



THE VOICE

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

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St. Matthew Lutheran Church
224 Lovely Street
Avon, CT 06001-4018
(860) 673-3301

Website: www.stmatthewavon.org

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

DATES TO REMEMBER:

- May 2** - National Day of Prayer: 12 p.m.
- May 4** - Barnstormers concert: 7:00 p.m.
- May 11** - Church Cleanup Day: 8:00 a.m.
- May 12** - Mother's Day.
- June VOICE deadline.
- May 19** - First Communion: 11:00 a.m.
- May 27** - Memorial Day; Office closed.

LOOKING AHEAD:

- June 2** - Annual Church Picnic – following 11 a.m. service.
- June 7-8** - Synod Assembly.
- June 9** - Pentecost/Confirmation at 11:00 a.m.
- June 16** - Father's Day.
- Summer Sunday Worship Schedule begins 9 a.m.
- Summer VOICE Deadline



A LETTER FROM THE PASTOR

RUNNING THE RACE- A VISION PROJECT

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us... run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus as the pioneer and perfecter of our faith."
Hebrews 12: 1-2.

The author of the letter to the Hebrews knew that the key to running a good race was having your eye set on your goal. The goal is Jesus, who is both the starting place of faith as well as the finish line. Jesus is the one to look to for direction and guidance. The community of faith runs together in the same direction, with their eyes fixed on the prize of Jesus' example. The 'cloud of witnesses,' believers who have already completed the race, are like a great crowd of fans, who cheer the runners on!

I love this image, because it captures so much of the energy and common purpose of a community of faith—especially one that has engaged in a visioning process. A visioning process is where a community charts its course together through prayer, study, and discussion. The vision plan that is created is then the road map for the community and the standard by which resources are allocated and progress is measured.

This month we begin the congregational phase of our church's visioning work. St. Matthew began establishing a new direction for its ministry with the work of the call committee for a new lead pastor in 2016, continued with more study and prayer in calling an associate pastor in 2018, and was picked up by the council this year. The conversation and prayer around our congregation's roadmap has led to a proposed mission statement, as well as a variety of possible ministry outcomes over the next 1-3 years.

I join the council inviting you to join us for a series of Community Conversations on the proposed mission statement and possible goals for our ministry in the near and longer term future. They will be at 9:40am on Sunday mornings on April 28, May 5, and June 2. Come join us as we discern God's vision for our congregation.

Let us run that race that is before us... together!

Pastor Julie

INTRODUCING OUR NEW OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR!

Please join us in welcoming **Cynthia Zakowski** to the role of Office Administrator at St. Matthew! Cynthia comes to us with over 20 years of admin experience in both the for profit and non profit world. Her hours will be Monday - Thursday, 8:45am - 2:45pm and Friday, 8:45am- 12:45pm.

Her email is office@stmatthewavon.org.



ADULT FORUM STUDIES THE BAPTISTS

In May and June our Adult Forum continues its study, *My Neighbor's Faith* with a study of Baptists and Judaism. We will also welcome a visit from Reverend Tim Ponzani, District Executive Minister for Converge Baptist Conference in the US. Reverend Tim was formerly the Administrative Pastor at Valley Baptist. On June 9 we will close out our Adult Forum season with a visit from Rabbi Rebekah Mag Goldman of the Farmington Valley Jewish Congregation- Emek Shalom in Simsbury.

- May 5 Community Conversation
- May 12 Who Are The Baptists?
- May 19 Reverend Tim Ponzoni, District Executive Minister, Converge Baptist Conference
- May 26 Judaism
- June 2 Judaism
- June 9 Rabbi Rebekah Mag Goldman



BARNSTORMERS MEN'S CHORUS

St Matthew is hosting a travelling men's chorus known as The Barnstormers, May 4, 7:30pm. The chorus, which was founded in 1946 with 15 singers from Waterbury, now boasts 50 men from around New England.

Singers from Avon High School will join the performance at St. Matthew. Invite your friends and join us for this community event! A free will offering will be taken to benefit the chorus. More info available at <https://barnstormersmc.webs.com/>.



