

# St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church



## First Sunday of Christmas

December 29, 2024

*On the first Sunday of Christmas we find the boy Samuel and the boy Jesus, both in the temple, both growing in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and humankind. We too have returned to the house of God "to sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God," who has gifted us with a savior. As the festival continues, "let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts." It is Christmas, still.*

## Holy Communion

Evangelical Lutheran Worship

(ELW) Setting 7, page 175

† Congregation stands as able

## GATHERING

Prelude

Sandra Nearhoof



P. Blessed be God, Father, +Son, and Holy Spirit.

**C. And blessed be God's kingdom now and forever. Amen.**

P. Most merciful God,

**C. We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

P. God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of +Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith. .

**C. Amen.**

Gathering Hymn

*"All My Heart Again Rejoices"*

**ELW#273**

Kyrie

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Gloria

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Prayer of the Day:

P: Let us pray,

Shine into our hearts the light of your wisdom, O God, and open our minds to the knowledge of your word, that in all things we may think and act according to your good will and may live continually in the light of your Son, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

## PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD

Children's Message

Shannon Gardner

**First Reading**

**1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26**

<sup>18</sup>Samuel was ministering before the LORD, a boy wearing a linen ephod. <sup>19</sup>His mother used to make for him a little robe and take it to him each year, when she went up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. <sup>20</sup>Then Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife, and say, "May the LORD repay you with children by this

woman for the gift that she made to the LORD"; and then they would return to their home. <sup>26</sup>Now the boy Samuel continued to grow both in stature and in favor with the LORD and with the people.

L: The word of the Lord

C: **Thanks be to God.**

## Psalm 148

Tone 11

- <sup>1</sup>Hallelujah! Praise the LORD <sup>1</sup>from the heavens;  
praise God <sup>1</sup>in the heights.
- <sup>2</sup>**Praise the LORD, <sup>1</sup>all you angels;  
sing praise, all you <sup>1</sup>hosts of heaven.**
- <sup>3</sup>Praise the LORD, <sup>1</sup>sun and moon;  
sing praise, all you <sup>1</sup>shining stars.
- <sup>4</sup>**Praise the LORD, heav- <sup>1</sup>en of heavens,  
and you waters a- <sup>1</sup>bove the heavens.**
- <sup>5</sup>Let them praise the name <sup>1</sup>of the LORD,  
who commanded, and they <sup>1</sup>were created,
- <sup>6</sup>**who made them stand fast forev- <sup>1</sup>er and ever,  
giving them a law that shall not <sup>1</sup>pass away.**
- <sup>7</sup>Praise the LORD <sup>1</sup>from the earth, you sea monsters <sup>1</sup>and all deeps;
- <sup>8</sup>**fire and hail, <sup>1</sup>snow and fog,  
tempestuous wind, do- <sup>1</sup>ing God's will;**
- <sup>9</sup>mountains <sup>1</sup>and all hills,  
fruit trees <sup>1</sup>and all cedars;
- <sup>10</sup>**wild beasts <sup>1</sup>and all cattle,  
creeping things and <sup>1</sup>flying birds;**
- <sup>11</sup>sovereigns of the earth <sup>1</sup>and all peoples,  
princes and all rulers <sup>1</sup>of the world;
- <sup>12</sup>**young <sup>1</sup>men and maidens,  
old and <sup>1</sup>young together.**
- <sup>13</sup>Let them praise the name <sup>1</sup>of the LORD,  
whose name only is exalted, whose splendor is over <sup>1</sup>earth and heaven.
- <sup>14</sup>**The LORD has raised up strength for the people  
and praise for all <sup>1</sup>faithful servants,  
the children of Israel, a people who are near the LORD. <sup>1</sup>Hallelujah!**

## Second Reading

Colossians 3:12-17

<sup>12</sup>As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. <sup>13</sup>Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. <sup>14</sup>Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. <sup>15</sup>And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. <sup>16</sup>Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. <sup>17</sup>And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

L: The word of the Lord

C: **Thanks be to God.**

✠ Gospel Acclamation

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**Gospel**

**Luke 2:41-52**

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke the 1st Chapter.

