

The Word

November/December 2026

with addendum, pages 14-20

St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church
700 Pleasure Road, Lancaster PA 17601
(717) 394-9607 www.stmatthewelc.com

Pastor Robin Fero

Pastor's Page



"Blessings on the pathway!"

That familiar greeting and benediction that I have lived and breathed all summer is taking on a new meaning, as the mornings are a little frosty and the evenings have that cold autumn echo in the air.

From the pathway, we witness harvested fields and browner tones in the vegetation. The Revised Common Lectionary was certainly designed by folks who were familiar with the changing seasons in North America. As the earth appears to die or sleep for a season, we experience scriptures about death and "end times" at the end of the Pentecost "green season".

No matter the season, we are assured that God is with us on that pathway.

In December of last year, our church Year A Gospel companion was the gospel of St. Matthew. It taught us plenty about the kingdom of God—its vastness and its surprises.

Our church Year B, beginning Nov. 29-30, will feature both the Gospels of Mark and John. The two Gospels will complement each other through the "busy months" of the church year-- Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Holy Week, and Easter Season. When we reach 2027's "green season", we will walk primarily with St. Mark, in a linear fashion.

Easter is early this year-March 28! That means an earlier Ash Wednesday, which will be on February 10, before Valentines Day.

In the Year B lectionary, there are a few books of the Bible that are featured. The First Readings in the Easter Season are from the Acts of the Apostles, and the Second Readings are from the Epistle of 1 John. This gives us a good opportunity to do extra studies on these books.

1 Corinthians is highlighted in Epiphany, and 2 Corinthians, Ephesians, and James are all read in order during the green Season after Pentecost.

If you would like to know more about the scriptures we are encountering from week to week, come check out Bible studies at 12Noon on Wednesdays.

God bless you in your walk. See you on the pathway!

A Prayer for November

Lord God, who spoke the Word, and all the world came into order,

Thank you for the freedoms we have enjoyed in our country: freedom to worship, freedom to speak, freedom to assemble, and freedom to vote.

Thank you for the systems of justice that have been established, designed to give every citizen a voice.

Thank you for infrastructures, highways, interstate travel, civil government planning, education institutions, and civic groups that weave our communities together.

Thank you for those who provide public safety in our localities and through our nation's military.

Thank you for leaders and for structures of government that are led by the people.

Thank you for blessing us with vocations within our community, allowing for our full participation in society.

We pray for your church, that we will be witnesses of your love and mercy, oases of grace in the midst.

We pray that each citizen of this country will work toward peaceful dialogue with their neighbors, no matter what political viewpoints they may have.

We pray for patience in all political campaigns and for peaceful transition of government as we await the results of the November 3 election.

Most of all, we look to the hills, as the Psalmist wrote, and ask you for help. You are our rock and our redeemer.

Give us this day our daily bread. Amen.

- Pastor Fero

Council Corner

This note to you is being written almost two weeks before our annual meeting. Even though I cannot see into the future, I'll still thank you for your attendance at our meeting.

In thinking about the months of November and December, I think about the approaching holidays of Thanksgiving and Advent/Christmas. First a season to reflect on people and things for which we are grateful. And then the seasons of hope and renewal as we celebrate the birth of Christ.

When it comes to our congregation, I am thankful for the faithful dedication of our Congregation Council and how they applied themselves to their task of leadership. I am thankful for StewardSix, our home-grown initiative which challenged us to think, and hopefully grow in persistence to supporting our congregation. I am thankful that through additional leadership and persistence, we will take positive strides to ensure the ongoing ministry of St. Matthew.

During the season of hope and renewal, my prayer is for us to face the future in faith, and with the Spirit's guidance, support and even prodding, to develop meaningful and successful ideas and methods which will ensure our future. Your participation is welcome and needed.

See you in church.

- Cliff Eshbach, Council President

RIC Committee News

Please join us on **Sunday, November 22, at 2:00 pm** for an afternoon of theater, reflection, and conversation as the RIC Committee presents *Deadly Silence*, a powerful documentary-style drama in the format of a staged reading.

The play explores the tragic suicide of a 16-year-old transgender girl through a series of interviews with friends, clergy, mental health professionals, and members of the community she left behind. As grief, faith, prejudice, compassion, and accountability collide, the story examines the devastating impact of rejection and the lifesaving power of acceptance.

Timely, emotional, and deeply human, *Deadly Silence* invites us to consider difficult questions about identity, belonging, faith, and what it truly means to love one another.

We hope you'll join us for this important and moving afternoon.