5 K 2019

St. Matthew's annual 5K road race will take place on Saturday, July 13th. Mark your calendars and come out to support this great event!



YOUTH GROUP!

In the month of May youth group will meet our usual first Sunday and third Thursday: Sun. May 5th at 9:40am and Thurs. May 16th 6:00-7:30pm. And on Sunday, May 19th we will go to a trampoline park together after church. Watch for an email from Pastor Brian with details about these events!



YOUNG ADULTS

St. Matthew's young adult group will not meet for lunch on our typical third Sunday this month. Pay attention to our GroupMe messages about what we might do instead.



WELCOME LUNCH MAY 19, 12:00 NOON.

We invite all visitors and new folks in the congregation to join the Evangelism Committee for a Welcome Lunch on May 19. Ask your questions about Lutheranism or St. Matthew, meet some new friends, enjoy a lunch after the 11am service. We will receive new members into the congregation on June 2, so this is a good time to learn about membership as well. All are welcome to attend, whether you intend to join at this time or not. RSVP to the church office by Wednesday May 15.



On behalf of my fellow artists, I want to extend a special thank you to all of the Members of the Fellowship Committee. Their extraordinary efforts and attention to detail made this initial Gallery Walk a huge success.

— Jean Tuve



SMLC EVENING READERS BOOK CLUB

Our meeting this month is on May 13 at 7:00 p.m. at the church. Our book is *Ordinary Grace* by William Kent Krueger. June's book will be *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston on June 10. Contact Debbie Steinberg at 860-463-9212 or deborahsteinberg@mac.com for more info or to be included on the book club email list OR just show up at a meeting - whether you finished the book or not - **WE LOVE VISITORS!**



NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER CARMON FAMILY CENTER

**THURSDAY MAY 2, 2019 12:00 NOON
301 COUNTRY CLUB ROAD, AVON**

This year's theme is "love one another" and is based upon John 13:34 "A new commandment I give to you that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another." This event is organized by our own Steve and Beth Wilson. Join us!



FIRST COMMUNION AND LAST DAY OF SUNDAY SCHOOL

On May 19, we welcome our 5th graders to the Table to receive Holy Communion. It is also the final day of Sunday school! Congratulations to our 5th graders! And a hearty thank you to our Sunday School teachers this year, Melissa Bender, Sarah Burns, Amy Byrne, Margaret Byrne, Kristen Conover-Cody, Meredith Trimble, Kurt Saenger-Heyl, Laurie Stickles, and Travis Wright.

CLEAN UP DAY IS MAY 11

Please come to the 2019 St. Matthew Clean-up Party!!

Ok - so maybe it's not REALLY a party, but it's still a good time! On May 11 (Sat.) please come help us with our Spring Clean up... hosted by the St. Matthew Property Committee. We will provide coffee and donuts starting at 8am and there will be a list of fun tasks to do, both inside and outside the church. We will plan to be done and have you on your way around noon-ish to enjoy the rest of your Saturday. Look for more info. soon on the bulletin board!

Ben Wright - for the Property Committee

GOOD THINGS

We have a lot of Good Things to be grateful to God for this past month:

- ✦ 87 people attended the first ever Gallery Walk art show, featuring 7 artists from St. Matthew. It was a lovely afternoon of fellowship, creativity, conversation, and elegant food—thank you, Anne F and the Fellowship Committee!
- ✦ Pastor Brian led sessions this Lent on different disciplines of prayer. In April, 12 people joined him each week to learn about and practice Welcoming Prayer and Centering Prayer.
- ✦ 8 confirmation students led the evening prayer worship services on Thursday nights in Lent. We are growing new leaders at St Matthew!
- ✦ 17 people cleaned the parsonage and helped Pastor Brian move in at the end of March. They joined the efforts of Ben W, Carl F, Tom L, Roy Z, and others who have worked over the past 14 months to renovate our parsonage.
- ✦ Stephanie M and Debbie S covered the office during the interim with seamless efficiency.
- ✦ Janet D, Peggy B, the confirmation and high school youth served a delicious Palm Sunday breakfast.
- ✦ Altar Guild, many worship servers, and musicians came together to lead us in an inspired observation of Holy Week and Easter. A special shout out to David B, who fashioned a new cross for our Good Friday liturgy.
- ✦ Our congregation exceeded the goal of \$57,000 to close the gap in our operating budget for 2019, with a total of \$61,700!