C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>41</sup>Now every year [Jesus'] parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. <sup>42</sup>And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. <sup>43</sup>When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. <sup>44</sup>Assuming that he was in the group of travelers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. <sup>45</sup>When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him.

<sup>46</sup>After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. <sup>47</sup>And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. <sup>48</sup>When his parents saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, "Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety." <sup>49</sup>He said to them, "Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" <sup>50</sup>But they did not understand what he said to them.

<sup>51</sup>Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart. <sup>52</sup>And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favor.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

*Jesus as Samuel*

Reverend Taylor Burton Edwards

✠ Hymn of the Day      "*Good Christian Friends, Rejoice*"

**ELW #288**

Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and unseen.**  
**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father;  
through him all things were made.  
For us and for our salvation**

he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary  
and became truly human.  
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.  
On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the  
dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,\*  
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

*You may sit, stand or kneel for the prayers.*

### **Prayers of Intercession**

A: Filled with the good news of great joy, let us offer our prayers for the church,  
the earth, and all people.

*A brief silence.*

A: For those who teach and those who learn, we pray. Bless the education  
ministries of your church. Guide Sunday school teachers, college and  
seminary professors, and Bible study leaders in our ongoing faith formation  
and curiosity. God of grace,

**C: receive our prayer.**

A: For the thriving of creation, we pray. Protect the habitats of pangolins and  
porcupines, penguins and parrots, and all wild animals and creeping things.  
Increase our knowledge of the natural world and the care of its inhabitants.  
God of grace,

**C: receive our prayer.**

A: For the nations of the world, we pray. Raise up rulers who lead with  
compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Let your peace  
rule in their hearts and in all lands. God of grace,

**C: receive our prayer.**

A: For the well-being of your people, we pray. Keep watch over all who travel  
this holiday season. Accompany those who are alone or ill. Console parents  
and children whose relationships are strained or severed. God of grace,

**C: receive our prayer.**

A: For the ministry of this place we pray. Let the word of Christ dwell among us. In times of conflict, clothe us in love and move us to forgiveness.  
God of grace,

**C: receive our prayer.**

A: For all those who have asked us to pray for them...

**C: receive our prayer.**

A: For your holy, beloved, and chosen ones of every time and place especially Margarete Walsh, we give thanks. Draw us all into everlasting praise and joy. God of grace,

**C: hear our prayer.**

P: We commend these prayers to you, O God, trusting your grace made known to all, through the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**C: Amen.**

## MEAL

Soloist

Shannon Gardner

*The gifts may be brought forward.*

Offering Prayer

A: God of heaven and earth, from the beginning, you have forth life, in which you take delight. The trees, the fields, and the seas sing for joy. Bless now these gifts, received from your bounty, that we may join the chorus of creation to tell of your salvation from day to day.

**C: Amen.**

† Great Thanksgiving Page 180

Holy, Holy, Holy Page 181

Lord's Prayer "Our Father, who..." Page 182

Lamb of God Page 182

### Communion

The body of Christ, given for you.  
The blood of Christ, shed for you.  
*and each person may respond Amen*

Table Blessing

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

**C: Amen.**

† Prayer after Communion

- A:** Merciful God, we thank you for Jesus, who is our heavenly food. Strengthened by this goodness, send us forth to announce your peace, comfort the afflicted, and share the good news of great joy.
- C:** **Amen.**

**SENDING**

Blessing

**Sending Hymn**

*"Love Has Come"*

**ELW #292**

**Dismissal**

- A:** Go in peace. Christ is born!
- C:** **Thanks be to God.**

The Memorial Book is open today to the Glory of God

In Memory of:

*Joyce Garver-Messenger, 2022*



**READINGS AND PSALM**  
**SUNDAY, JANUARY 5, 2025**

Isaiah 60:1-6  
 Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14  
 Ephesians 3:1-12  
 Matthew 2:1-12