-Erin Conahan

Social Ministry

In 2025 LWR (Lutheran World Relief) sent 803,181 quilts to 15 countries. In a world filled with conflict and hardship, these donations are a lifeline for thousands in need.

This vital ministry reached people in Angola, Djibouti, Georgia, Honduras, Jordan, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Romania, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Ukraine, United States, and Zimbabwe.

LWR deeply values the generosity of its Synod churches and the unwavering dedication that continues to shine through hard work and compassion.

Here is some Trivia:

**The Lower Susquehanna Synod is divided into 13 conferences, across nine counties.*

**Congregations/Worshipping Communities - 217*

**LWR participating churches - 82 and 29 sister churches outside of our synod*

**Quilts donated in 2025 - 3,608*

**Participating churches in the Lancaster Conference - 11 out of 25*

~~~St. Matthew is proud to be one of them~~~
This year we were able to donate 61 quilts.

Thank you for all the donations during the Backpack Challenge in August and September. We had enough items to fill 27 backpacks.

That gets a big WOW!!

We continue to collect food items for Brecht Elementary School Thanks-GIVING Service Project.
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Deadline is Sunday, November 15th.

Community Meal & Quilting

Local Outreach ~ 3rd Monday ~ Community Meal
Global Focus ~ 3rd Saturday (Jan - Aug) ~ Quilting

To continue with these monthly projects Social Ministry needs your help. Monetary donations are needed to help pay for our quilting supplies and to help with the food expenses for the planned monthly meal.

Anything you can give will be greatly appreciated. Please use the designated envelopes in the foyer and place your contribution in the offering plate.

- Sheila Charles

Music Ministry News

I love the fall. Outside, the air turns cooler. There is vibrant color in the changing leaves before winter. At St. Matthew, the choirs resume their music-making after summer break with the excited preparation of special music for Reconciling in Christ Sunday, All Saints Sunday, Advent and Christmas Eve. It truly is a time when I feel especially thankful for St. Matthew, its ministries, its ongoing commitment to growing in understanding our neighbors, and its sanctuary of love for *every one* of God's children. This congregation is an oasis. I know it and I've felt from the first time I attended.

At year end, when I reflect on our music making at St. Matthew, the words to an old anthem *Why We Sing* come to mind:

Music builds a bridge. It can tear down a wall.
Music is a language that can speak to one and all.

Sometimes, when we have difficulty finding the right words, it is music that can speak for us and to us. "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth!" *Psalm 100* invites us all to celebrate God with singing, music and thankfulness. We truly sing and worship God as a congregation. Our music is also a gift to soothe our world.



The Chancel Choir and Bell Choir rehearsals are on Thursdays in November and December as listed below. A part of the joy of music making is also the journey of learning music with one another. Please contact me if you would like to sing or ring! You are welcome to sing or ring just for Christmas Eve. No prior experience is needed. We learn and grow together.

- November 5 – Chancel Choir -- 6:30-7:30 pm
- November 12 – Bell Choir -- 6:00-7:00 pm; Chancel Choir – 7:00-8:00 pm
- November 19 – Bell Choir – 6:00 -7:00 pm; Chancel Choir – 7:00-8:00 pm
- November 26 – No Rehearsals – Thanksgiving Day
- December 03 – Bell Choir – 6:00-7:00 pm; Chancel Choir – 7:00-8:00 pm
- December 10 – Bell Choir – 6:00-7:00 pm; Chancel Choir – 7:00-8:00 pm
