote the Gospel which bears his name.

On September 22nd, we will kick off our fall Stewardship campaign with a celebration of our namesake, St. Matthew. In honor of the September 21st St. Matthew feast day, we will focus on Matthew with a bible study in the Adult Forum entitled, Who Is St. Matthew?, and a visit from the saint himself in worship.

In a world of activity and things, Jesus issues the invitation for each of us to follow him more closely. We know as Christians that all is 'on loan' to us in this life on earth. God created everything. God owns everything. We steward resources for saving, giving and helping. When we reorient our lives and share our gifts, talents and treasures, we follow Jesus, like St. Matthew.

### Join Us for Stewardship Sundays!

**Sept 22** – St. Matthew Day & Campaign Kick Off!

Stewardship Minute: What Is Stewardship?

Adult Forum: Who Is St. Matthew?

**Sept 29** - Healing Prayer in Worship

**Oct 6** - Stewardship Minute: God Owns Everything

**Oct 13** - Stewardship Minute: God Delegates Responsibility

**Oct 20** - Stewardship Minute: We Steward Resources

**Oct 27** - Reformation Sunday

Procession of intended giving cards.

**ST. MATTHEW MISSION STATEMENT:** St. Matthew Lutheran Church is a worshipping community called to proclaim God's love for all and to grow spiritually together. Challenged by Jesus' example, we strive to connect people of all ages, abilities, and needs, and to nurture them to be disciples of Christ. Guided by the Holy Spirit, we reach out to the wider community and welcome our neighbors to a life of worship, preaching, teaching, Christian care, service, and spiritual growth.

## COME WALK WITH US! JOURNEY THROUGH GRIEF TOGETHER! – **NEW!**

St. Matthew is holding an informational gathering for those in need of grief support or who may be interested in helping provide support. Grief can be present from the loss of a loved one, in the wake of a divorce or other life-altering situations. If you feel the need for support or are interested in helping in this worthy mission, please join us for an informal gathering on **Sunday afternoon, September 22 at 4:00 PM** at the church. For more information, please contact Ellen Ericson or Pastor Julie. Let's begin this journey



## COMMUNITY CONVERSATION UPDATE: FAMILY PIZZA NIGHT!

Inside this newsletter you will see evidence of some of the ministries that are coming to fruition from our *Community Conversations* last spring. We are so grateful for the enthusiastic response and leadership from our congregation that makes this possible!

In addition, we would like to invite greater participation from the younger generations of St. Matthew. To that end, we are planning a **Family Pizza Night at 5 PM on Sunday, September 29th** in the Hall of the Evangelists. We will share pizza and a few games, as well as have an opportunity to get input around the needs and gifts of families, youth, and children. People of all ages are welcome to attend! Please RSVP to the office at [office@stmatthewavon.org](mailto:office@stmatthewavon.org) by Wednesday, September 25th so we can plan for the food.

## TODDLER TIME AT ST. MATTHEW—**NEW!**

**Calling All Toddlers!** As part of our Visioning Process, one idea to reach out to the community is to begin a playgroup for “Toddlers” between the ages of 12 months and 36 months old. The playgroup will be open to both St. Matthew families as well as non-member families. The playgroup will meet on **Tuesday mornings, two times per month from 9:30 –10:30 AM**. This one hour child and parent participation playgroup will allow for quality time with your child and be an opportunity to create lasting relationships with the new friends you will meet along the way. **The first session will begin on September 24<sup>th</sup>.**

The hour may include different activities such as: free play (in the nursery), story time, a musical activity, movement activities and a craft activity. The program is being organized by Jenna Pietrick Gray, a member of St. Matthew. Jenna taught second grade for seven years and kindergarten for two years in the Wethersfield Public Schools, and has a toddler of her own who will be participating in the playgroup.

Interested parents should e-mail [office@stmatthewavon.org](mailto:office@stmatthewavon.org) or call the office at 860-673-3301 and leave a message with the office administrator, Cynthia. Slots will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. There will be no participation fee. Coffee will be available for the adults.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL RALLY DAY!

Mark your calendars for Rally Day on **Sunday, September 15<sup>th</sup>**! We're enthusiastic to begin our new year of Sunday School and have an exciting new curriculum called “Dig-In!”. Sunday School students will also be involved with singing in worship the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of every month and will have several mission projects throughout the year. We're excited to do some new things with Sunday School and look forward to a great year!

**YOUTH GROUP:** Youth Group Rally Day is **Sunday, September 15<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 - 7:00 PM!** This is a special youth group kick-off event for the school year and we hope everyone can make it! Students in grades 7-12 are welcome . . . and bring a friend! We'll have pizza and games and talk about what you want to do in the coming year.

**MEN'S FELLOWSHIP GROUP – **NEW!**:** The men of St. Matthew are planning a breakfast on **Saturday, September 28<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 AM**. Sign up on the poster in the Gathering Space, or by emailing Pastor

**CENTERING PRAYER – **NEW!**:** Pastor Brian is leading a Centering Prayer group this fall, starting in October. An evening group will meet the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month from 7:00-8:00 PM, and an afternoon group will meet the second and fourth Thursdays at 2:00-3:00 PM. Both groups will cover the same material each week, however you're more than welcome to come to both meeting times if you can make it!

## CALLING ALL CONFIRMATION-AGED KIDS!

Confirmation is kicking off with a Parent and Student meeting on **September 24th at 6 PM**. Please contact the office to let us know you will be in attendance: 860-673-3301, or [office@stmatthewavon.org](mailto:office@stmatthewavon.org).