God is good, all the time.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
May 2019			1 Pastor Brian's Birthday! 7:00 Sanctuary Choir	2 10:00 Bible Study 12:00 National Day of Prayer	3 9:00 Piano tuning 2:00 Barnstormers Rehearsal	4 9:00 Barnstormers Rehearsal 5:00 Barnstormers Dinner 7:30 Concert
Notes:						
5 8:30 Worship 9:40 Sunday School & Community Conversation 9:40 Youth Group Meeting 11:00 Holy Communion 12:00 FIRST COMMUNION CLASS	6 11:30 Stewardship Com- mittee 2:15 Staff Meeting 7:00 Finance Committee	7 6:30 Confirmation Class 7:30 Church Council	8 7:00 Sanctuary Choir	9 1:00 Church Historians	10	11 8:00 Church Clean Up Day! 10:00 Tim Beaulieu - Fireside Room
12 VOICE Deadline 8:30 Holy Communion 9:40 Sunday School & Adult Forum 11:00 Worship	13 2:15 Staff Meeting 7:00 Evening Readers	14	15 7:00 Sanctuary Choir	16 10:00 Bible Study 12:00 Prayer Shawl Ministry 6:00 Youth Group Meeting	17	18
19 8:30 Worship 9:40 Sunday School (last day) & Adult Forum 11:00 Holy Communion 12:00 Welcome Lunch	20 2:15 Staff Meeting	21	22 7:00 Sanctuary Choir	23 7:00 Healing Prayer Workshop II	24 5:00 Fourth Friday at Grace Lutheran Church	25
26 8:30 Holy Communion 9:40 Adult Forum 11:00 Worship	27 MEMORIAL DAY OFFICE CLOSED	28 2:15 Staff Meeting 7:00 Property Com- mittee	29 7:00 Sanctuary Choir	30	31	

Electronic Service Requested
May 2019



Non-Profit Organization

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





POSSIBLE ORGAN RENOVATION

Have you ever noticed the television commercial from a local carpet store whose premise is that if you bring your oriental rugs in to be cleaned and repaired it will increase the life and usefulness of the carpet? That is the type of routine service the Worship and Music Committee recommended to the Church Council at the April 2nd meeting for our Casavant organ. A common repair for pipe organs is the re-voicing of the pipes. In fact, our recent organists have not used a number of the settings on the organ due to their piercing sound. The Committee has recommended that the Congregation Council consider re-voicing the 8' Principal and the V Mixture pipes which are not currently being used because of their extremely bright tonal quality. The Council is considering this proposal, and a possible spend from the Memorial Fund to cover the repairs.

Stay tuned (pun intended!) for more information about this potential project. For more information, please reach out to our musician, Dick, or our Council President, Jack. We welcome your feedback!



ANNUAL CHURCH PICNIC

Sunday, June 2, 2019

Immediately following the 11:00 service



Grilled burgers and hot dogs, salads, desserts, and more will be provided by the Fellowship Committee. There's no need to bring any food, but you can bring lawn games to share, if you'd like.

Look for the sign-up sheet in The Carter Gathering Space. Please let us know you are coming, if you can, but last minute attendees are always welcome. We look forward to seeing you there! Contact Karen Wright or anyone on the Fellowship Committee if you have any questions.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR CONGREGATION

The St. Matthew Lutheran Church Council as well as the members of the Close the Gap Committee wishes to thank the congregation for their contributions toward our campaign to Close the Gap in our 2019 operating budget. We are truly blessed to have such a dedicated and supportive congregation. We not only succeeded in meeting our initial goal of \$57,000 but surpassed that amount by \$4,700. The total amount of both revised pledges as well as donations resulted in an increase of \$61,700 in additional giving. Your generosity will enable us to continue to move forward in the ministries of St. Matthew.