- December 17 -- Bell Choir – 6:00-7:00 pm; Chancel Choir – 7:00-8:00 pm
- December 19 -- Bell Choir – 10:00-11:00 am; Chancel Choir – 11:00 am-12:00 noon
- December 24 -- Christmas Eve Worship – 4:00 pm

-Susan Feldmann

Evangelism Corner

A meeting of the Evangelism Committee occurred on Sunday October 15 at 11:30am. Plans were finalized for Diane Whitcomb's presentation, speaking on medical practices in the 1800's as part of our ongoing Conversation Around the Corner (Wednesday, October 21 at 6:30 pm).

A Starbucks gift card ($25) will be sent to Noah Haldeman who is currently enrolled at Stevenson University in his second year of studies.

Members volunteered to hand out candy for our trick-or-treaters on Saturday, October 31 from 6 to 8 pm. Our wagon full of candy will be distributed at that time.

Caroling Around the Corner is scheduled for December 12 at 6pm following Saturday's church service.

Dan Mink, volunteer with Hawk Mountain Sanctuary will present a program for Birds of Prey on March 9, 2027, continuing our Conversation Around the Corner.

Barb Emmerich led us in a closing prayer with adjournment at 12pm.

Our next Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, November 15 at 11:15am.

-Kay Gontner



StewardSix

Our six weeks of Steward Six are coming to a close! We hope this journey has encouraged you to notice the many ways small acts of generosity can make a difference. Scan the QR code to read some of the reflections and insights shared throughout our Steward Six journey.

stmatthewelc.com/reflections

Join us for a wrap-up luncheon on Sunday, November 8, following the Annual Meeting, as we celebrate our shared experience!

- Barb Eshbach, Treasurer

balancing faith and finance

JANUARY-SEPTEMBER 2026	
General Fund	
Regular Giving	$ 95,935.51
Other Income	$ 46,688.66
Total Income	$ 142,624.17
Total Expenses	$ 123,035.64
	$ 19,588.53

Although our income exceeded expenses for January through September, the surplus reflects significant gifts and other income that we cannot count on receiving every year. In fact, we received nearly $34,000 in gifts this year alone. **Regular giving** remains the foundation of our congregation's financial health, yet it is not keeping pace with our needs. The ongoing work of our congregation depends on the financial support of its members. As we approach the end of the year, please prayerfully consider how your giving can help sustain our ministries and support the mission we share.

- Barb Eshbach, Treasurer

Daylight Saving Time Ends



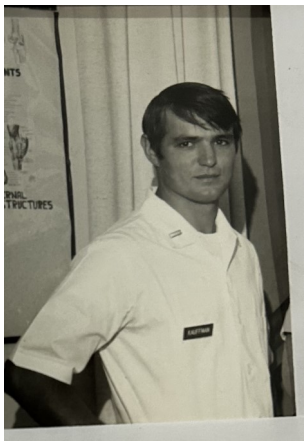
Don't forget to set your clocks back one hour on Saturday night, October 31st.

Veterans Day

Veterans' Day grew from Armistice Day which was established by President Woodrow Wilson in 1919 to honor the end of the "War to End All Wars" – World War One. The peace was declared on the 11th hour of the 11th Day of the 11th month in 1918. Armistice Day was declared a national holiday in the United States in 1938. It was changed to Veterans Day in 1954 to honor US military Veterans and includes members of the Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force and Coast Guard. *This writer believes it should also include civilians who have taken more responsibility in the defense of our nation, especially since the end of the draft in 1973.*

Many persons question the relation of the military to religion. As a veteran, I must say that the military Chaplain Corps is critical to service of the military. In my own experience, the most meaningful church services I have ever attended were the times we had a member "of cloth" speak to us under a tree as we had rifles at our sides and steel pots on our heads. . . you come closer to God.

Honor Veterans Day 2026 and Every Year.



- Tim Kauffman, LTC, Retired, US Army

Thank You

Dear St. Matthew members,