**BIBLE STUDY:** Thursday morning Bible Study will begin again on September 19<sup>th</sup> and continue to be held the first and third Thursdays of each month from 10:00-11:00 AM. **A new evening Bible Study** will also begin the same day, September 19<sup>th</sup>, which will meet the first and third Thursday of each month from **6:00—7:00 PM**. We hope you will join us for this time of studying Scripture!



## ADULT FORUM TAKES A LOOK AT ST. MATTHEW



Adult forum kicks off this fall with a look at St. Matthew. Who does the bible say Matthew was? How was he seen by others? What can we learn from his life? Next, Pastor Brian will lead us through a session exploring Centering Prayer. Join us in the Hall of the Evangelists at 9:45 a.m. on Sunday mornings!


- ⇒ **September 15:** First Adult Forum: Who Is St Matthew?
- ⇒ **September 22:** Who Is St Matthew? Continued.
- ⇒ **September 29:** Centering Prayer

## GOOD THINGS

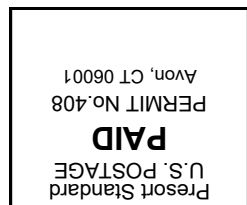
**We have so many wonderful things to be grateful to God for this past month!**

- ✦ Ten parishioners shared their faith stories on Thursday nights this summer. We are blessed with their stories, inspired by themes from Galatians, Paul's letter of freedom!
- ✦ The congregation learned a new setting of the liturgy this summer entitled, Now The Feast and Celebration, by composer Marty Haugen, and sang favorite hymns suggested by congregation members. Thank you to Dick, our musician, to our impromptu choir members, and to all parishioners who have contributed to our song this summer.
- ✦ Youth group's Rolling Hills 5K had a great turnout! We hosted 102 human runners this year and quite a few dogs! Thank you to everyone who walked/ran, volunteered, or supported in any way!
- ✦ Stephanie Montminy and her team welcomed the community and the Red Cross for a blood drive this month. We are grateful to all who make this gift of life possible!
- ✦ Deb Brodeur leads a group that offers lunch receptions following funerals at St. Matthew. The extended time at St. Matthew provides bereaved families with special care from our church members and the wider community.
- ✦ Five new ministry offerings are launching this month, which are early results of the visioning process and community conversations! They include: a men's fellowship group, a centering prayer group, an evening bible study, a grief support group, and a playgroup for toddlers and their caregivers. Thanks be to God for the faith and energy of our congregation!
- ✦ St. Matthew is hosting its first 12-Step Group this fall, led by a parishioner. Anonymous groups like AA are a beautiful extension of St. Matthew's goal to "heal those broken by life's circumstances."
- ✦ The cooks for Grace meals voted to spend earmarked outreach funds for a freezer for Grace Lutheran Church. Now the cooks at Grace can store surplus items from FoodShare, as well as St. Matthew casseroles, with ease!
- ✦ Total giving year-to-date July is \$9K ahead of budget and \$45K higher than last year at the same time – thank you! This has allowed us to put off utilizing endowment gifts from prior years until later this year.

**God is good, all the time.**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>September 2019</b>		<b>St. Matthew Lutheran Church Mission Statement:</b> St. Matthew Lutheran Church is a worshipping community called to proclaim God's love for all and to grow spiritually together. Challenged by Jesus' example, we strive to connect people of all ages, abilities, and needs, and to nurture them to be disciples of Christ. Guided by the Spirit, we reach out to the wider community and welcome our neighbors to a life of worship, preaching, teaching, Christian care, service, and spiritual growth.				
1 9:00 Worship & Holy Communion 10:15 Sunday School Meeting	2 LABOR DAY: OFFICE CLOSED	3 1:45 Staff Meeting  7:30 Church Council	4	5	6	7
8 8:30 Holy Communion 9:40 Sunday School Teachers' Meeting 11:00 Worship	9 1:45 Staff Meeting 6:30 Altar Guild Meeting 7:00 Evening Readers	10  7:00 Stewardship Committee Meeting	11  7:00 Sanctuary Choir	12  1:00 Church Historians	13	14 9:30 Guardian Angels Volunteer Training
15 RALLY DAY October VOICE Submission Deadline  8:30 Worship 9:40 Sunday School & Adult Forum 11:00 Holy Communion  5:00 Youth Group	16  1:45 Staff Meeting  7:00 Fellowship Meeting	17	18  7:00 Sanctuary Choir	19 10:00 Bible Study  12:00 Prayer Shawl Ministry  6:00 Evening Bible Study	20	21
22 STEWARDSHIP KICKOFF 8:30 Holy Communion 9:40 Sunday School & Adult Forum 11:00 Worship & Baptism (Andrew Codispodi) 4:00 Grief Support Group Informational Meeting	23  1:45 Staff Meeting  7:00 Worship & Music Committee Meeting	24 9:30 Toddler Time Playgroup 6:00 Parent/Child Confirmation Meeting 7:00 Property Committee	25  7:00 Sanctuary Choir	26	27  5:00 Fourth Friday at Grace Lutheran Church	28 WELCA Fall Mini-Retreat
29 8:30 Holy Communion & Healing Prayers 9:40 Sunday School & Adult Forum 11:00 Holy Communion & Healing Prayer 5:00 FAMILY PIZZA NIGHT	30  1:45 Staff Meeting	Notes: 				

Electronic Service Requested  
September 2019



Non-Profit Organization

SAINT MATTHEW LUTHERAN CHURCH  
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