

Pentecost Seventeen
Sunday September 20, 2026



ONLINE
 **GIVING**



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**St. Matthew Evangelical
Lutheran Church**

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Lancaster, PA

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* *Indicates please stand as you are able.*

PRELUDE *Fairest Lord Jesus*

arr. Janet Vogt

***Confession and Forgiveness**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,
who pours love into our hearts
and healing upon the earth.

Amen.

Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith,
let us confess our sin.

Compassionate God,

**we confess that we struggle to embody your goodness
in the world and in our own hearts.**

Creation groans from overuse.

Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships.

Indifference keeps us from seeking justice.

**Divisions disrupt your call to show genuine love
to others.**

Turn our hearts back to you.

Restore our world and reconcile us to one another.

**Renew us to live as your holy people,
following the way of Jesus Christ.**

Amen.

Hear this good news:

We have peace with God through ☩ Jesus Christ,
in whom there is no condemnation,
but only forgiveness and the promise of eternal life.
Receive freely this healing gift of grace.

Amen.

GATHERING

***GATHERING HYMN** *As Saints of Old*

ELW #695

***GREETING**

Pastor: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you
all.

People: *And also with you.*

***Kyrie**

p. 138

***Hymn of Praise**

Glory to God...

p. 139

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Almighty and eternal God, you show perpetual lovingkindness to us
your servants. Because we cannot rely on our own abilities, grant us
your merciful judgment, and train us to embody the generosity of
your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

People: *Amen*

WORD

First Reading: Jonah 3:10—4:11

¹⁰ When God saw what [the people of Ninevah] did, how they turned
from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that
he had said he would bring upon them, and he did not do it.

^{4:1} But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry.
² He prayed to the LORD and said, "O LORD! Is not this what I said
while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at
the beginning, for I knew that you are a gracious and merciful God,
slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from
punishment." ³ And now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is
better for me to die than to live." ⁴ And the LORD said, "Is it right for
you to be angry?" ⁵ Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down
east of the city and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it
in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city.

⁶ The LORD God appointed a bush and made it come up over
Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort,
so Jonah was very happy about the bush. ⁷ But when dawn came up
the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that
it withered. ⁸ When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind,
and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint
and asked that he might die. He said, "It is better for me to die than
to live."

⁹ But God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?" And he said, "Yes, angry enough to die." ¹⁰ Then the LORD said, "You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. ¹¹ And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left and also many animals?"

Reader: Word of God; Word of Life.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm: Psalm 145:1-8

Read responsively

- ¹ I will exalt you, my ¹ God and king,
and bless your name forev- ¹ er and ever.
- ² **Every day ¹ will I bless you
and praise your name forev- ¹ er and ever.**
- ³ Great is the LORD and greatly ¹ to be praised!
There is no end ¹ to your greatness.
- ⁴ **One generation shall praise your works ¹ to another
and shall de- ¹ clare your power.**
- ⁵ I will speak of the glorious splendor ¹ of your majesty
and all your ¹ marvelous works.
- ⁶ **They shall tell of the might of your ¹ wondrous acts,
and I will re- ¹ count your greatness.**
- ⁷ They shall publish the remembrance of ¹ your great goodness;
they shall sing joyfully ¹ of your righteousness.
- ⁸ **The LORD is gracious and full ¹ of compassion,
slow to anger and abounding in ¹ steadfast love.**

Second Reading: Philippians 1:21-30

²¹ For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. ²² If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me, yet I cannot say which I will choose. ²³ I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better, ²⁴ but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. ²⁵ Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, ²⁶ so that, by my presence again with you, your boast might abound in Christ Jesus because of me.

²⁷ Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel ²⁸ and in no way frightened by those opposing you. For them, this is evidence of their destruction but of your salvation. And this is God's doing.

²⁹ For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ but of suffering for him as well, ³⁰ since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

Reader: Word of God; Word of Life.

People: *Thanks be to God*

***Gospel Acclamation**

p. 142a

Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia. Alleluia.

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew

People: *Glory to you, O Lord.*

Gospel: Matthew 20:1-16

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹ "The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ² After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³ When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, ⁴ and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. ⁵ When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. ⁶ And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around, and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' ⁷ They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' ⁸ When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' ⁹ When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received a denarius. ¹⁰ Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius. ¹¹ And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ¹² saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' ¹³ But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius? ¹⁴ Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. ¹⁵ Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?' ¹⁶ So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

Pastor: The Gospel of the Lord

People: *Praise to you, O Christ.*

SERMON

***HYMN OF THE DAY** *Great God, Your Love Has Called Us*
(verses 1-4) **ELW #358**

*APOSTLES' CREED

Asst. Min.: With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

***I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.***

PRAYERS OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Between each petition the following is said:

Asst. Min.: Hear us, O God,
People: ***Your mercy is great.***

Asst. Min.: Grant the prayers we have offered, what we have forgotten to ask, and whatever else you see that we need. We ask this in Jesus' name.

People: Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC

There's a Wideness in God's Mercy
Chancel Choir; Ann Hossler, piano

David Ashley White

There's a wideness in God's mercy like the wideness of the sea;
There's a kindness in God's justice, which is more than liberty.
There's a welcome for the sinner, and more graces for the good!
There is mercy with the Savior; there is healing in his blood!

For the love of God is broader than the measure of our mind;
And the heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind.
If our love were but more simple, we should rest upon God's Word;
And our lives would be illumined by the presence of our Lord.