I want to thank you for the beautiful flower arrangement. It brought much joy looking at them and lasting quite long.

I also enjoy Pastor's visits, lots to talk about.

Kay, love your notes on the cards.

Love, Jean Schweers

Dear St. Matthew,

Thank you for your prayers and support during this time of health concerns.

Sincerely in Christ,
David Ostrander

Saturday Dine Out

Saturday After Church Dine Out is Back!

Our next Saturday evening Dine Out will be November 21 at 6:00pm, immediately following the service.



The gathering will be at Olde Hickory Grille, located at 709 Olde Hickory Road. We hope you'll join us for an evening of fun and fellowship.

-Dan and Suzanne Mink

Seeing God in Nature

This article is a re-print of a newsletter article that first appeared in our August 2020 issue.

This column is intended to be a sharing of the joy of Nature through photos of God's wondrous creations. It is my hope that they will brighten someone's day.

There are so many examples of ways that our Creator helped the animal world to succeed in life. Did you ever wonder how animals know what to do? How does a bird know that it needs a nest? How does a bear know to eat extra in the fall to survive hibernation? How does a doe know to hide its fawn and leave it to keep away predators?



Recently we witnessed an example of animal instinct, one of the most fascinating aspects of nature. My husband and I were driving up Route 15 to the mountains last month when we saw a turtle crossing the road ahead of us. Route 15 is a divided highway that runs north/south beside the Susquehanna River. Intermittently the cement divider is about three feet high. Unfortunately the turtle was headed toward the divider. As we drove, we saw more turtles headed the same way. Sadly, I noticed one at the divider on his back and one that didn't make it across. Turtles seek out soft ground where they can dig to lay their eggs. These turtles had no doubt successfully crossed the highway, laid their eggs along the Susquehanna river, and were making the journey back across the highway to higher ground. They do this instinctively and I've read that if you help them you should not change their direction.

The photo that I'm sharing today is a baby great horned owl in a tree along the Cocalico Creek at the Ephrata Cloisters. This is a popular spot for photographers to gather in springtime. The mother owl returns to this same tree each January and generally lays two eggs. Most years the nest has been successful and the disturbance by photographers across the creek has been minimal.

- Phyllis Wimer

Devotions Booklet



Christ in our Home booklets (for October, November, December) are available in the church lobby.

These are free and for anyone to take. Please take multiple copies and share Jesus in your community.

Take them with you on vacation!

- Pastor Fero



Birthdays

Corbin Miller 11/2
Carole Castline 11/3
Andrea Farris 11/3
Brian Almond 11/4
Fiona Smith 11/4
Neely Frye 11/7
Mabel Frazier 11/18
Joan Bowers 11/18
Nancy Pokopec 11/20
Shep Smith 11/22
James Frazier 11/28
Sheila Charles 11/29
Carolyn Rothweiler 11/29
Phyllis Wimer 12/4
Cathy Stephens 12/8
Tracy Longenecker 12/11
Kay Nolt 12/17
Norman Drescher 12/20
Jesus Christ 12/25
Elsa Teichmann 12/27
Daniel Mink 12/29

Anniversaries

Norm Drescher & David Ostrander 11/30

Worship Assistants—November

Altar Care for November – Linda Tice, Anna Neal & Barb Elsen

October 31 – Saturday 5pm
- Assisting Minister: Barb Emmerich
- Reader: Barb Emmerich

November 1 – Sunday 10am
- Assisting Minister: Linda McIntyre
- Reader: Linda McIntyre
- Greeter: Anna Neal
- Usher: OPEN
- Counters: Linda Tice & Brad Charles

November 7 – Saturday 5pm
- Assisting Minister: Nancy Pokopec
- Reader: Nancy Pokopec

November 8 – Sunday 10am
