



St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

Around the Church

December 7, 2025



POINTING TO JESUS

*(adapted from
Sundays & Seasons)*

John the Baptist is a fitting messenger for

the season of Advent, a time for the church to prepare for both the nativity of the Christ and for his second coming. John's call to repentance in preparation of Jesus' arrival carries a challenge for us to rid ourselves of everything that obstructs our view. His proclamation is filled with images of cleansing: straightening paths, cutting down useless trees, and burning away chaff. John's baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins means cleansing as well as a changing of the mind, a turning toward Jesus, so that one's whole self is pointed toward the Lord of this world and of eternity.

Undistracted even by thoughts of our own worthiness, the church's focus year-round is turned toward the coming of Christ. John points to Jesus, never to himself, and in so doing becomes a model for discipleship.

Having heard John's cry, we join the chorus, becoming messengers in turn. All our efforts in worship and evangelism, education and social ministry point, not to ourselves, our programs, our skill or our saintliness, but only to Jesus. Preparing the way of the Lord is very much about pointing others to his real presence in and among us.

The church teaches that amidst all that is transient in our lives, and creation, only God's word is eternal. John the Baptist's testimony points us to that Word made flesh, who brings with him a new heaven and a new earth after all else has passed away. John directs us in our faith journeys as individuals and communities toward a witness that is forever pointing to Jesus.

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Reflections adapted from Sundays and Seasons.com.*



NO SHAVE NOVEMBER EXTENDED

Don't forget about our

No Shave November Fundraiser to benefit families in need in the Owen J. Roberts School District. Envelopes can be found in the pews and in the Narthex. **To make an online donation go to www.stmatthews-church.org/give and choose "No Shave November" from the drop-down menu. So far, we've raised \$632.00, and we are still accepting donations until next week!**

And, since we've raised over \$400...the youth will decide what to do with Pastor Christian's beard! Will he shave his head, too?!?



CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES: Please join us to celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus during our Worship services on Christmas Eve: Wednesday, December 24. There will be three services: 3:00pm, 5:00pm and 7:00pm. *All are welcome!*



HELP NEEDED FOR THE HANGING OF THE GREENS, TODAY! Decorating will take place **TODAY, Sunday, December 7 after Worship**. All are invited to decorate the Sanctuary for Christmas! Please see Sue Hummerston for questions.



HOLIDAY MOVIE DAY: THE GRINCH, TODAY! We will host a Family Movie Day, showing Dr. Seuss' "The Grinch" **TODAY, December 7 from 1:00-3:00pm in the CLC**. All are welcome! We will provide the popcorn, a hot chocolate bar, and a winter craft. We are also in need of a few volunteers to help everything run smoothly. Please reach out to Troy and Diana Sisum to volunteer, or for questions (tdsisum1@yahoo.com)



ADVENT THURSDAY PRAYER SERVICES, DEC. 11 &

18: Guided prayer with some time for silence, "to sit quietly with God and others." An opportunity to "take a break" from the busy-ness of Christmas preparations. Come take a break, and let us worship and pray!

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING SIGN UP: All families are invited to sign up for one of the four Sundays in Advent to read the Scripture and light the wreath. You can find the Sign Up Genius in this week's online ATC and on the church website. Thank you for making our Advent Season brighter by participating!



ORDER POINSETTIAS FOR CHRISTMAS EVE: You are invited to share in the beauty of the Christmas Eve services by purchasing red poinsettias. Forms are now in the pews and can be found in this week's online ATC and the church website.

Place the form in the offering plate, or send it to the Church Office with a check payable to St. Matthew's Lutheran Church.

The poinsettias are \$10.00 each. This year's ordering deadline will be Friday, December 12.



ADVENT COLLECTION FOR GRACE CROSSING: We are having an Advent Collection for the Grace Crossing Food Pantry's Christmas Meal Distribution now through December 12. They will be having their Christmas Meal Distribution for 50 families on December 18, and we would like to provide the side items for that meal.

We will need the following:

Canned carrots
Canned corn
Canned Sweet Potatoes (40 oz size)
Canned pineapple (only sliced variety)
Boxed Au Gratin or Scalloped Potatoes
Cookies of any variety (boxed or bagged)
Reusable shopping bags

Items can be brought to the church office during business hours, or you can place them in the bin on the office porch. We will also be collecting items on Sunday morning in the Narthex.