PREPARING THE TABLE

OFFERING PRAYER

Spoken in Unison

**God of creation,
you send rain and the earth springs forth abundantly.
All blessings are from you;
make us generous with what we have.
Use our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts
in service to you and in love to our neighbors,
today and always.
*Amen.***

***The Great Thanksgiving**

p. 144a

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: *And also with you.*

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: *We lift them to the Lord.*

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: *It is right to give our thanks and praise.*

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy...we praise your name and
join their unending hymn:

***Sanctus**

p. 144b

*Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth
are full of your glory. Hosanna. Hosanna. Hosanna in
the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.*

***Eucharistic Prayer**

***LORD'S PRAYER**

Spoken in Unison

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray the prayer that Jesus taught us.

*Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.*

***INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Christ invites you to this table.

All who are thirsty, all who are hungry, come!

People: *Thanks be to God.*

SHARING OF THE SACRAMENT

***TABLE BLESSING**

The Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ
strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Amen.

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Spoken in Unison

**Sustaining God,
with this bread and cup,
you nourish us with mercy and abundant life.
By your Spirit, send us from this table to serve a needy world.
Make us living signs of your liberation, healing, and love,
following the way of Jesus, in whose name we pray.
Amen.**

***BENEDICTION**

The God of love
draw you into full accord and one mind,
in the body of Christ Jesus.

Amen.

The God of hope
grant you strength and joy in all circumstances
through the interceding of the Spirit.

Amen.

The God of grace
✝ bless you now and forever.

Amen.

***SENDING HYMN** *God's Work, Our Hands*

ACS #1000

***DISMISSAL**

Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE *Tradesman and Teacher*

Scottish Folk Melody/Bell and Maule



Saturday Dine Out

Brenda Artz, Sean Carter, Sarah Challenger, Don Dubs,
James and Mabel Frazier, Patrick Herr,
Heather Hildebrand, Debbie LaNasa,
Joan Matternas & Abbey, Harold Nightingale,
David Ostrander, Diane Repp, Bob & Carolyn Sampson,
Betty Sheaffer, Angie Wendler,
Shirley Wertz and Bob Wimer

****WE'RE BACK!!****

BETTER BONES, BETTER BALANCE
Dr. Tim Kauffman's class
(Tuesdays at 12:00 PM)

September classes will be held at St. Matthew
on Tuesday, September 15, 22, and 29.



St. Matthew Lutheran Church Statement of Welcome, Affirmation and Full Participation



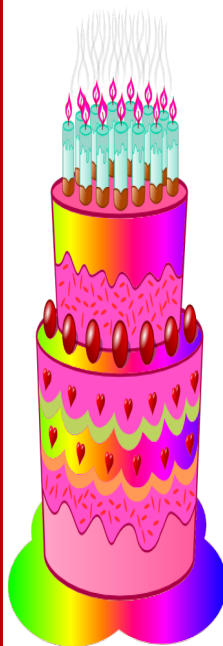
Welcome to St Matthew, the little church
with a big heart.



We are a Reconciling in Christ
(Open and Affirming)
congregation, so when we say "all are welcome",
we really mean it.

We strive to live that out in our actions as well as our words.
We publicly and humbly commit to do what it takes to truly be
a sanctuary filled with warmth, love, understanding, safety,
respect and care for all who enter here.

*(Please see our Full Statement of Welcome, Affirmation and Full
Participation on our website: www.stmatthewelc.com. Copies of
the Full Statement are also available in the Education
and Resources Stand in the Fellowship Hall.)*



SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

9/5	Kathleen Nightingale
9/6	Scarlett Jordan
9/7	Hannah Bentz
9/8	Kaye Ames
9/9	Susan Kolb
9/12	Marilyn Huehnergath
9/22	Barb Eshbach
9/29	Brenda Stauffer

SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

9/10	Harold & Kathleen Nightingale
9/10	Pat & Shep Smith
9/11	Carol & Buzz Rothweiler
9/14	Jacki & Clint Roderick
9/24	Sam & Sarah Jordan
9/25	Ray & Lunda Shaub
9/27	Cliff & Barb Eshbach

The Congregation

The Ministers

Pastor Robin Fero

Church Office

phone: 717-394-9607

Website: stmatthewelc.com

Email: info@stmatthewelc.com

Cliff Eshbach

Council President

Susan Feldmann

Director of Music/Choir

Ann Hossler

Organist/Pianist

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

Altar Care for September:

Carol Rothweiler & Linda Tice

Assisting Minister:

Steve Feldmann

Greeter:

Kay Gontner

Usher:

Barb Elsen

Reader:

Peg Sampson

Counters:

Brenda Stauffer & Sandy Tucker

9/19 Saturday

5:00pm Worship

9/26 Saturday

9:30am CPR Class *

5:00pm Worship

Steward Six Kickoff

Quilts Blessing

9/20 Sunday

10:00am Worship

9/21 Monday

9:00am Community Meal

6:00pm Finance Committee

9/27 Sunday

10:00am Worship

Quilts Blessing

9/22 Tuesday

12:00pm Better Bones at
St. Matthew

**Events scheduled for outside groups that use
our facility. You are welcome to attend or sign up for
all other events on the calendar*

9/23 Wednesday

12:00pm Bible Study

6:30pm Council Training

**Scripture Readings—
September 26-27, 2026**

Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

Psalms 25:1-9

Philippians 2:1-13

9/24 Thursday

6:30pm Vocal Choir Reh