- Assisting Minister: Steve Feldmann
- Reader: Steve Feldmann
- Greeter: Scarlett Jordan
- Usher: Sadie Jordan
- Counters: Sandy Tucker & Brenda Stauffer

November 14 – Saturday 5pm
- Assisting Minister: Brad Charles
- Reader: Anthony Randow

November 15 – Sunday 10am
- Assisting Minister: Barb Emmerich
- Reader: Linda Tice
- Greeter: Kay Gontner
- Usher: Barb Elsen
- Counters: Carol Rothweiler & Linda Tice

November 21 – Saturday 5pm
- Assisting Minister: Sheila Charles
- Reader: Sheila Charles

November 22 – Sunday 10am
- Assisting Minister: Brad Charles
- Reader: Peg Sampson
- Greeter: Roxanne Koch
- Usher: Barb Elsen
- Counters: Brad Charles & Pam Frye

November 28 – Saturday 5pm
- Assisting Minister: Matthew Kolb
- Reader: Matthew Kolb

November 29 – Sunday 10am
- Assisting Minister: Barb Elsen
- Reader: Steve Feldmann
- Greeter: Anna Neal
- Usher: OPEN
- Counters: Sandy Tucker & Carol Rothweiler



Pet Blessing 2026

















Fall Around St. Matthew





















Upcoming Events

St. Matthew Annual Congregation Meeting and StewardSix Recap Lunch

Sunday, November 8

Immediately following the 10am worship service

Join us for festive singing & holiday cheer! We'll sing outside the church or move inside if it's too cold!

ALL ARE WELCOME!



SATURDAY NIGHT FELLOWSHIP

November 21 at 6:00pm

Dinner out after the 5pm worship service

Olde Hickory Grille, 709 Olde Hickory Rd

Cookie Event

We are considering having a cookie event here at St. Matthew as a fellowship sharing event. We are looking for suggestions from the congregation for ideas. Any suggestion could be placed in the cookie jar in the fellowship hall or emailed to Laurie LaBar at info@stmatthewelc.com.

St. Matthew is again reaching out
to help neighboring families
have a more plentiful Thanksgiving

Brecht Elementary School
Thanks~GIVING Service Project

You are invited to donate any of the items on the other side

~~ Last Collection Day ~ Sunday, Nov. 15th ~~

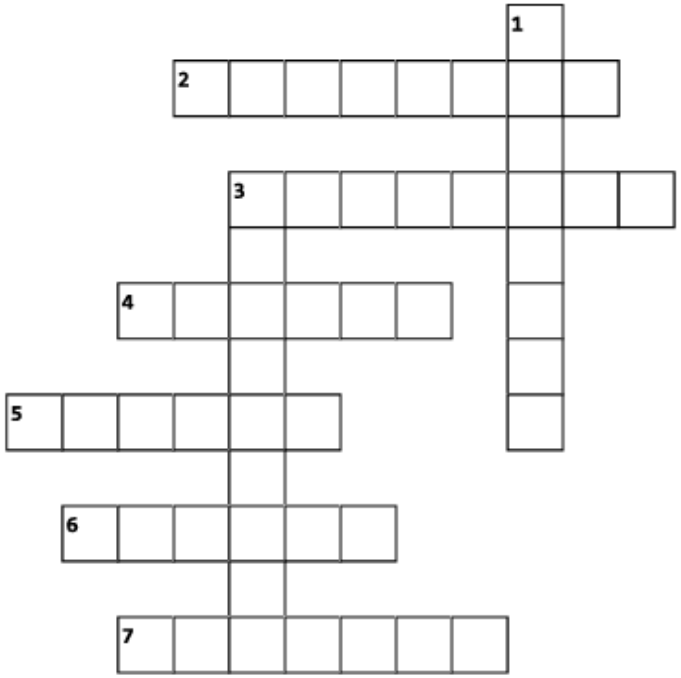
Items can be placed in Fellowship Hall
Monetary contributions (for grocery gift cards) will also be accepted. Labeled envelopes for cash or check (made out to St. Matthew) will be in the foyer. These envelopes, "Brecht School Project" can be placed in the collection plate.

Thanks-GIVING Shopping List

Rice (bags or boxes)
Stuffing (bags or boxes)
Mashed Potatoes
Canned Vegetables
Bottled Juice
Cranberry Sauce
Canned Fruit & Fruit Cocktail
Macaroni & Cheese
Beans - black, kidney, baked
Cookie/ Brownie/ Muffin Mix
Spaghetti & Tomato Sauce
Peanut Butter & Jelly
Cereals, Oatmeal
Pancake Mix & Syrup
Jello, Pudding
Boxes of Granola Bars
Paper Towels

Any questions, contact
Sheila Charles

Revelation 7:9-17 1 John 3:1-13 Matthew 5:1-12



Across

2. (1 John) We are God's _____ now...

3. (Rev.) The lamb at the center of the throne will be their _____.

4. (Matt. Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they will be _____

5. (Rev.) The ones robed in white who were singing around the throne had come out of the "great _____".

6. (1 John) All who have this hope in him, will _____themselves.

7. (Matt.) Blessed are the poor in Spirit, for theirs is the _____ of God.

Down

1. (1 John) When he is _____, we will be like him.

3. (Rev.) This belongs to our God who is seated upon the throne.





Officers (2026)

Rev. Cliff Eshbach, President

Laurie LaBar, Vice President

Kay Gontner, Secretary

Brad Charles, Financial Secretary

Barb Eshbach, Treasurer

Staff

The Rev. Robin Fero, Pastor

Susan Feldmann, Director of Music

Ann Hossler, organist

Church Council

Rev. Cliff Eshbach
Barb Eshbach
Barb Elsen
Kay Gontner
Andrea Farris
Peg Sampson
Roxanne Koch
Toni Sweitzer
Laurie LaBar
Pastor Fero

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.)

St. Matthew