*“The Bible is alive, it speaks to me; it has feet,  
 it runs after me; it has hands, it lays hold of  
 me.” —Martin Luther*

**December 22, 2024**  
**Fourth Sunday of Advent**

ATTENDANCE — 89  
 (IN-PERSON— 54, YOUTUBE - 35)

**OFFERING**

Benevolence	\$	3,836.00
Building	\$	400.00
Memorial	\$	400.00
Other	\$	170.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>4,806.00</b>

**Offering for 12/18/24:** 395.00  
**Attendance for 12/18/24:** 22

***Save the Date***

- December 29 - 12:00 - Winter Wonderland
- January 8th - 10:00 AM - Take down of the Chrismon trees and decorations
- January 14 - 3:00 - Remembrance Gathering

**Serving December 29, 2024**

Opener/Closer	Zocia Barr/Rose Johnson
Worship Assistant	Matt Bonaker
Communion Assistant	Cecil McGouirk
Lector	Dave Bonaker
Ushers	Katherine Kelly Jim Sperry
Altar Guild	Debby Ullman Terri Niederhammer
Live Streaming	Jaxson Gardner

**Serving January 5, 2025**

Opener/Closer	Bill Wallace
Worship Assistant	Shannon Gardner
Communion Assistant	Lisa Pettit
Lector	Bill Wallace
Ushers	Sandy Craven Randy Craven
Altar Guild	Rose Johnson Catherine Sayers
Live Streaming	Jaxson Gardner



# *Pray Without Ceasing*



*“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”*

—1 Thessalonians

5:16-18

The Armed Forces,  
their families,  
and victims of war  
Persecuted Christians  
The ministries of  
St. Matthew  
Bishop Kevin  
Strickland  
Southeastern Synod  
Staff  
Pastor Taylor Burton  
Edwards  
St Matthew  
Congregational  
Council  
Laura Alexander  
Carol Bingemann  
Dave Bonaker  
Pat Bonaker  
Betty Davidson  
Ken Hoag  
Myrna Hoag  
Bennie Jackson  
Mairetha Jackson  
Sean Jeffery  
Marga Miller  
Charlotte Moore  
Traudel Mosely  
Terri Niederhammer  
Debby Owen

Dorothy Redden  
Connie Sieg  
Carla Stickle  
Albert VanHousen II  
Harold Vinson  
James Anderson  
Roger Anderson  
Eric & Tinisha Bryant  
George Capps  
Jim Chappel  
Jean Clemmons  
Xavier Danguilan  
Penny Davis & Family  
Brandy Garnett  
Mike Gewin  
Moses Glidden  
Becky Goldsmith  
Estrella Gonzales  
Doris Grier  
Petra Henderson  
Norma Kilby  
Ken Korn  
Emma Kump  
Melissa Lancheros  
Boyd Lester  
Laura Lester  
Robert Lowe  
Michelle Matthias  
Sandra McPeters  
Brady Meeks

Tim Moore  
Nearhoof Family  
Angela Paul  
Vincent Pawlowski  
Beth Price  
Mark Purushotham  
Bill Rahm  
Tiffany Richardson  
Dayna Ryan  
Shirley Scott  
Dou Shizhen  
Ricky Skinner  
Amanda Steinagel  
Betty Townsend  
Charlie VanHousen  
Dawn VanHousen  
Martha Zimmerman

Israel  
Ukraine  
Gaza  
Lebanon  
Western North Carolina

Mario's Tire  
Mariner Finance  
Woodville Apartments  
Beal Wellness

Deadline for bulletins is **Tuesday 10:00 a.m.** prior to the Sunday.  
Deadline for February newsletter is January 20.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Welcome to St. Matthew:** Jesus Christ offers himself to all. May you be blessed as we celebrate God's love for us. All the baptized are invited to feast with us at the Lord's Table. The wearing of a mask is optional during worship and social distancing is recommended. The Sacrament of Holy Communion is celebrated every Sunday.