In the upcoming months, a number of Community Conversations are scheduled during the Sunday morning adult forum sessions. During these meetings, parishioners will participate in discussions regarding the goals and directions we wish to take as we continue to grow the ministry at St. Matthew. We pray for your continued support and involvement.

Community Conversations:

- April 28, 9:40 a.m.
- May 5, 9:40 a.m.
- June 23, 10:00 a.m. (Summer Schedule)

Jack Pietrick, President – Church Council



GREATER HARTFORD LUTHERANS IN GERMANY

Pastor Cheryl Hoffman of St Mark Lutheran, Glastonbury is organizing a Luther tour / Oberammergau trip for 2020. Time frame is 10 days, late June-early July. Price will be all inclusive, including 4-star hotels and breakfast every morning. The very rough tentative itinerary is: Fly into Berlin, Wittenberg, Dresden, Eisleben, Halle, Leipzig, Erfurt, Eisenach, Wurzburg, Rothenburg, Oberammergau, Munich. For questions, please contact Pastor Cheryl Hoffman: pstrhffmn@comcast.net or speak with Pastor Julie.



PUT YOUR FAITH INTO ACTION!

The Ascentria Care Alliance Unaccompanied Refugee Minors program is the only foster care program in New England that exclusively assists refugee and migrating youth. Eighty-five percent of these youth pursue a postsecondary education after completing high school. However, many of them do not have a computer which can negatively affect their ability to be successful. Member of St. Matthew can help by donating gift cards to Best Buy and Amazon! Ascentria's case managers will use the gift cards to help refugee youth purchase a new computer. Imagine the possibilities! Please bring gift cards to the office or put them in the offering plate. Pastor Julie will take them to the Synod Assembly on June 7. For questions or more information, please contact Diane Fitzmaurice at 774-243-3938.



Partners in building better futures

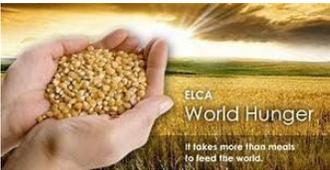


THRIVENT

THRIVENT HOUSE OF FAITH BUILD WITH HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Please join us in helping to build a home in East Hartford! The project will take all summer, but **Saint Matthew will be volunteering on**

Saturday, June 22 from 8:00 am to 3:30 pm. No skills are necessary to help; just a willing heart and able hands! If your heart is willing but your hands may not be able, we will also need volunteers to provide lunches and snacks for the volunteers. **Please sign up in the Carter Gathering Space!** Questions? Please contact Tim Beaulieu.



THANK YOU!!

\$561,796 Wow! That's how much members of the New England Synod gave to the ELCA World Hunger campaign during 2018, according to recently received year-end reports. This figure represents more than a 16% increase over giving in 2017. What a wonderful testament to the generosity of both individuals and

congregations here in New England who understand the importance of this critical ministry. According to the United Nations, more than one in ten people globally do not have access to sufficient food. In the U.S. alone, there are more than 40 million people who are food insecure. ELCA World Hunger works with partners around the world, providing immediate relief from hunger and connecting people with the resources they need to produce food and gain access to clean water, education, health care and sources of income. Through their efforts, long-term, sustainable change can be accomplished. Thank you for helping to make this possible!



Guardian Angels: If you are looking for an opportunity to help migrant youth, consider this. "Guardian Angels," an ELCA AMMPARO program, offers physical, spiritual and emotional accompaniment of migrant minors and their families. The Synod's Immigration & Refugee Task Force hopes to start a program at Hartford's immigration court. Two volunteers, one using Spanish-speaking skills, and the other, note taking skills, will work together. They will talk with migrants and their families before their

court time and then be in the courtroom. It's been found that with "Guardian Angels" present, judges & officials treat the young person with more respect! Watch the ELCA video:

Guardian Angels: An Introduction, <https://vimeo.com/157458987>

On Saturday, September 14 at 9:30 a.m. Mary Campbell, Director of AMMPARO, will train us in a 3+-hour session at Emanuel Lutheran Church, Hartford, CT. Guardian Angels will commit to volunteer two times a year, 8:30 a.m. to 12 noon, on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month. To sign up or ask for more information, contact Doreen Rinas at doreen.rinas@gmail.com.