November 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 10am –Worship 4:00pm – Deaf/HH Kids of Lancaster	2	3 **ELECTION DAY**  	4 12:00pm – Bible Study 6:30pm – MT Democratic Committee	5 6:30pm – Vocal Choir Reh	6 10:30am – CPR Class 1:30pm – CPR Class	7 5pm –Worship
8 10am –Worship 11:00am – Congregation Meeting and StewardSix luncheon	9	10 12:00pm – Better Bones Grandview	11 12:00pm – Bible Study 6:30pm – RIC Committee Mtg	12 1:00pm – Thrive to Five Parent Group 6:00pm – Bell Choir Reh 7:00pm – Vocal Choir Reh	13	14 5pm – Worship
15 10am – Worship 11:00am – Evangelism Mtg	16 9am – Community Meal Prep 5:30pm – CPR Class	17 12:00pm – Better Bones Grandview 7:00pm – Church Council	18 12:00pm – Bible Study	19 6:00pm – Bell Choir Reh 7:00pm – Vocal Choir Reh	20 10:30am – CPR Class 1:30pm – CPR Class	21 5pm – Worship 6:00pm – Dine Out After Church
22 10am – Worship 2:00pm Deadly Silence Play	23	24 12:00pm – Better Bones Grandview	25 12:00pm – Bible Study	26 **THANKSGIVING** 	27	28 5pm – Worship
29 10am – Worship	30					

Newsletter Addendum—December 2026

Pastor's Page



Happy Anniversary,
St. Matthew flock!

December 4 will mark the 10th year anniversary of my ordination, and the official beginning of our life of ministry together.

It was during that worship service at Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, when Bishop Dunlop proclaimed that I was an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament that I lifted my arms to the skies and let out a good old-fashioned "Thank you, Lord!" What a day of celebration!



Thank you for your faithfulness in this walk. You invited Jeff and me into the fellowship of this "little church with the big heart", and all of us have grown together. There have been many days, through thick and thin, where I have known the joy or have expressed the deep sighs of blessed hope as I stepped one foot into the church's sanctuary and have cried out or whispered the words, "Thank you, Lord!" at the end of a long day.

Thank you for stepping out there in faith and trusting God's work in this blessed congregation of God's people.

I love you.

Peace on the pathway,

-Pastor Fero

RIC Committee News

Throughout the year, we talk about what it means to be a Reconciling in Christ (RIC) congregation and the many ways, both big and small, that we live out that commitment for our neighbors and our community. This month, I wanted to share something a little different: a personal reflection on what being part of this congregation has meant for my family.

I grew up in the Catholic Church, and while I have many memories from that time, I didn't always experience it as a particularly welcoming place. When you have young children, there can sometimes be an unspoken expectation that if they get loud or restless, you should take them to the children's room. At St. Matthew, we have never experienced that.

Our family started bringing Fiona to St. Matthew when she was just six months old. Now, somehow, she is five! Over the past five years, we've made our way from the back of the church (always on the right side!) to eventually settling in the middle. When Fiona was a toddler, Pastor Fero invited us to move up to the front so she would have a little more room.

Since then, Fiona has had a front-row seat to church life. She's had opportunities to help at the altar, watch others receive communion, and get to know and spend time with members of our congregation. Through all of these little moments, she has grown comfortable and connected. She feels so welcomed that she has become a little territorial about "her church" – in the very best way!

Recently, someone gave Fiona a copy of *Christ in Our Home*. Ever since, she has carried it everywhere. She takes it to bed with her and even keeps it tucked under her pillow.