**We invite you to join our congregation if you have not yet found a church home.** We are people of God that share a living, daring, confidence in God's grace. Liberated by our faith, we embrace you as a whole person, questions, complexities and all. Join us, as we do God's work in Christ's name for the life of the world.

**Nursery:** St. Matthew provides nursery service for children ages 6 and younger. All children are welcome to attend worship with their families. If a child needs a break during the service, they may sit with a parent/guardian in the Narthex.

## **Mission Outreach Opportunities:**

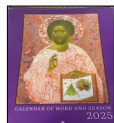
### **Mission Focus:**

- |                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
|                            | Warming Tree   |
| • Lion's Club:             | Glasses, sunglasses and old cell phones  |
| • Family House of West GA: | Pop tabs   |
| • Flags to Retire:         | Bring used American flags that you no longer want or need.                           |
| • St. Anne's:              | Personal hygiene products (travel size), toilet paper, and non-perishable food items |
| • Safe House               | Sealed plastic utensils (take-out meals)   |

Leave donations in the labeled containers in the Narthex between bathrooms.

**Craf-Tea:** This group will meet Fridays 10:00-12:00 PM in Luther Hall. If you enjoy crafts and tea, this group is for you! Please see Beth Hoag for more information.

**Remembrance Gathering:** Our monthly Remembrance Gathering will be starting back up on Tuesday, January 14th at 3:00 pm in the Church House. This will be a time to come together and share personal stories or recollections of someone else's experience of any conflicts or wars. For more information, please contact Zocia Barr at 706-330-1001.



The 2025 Calendars are now available for \$10 each from Altar Guild members. Proceeds from the calendar sales will support purchases of worship supplies, including everything from communion wafers to palms for Palm Sunday.

New service opportunity at Wynnton Neighborhood Network. We will be packing care bags at 9am, January 9 and February 27, 2025 at St. Thomas Episcopal Church outreach center (back of church). Please let Allena Sperry know if you will be participating at [agsperry@bellsouth.net](mailto:agsperry@bellsouth.net) or 706-563-3107.

# January Mission Focus

January is our assigned Wynnton Neighborhood Network food collection month. We are collecting for WNN the following items:

- Canned Veggies: Sweet peas, corn, carrots, green beans, black beans
- Canned Meat: Chicken, ham, tuna
- Canned Fruit
- Spaghetti sauce and noodles
- Macaroni and cheese
- Canned tomato products
- Peanut butter and Jelly
- Soup
- Rice
- Cereals
- Monetary donations

## January Birthdays

2 David Gardner

3 Connie Newman

4 Rev. Shirley Redmond

5 Abigayle Ratliff

6 Jason Allen

8 Kenneth Hoag

10 Nancy Gates

13 Duncan Jeffery

16 Dorothy Redden

17 Bruce Clemens

17 Valerie Stickles

27 Evelyn Pettit



**St. Matthew Evangelical  
Lutheran Church  
Mission Statement**



Reach in to grow in Christ  
Reach up to worship God  
Reach out to welcome and witness

**Office will be closed on Tuesday, December 31st and  
Thursday, January 2nd. It will be open on Friday,  
January 3rd.**

**ST. MATTHEW EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH**

4026 Macon Road, Columbus, Georgia 31907

(706) 561-3406 - Office Hours - Tues & Thurs 2:00-5:00 PM, Friday 9:00-1:00 PM

Pastor Taylor Burton Edwards Email: [twbe@liturgyfolks.com](mailto:twbe@liturgyfolks.com)

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*A member congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,*

*Southeastern Synod*

[www.stmatthewcolumbusga.com](http://www.stmatthewcolumbusga.com)

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@st.matthewlutheranchurch4457/streams>

The Rev. Taylor Burton Edwards, Pastor

Sonja Metcalf, Parish Administrator

Lisa Pettit, Sexton

Sandra Nearhoof, Minister of Music

Penny Davis, Nursery Director