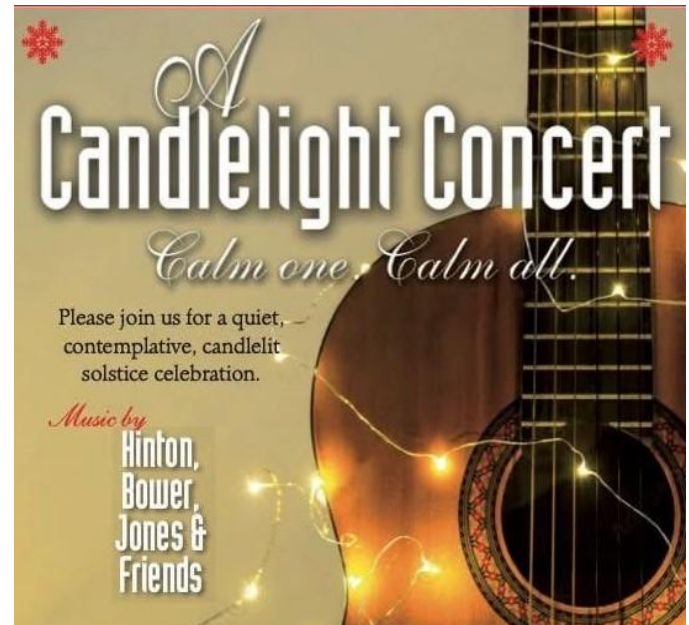


CHRISTMAS CONGREGATIONAL BREAKFAST, DEC. 21: Please join us for our Christmas Congregational Breakfast in the CLC on Sunday, December 21, immediately following the 9:30am Worship Service. Share some Fellowship with us as we prepare for the coming of Christmas!

Volunteers are needed to bring some dishes and to help cook the breakfast. We also need help with set up and clean up.

If you can volunteer in any capacity, please find the Sign Up Genius in the online ATC.

If you have any questions, please contact Troy Sisum at tdsisum1@yahoo.com



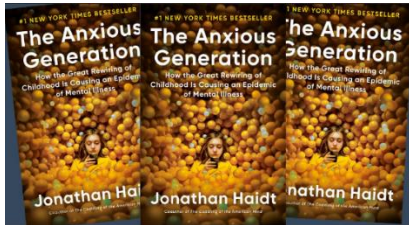
CANDLELIGHT CONCERT, DEC. 21: Calm one. Calm all. Please join us for a quiet, contemplative, candlelit solstice celebration on December 21 at 7:00pm in the Sanctuary. Hinton, Bower, Jones & Friends will host this Candlelight Concert. Music will include original works, ancient folk songs, and perhaps a quiet Christmas classic or two. All are welcome and entry is free!



MISSION IN: MEETING CHANGE DEC. 14

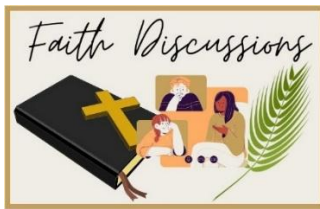
Our December Mission In meeting will be postponed from this Sunday, December 7, due

to the Hanging of the Greens. Please join us for the meeting next Sunday, December 14 in the CLC.



ANXIOUS GENERATION BOOK STUDY, DEC. 14

OUR NEXT "THE ANXIOUS GENERATION" BOOK STUDY will be on Sunday, December 14 from 3:00-4:30pm at St. Matthew's. Parents with children in preschool-5th grade are welcome to join us as we talk about issues around children and social media. Even if you haven't been able to attend until now, you are still invited to participate. This month's conversation will focus on the third section of the book, The Great Rewiring: The Rise of the Phone-Based Childhood.



FAITH DISCUSSIONS, DEC. 16

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, December 16 at 7:00pm in the Lounge. We will be discussing Matthew 5:17-48. Hope to see you there!



YOUTH NEWS

OUR ANNUAL HIGH SCHOOL TRIP TO ELMWOOD PARK ZOO WITH STUDENTS FROM GEMMA SERVICES is coming up on Sunday, December 7! All 9th-12th graders are invited to help make the Christmas season a bit brighter for some elementary-aged kids who are in challenging family situations by taking them through Elmwood's "Wild Lights" holiday display. We'll meet at St. Matthew's at 4:15pm to carpool to Elmwood Park Zoo and meet the Gemma Services group at 5:00pm, returning to St. Matthew's around 8:30pm. The

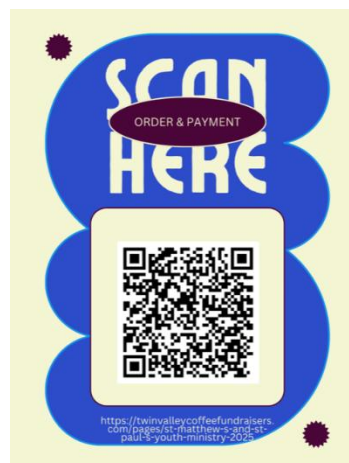
cost will be \$10 per person; if you wish to chip in additional money to help cover admission for our guests, you are welcome to do that as well. **Sign up in the online ATC to take part.**