It's a small thing, perhaps, but it says so much. It reminds me that welcoming people isn't always about grand gestures or formal statements. Sometimes it's about making room for a toddler at the front of the church, inviting a child to participate, or simply allowing a family to worship together without feeling like they need to apologize for having young children.

I am so grateful for the way this congregation has welcomed Fiona and our family over the years. You have helped make St. Matthew a place where she feels she belongs, and where she is already building her own relationship with her church and her faith.

That is what being a RIC congregation means to me. It's more than what we say we believe; it's what we show one another through our everyday actions. This place is a gift, and I'm grateful our family gets to be part of it.

- Erin Conahan



Council Corner

As I write this, we have six weeks remaining in this year. By the time you read this, there may be five or four.

No matter when you read this, the final weeks of the year are important for our life as a congregation. First of course, is being present in worship as we hear of the Advent promise and the Christmas fulfillment.

Being present is key to congregational life. It is key in our attendance and in our support of Saint Matthew. As was expressed at our annual meeting, generous giving is our primary source of support for our ministries. Without it...well...without it we would be in trouble. We are called to support one another, by fulfilling our promise to each other, that we will generously support this congregation and its ministries. Doing so will avoid us having more difficult conversations in the future. Conversations that I have heard about in other locations.

There is another element to being present, or as I like to say, “show up.” Two words in the previous paragraph brings this to mind. They are attendance and annual meeting. When we get together to share, in one place at one time, important information everyone needs to know about how this congregation works on its mission and organizes itself, I would have expected a much larger attendance than what occurred on November 8. While there were enough people present to conduct business, we could have done better.

So, yes this is a reminder for the remaining weeks of this year of how we relate to and support one another. In these final weeks of the year we are urged to: Show up. Participate. Give generously. Doing so frees us to happily produce ministry that is pleasing to God, supportive of our community, and one another.

- Cliff Eshbach, Council President

Evangelism Corner

The Evangelism Committee convened on Sunday, November 15, 2026 at 11:15 am with seven members in attendance.

The minutes of September 13 and October 18, 2026 were distributed and approved.

The candy remaining from our Trick-or-Treat evening was given to the Hub. Erin Conahan was most appreciative.

Caroling Around the Corner will be held December 12 from 6 to 7pm, following the Saturday evening church service. Plans were finalized with Sue Feldmann to lead the singing with Barb Emmerich, Sandy Tucker and Peg Sampson setting up the hot chocolate bar and Mark Smith providing the fire pit.

The event will be advertised on our church sign, plus inclusion in the Manheim Township Merchandiser. Starbucks gift card was sent to Noah Haldeman as planned.

Barb Emmerich suggested a speaker for spring/early summer of 2027 for our Conversation Around the Corner series, Carolyn Kleiniman will present two mysteries, Love, Faith and the Dented Bullet and Classic Assignment in Murder. Dan Mink is already in line for Birds of Prey on March 9, 2027.

There being no meeting scheduled for December, our next meeting will occur on January 17, 2027 at 11:15 am.

- Kay Gontner

Thank You

St. Matthew Family,

Thank you so much for sharing the beautiful flower arrangement with me.

I appreciated the Pastor’s visit, and I miss worshipping with you.

Take care and stay well.

Love,
Betty Sheaffer

Thank You

Special thanks to Mark Smith and Erin Conahan for donating new playground mulch. Mark took on the project by himself.



Our church playground is a favorite in the neighborhood. Thank you, Erin and Mark for helping to maintain the play area.

- Pastor Fero

Saturday Dine Out

Our next Saturday evening Dine Out will be January 9 at 6:00pm, immediately following the service.



The gathering will be at Salt & Pepper, located at 486 Royer Drive. We hope you'll join us for an evening of fun and fellowship.

-Dan and Suzanne Mink

Worship Assistants

Altar Care for December – Barb Elsen, Linda Tice & Carol Rothweiler

December 5 – Saturday 5pm
- Assisting Minister: Nancy Pokopec
- Reader: Anthony Randow

December 6 – Sunday 10am
- Assisting Minister: Steve Feldmann
- Reader: Linda Tice
- Greeter: Scarlett Jordan
- Usher: Sadie Jordan
- Counters: Pam Frye & Linda Tice

December 12 – Saturday 5pm
- Assisting Minister: Matthew Kolb
- Reader: Matthew Kolb

December 13 – Sunday 10am
- Assisting Minister: Linda McIntyre
- Reader: Linda McIntyre
- Greeter: Kay Gontner
- Usher: Barb Elsen
- Counters: Brenda Stauffer & Carol Rothweiler

December 19 – Saturday 5pm
- Assisting Minister: Barb Emmerich
- Reader: Anthony Randow

December 20 – Sunday 10am
- Assisting Minister: Brad Charles
- Reader: Peg Sampson
- Greeter: OPEN
- Usher: Barb Elsen
- Counters: Sandy Tucker & Brad Charles

December 24 – Christmas Eve 4pm
- Assisting Minister: Sheila Charles
- Reader: Steve Feldmann
- Greeter: Laurie LaBar
- Usher: OPEN

December 26 – Saturday 5pm
- Assisting Minister: Brad Charles
- Reader: Brad Charles

December 27 – Sunday 10am
- Assisting Minister: Barb Elsen
- Reader: Roxanne Koch
- Greeter: Anna Neal
- Usher: OPEN
- Counters: Brad Charles & Linda Tice

Around St. Matthew















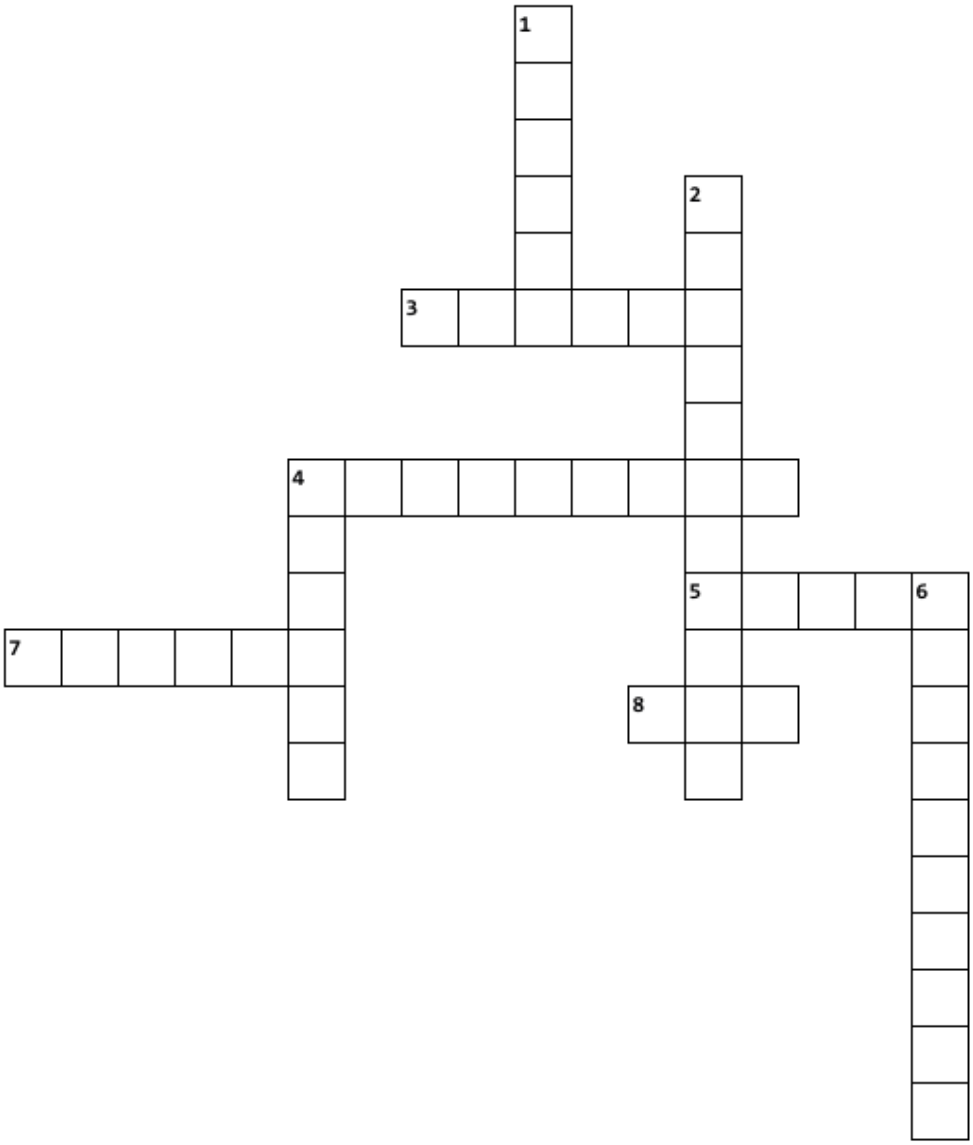
December at St. Matthew







Isaiah 64:1-9 1 Corinthians 1:3-9 Matthew 25:31-46



Across

3. (Matthew) You do not know when the _____ of the house is coming.

4. (Isaiah) "...no ear has _____..."

5. (Matthew) What celestial being will be falling from heaven "in those days?"

7. (Isaiah) The mountains quaked when God did awesome deeds that we did not _____.

8. (Matthew) When this tree's branches become tender and put forth leaves, it is summer

Down

1. (I Cor.) "...I give _____ to my God always..."

2. (1 Cor.) "...by whom you were called into the _____ with his Son..."

4. (Isaiah) "...we are the clay and you are the ___..."

6. (1 Cor.) "...he will also _____ you until the end..."

St. Matthew

December 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 12:00pm – Better Bones St. Matthew	2 12:00pm – Bible Study 6:30pm – MT Democratic Committee	3 6:00pm – Bell Choir Reh 7:00pm – Vocal Choir Reh	4 2:30pm – CPR Class	5 9:30am – CPR Class 5pm –Worship
6 10am –Worship	7	8 12:00pm – Better Bones St. Matthew	9 12:00pm – Bible Study 6:30pm – RIC Committee Mtg	10 6:00pm – Bell Choir Reh 7:00pm – Vocal Choir Reh	11 11:30am – CPR Class	12 5pm – Worship 6pm – Caroling On the Corner
13 10am – Worship	14 7:00pm – Church Council	15 12:00pm – Better Bones St. Matthew	16 12:00pm – Bible Study	17 6:00pm – Bell Choir Reh 7:00pm – Vocal Choir Reh	18	19 10:00am – Bell Choir Reh 11:00am – Vocal Choir Reh 1:00pm – CPR Class 5pm – Worship
20 10am – Worship	21 9am – Community Meal Prep 5:30pm – CPR Class	22 12:00pm – Better Bones St. Matthew	23 12:00pm – Bible Study	24 4:00 pm – Christmas Eve Candlelight Service	25 **CHRISTMAS** 	26 5pm – Worship
27 10am – Worship	28	29 12:00pm – Better Bones St. Matthew	30 12:00pm – Bible Study	31		