THE MIDDLE SCHOOL MANIA! CHRISTMAS PARTY will be on Saturday, December 20 from 4:00-5:30pm at Pastor Stuart's house. Come have a fun, festive afternoon with plenty of food, games, and our traditional gift exchange! Be sure to bring an inexpensive (\$5 or less), WRAPPED gag gift. All 6th-8th graders are invited, including friends, for our annual exchange. **Sign up in the online ATC to join the merriment.**

OUR HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH CHRISTMAS PARTY will be on Sunday, December 21 from 6:00-8:00pm at Pastor Stuart's house. Spend an evening with friends having fun, playing games, and of course taking part in our annual gift exchange! (Bring an inexpensive, WRAPPED gag gift for the exchange.) All 9th-12th graders are invited, including friends. **Sign up in the online ATC.**

COLLEGE PANEL FOR HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH AND PARENTS - On Sunday, January 4 from 4:00-5:30pm, we will provide another opportunity for older high school youth to sit with current college students and learn from their experiences. This year, we will also offer a chance for high school parents to talk to college parents to get *their* advice on how to navigate the process of preparing for college with their student. **Sign up is in the online ATC to participate.**

THE WINTER-SPRING YOUTH EVENT SCHEDULE is now posted and available on the church website's youth page; be sure to check it out and block out dates for upcoming activities!



TWIN VALLEY YOUTH FUNDRAISER NOV. 28- DEC. 12

Our Youth Ministry will be having another Twin Valley Coffee Fundraiser beginning on "Black Friday" November 28 and running through December 12. The link to preview the

products available is now posted in the online ATC and church website, or scan this QR code.

The profit for every purchase you make goes directly to our Youth Ministry.

FREDDY'S DINE AND DONATE FOR YOUTH MINISTRY, DEC. 10

For the printable flyer, please check this week's online ATC or the church website!

DECEMBER 10, 2025 | 4PM-8PM
221 EAGLEVIEW BLVD.
EXTON, PA 19341

Offer valid only on select deposits. Only non-profit organizations are eligible to participate in the Freddy's fundraising program. Freddy's will donate 15% of qualifying food and beverage sales to the organization. Tax gift credits, covering web delivery, are excluded from the donation. Offer good from 12/10/25 to 12/10/25. For more information about fundraising with Freddy's, please contact 800.841.FREDDY'S.



MEN'S BREAKFAST: DEC. 20

Please plan on bringing something to cook and share with the group on **Saturday, December 20**. Food prep begins at 8:00am with breakfast starting at 8:30am. Please contact Tim Guyer at ttguyer@gmail.com with questions.



St. Mary's
Franciscan Shelter
For Homeless Families

ST. MARY'S MEAL DELIVERY NEXT MEAL, DEC. 28

You can choose one of these options when you sign up to provide a meal:

- Provide groceries for their kitchen team to prepare dinner. Plan a meal for 15 people, including a main dish, a vegetable or salad and a dessert. Groceries can be dropped off the day before or by 2:30 pm on the day of the meal.

- Deliver a ready-to-eat meal (frozen or fresh) from a grocery store or pizza parlor.

More information is on our Church website, and the sign up for the next meal on December 28 is in the online ATC.



YOUTH MINISTRY ALUMNI

OPEN HOUSE, JAN. 4

WE WILL HAVE A SPECIAL YOUTH MINISTRY 'ALUMNI' OPEN HOUSE on Sunday, January 4 from 6:00-8:00pm at St. Paul's! College students home on break and other young adults from St. Matthew's and St. Paul's are invited to come for an informal opportunity to reconnect and catch up with your faith friends from high school, and to put your mark on our new youth room. Food and drinks will be provided **Please RSVP on the online ATC if you would like to attend!**



CALL FOR WORSHIP ASSISTANTS!

We are in need of more Worship Assistants in all areas: Audio/Visual Assistants, Greeters, Altar Assistants, Lectors, Communion Assistants, Fellowship Providers and Youth Acolytes.

The need is greater now, especially as we approach the Holiday season.

If you are interested in any of the positions available, please contact Sara Richardson in the office: srichardson@stmatthews-church.org. Scheduling is flexible and training will be provided!

OUR GIFTS TOGETHER: PLEASE FILL OUT OUR SURVEY!



Please scan this QR code from your mobile device to open a survey about what gifts and skills that you would like to share with your St. Matthew's family. You can also go to the link below to access the survey.

Additionally, it will be posted in the *Around the Church* email newsletter and around campus.

<https://forms.gle/PC66D8dp7Qpnus4t8>



DESIGNER BAG BINGO JAN. 16
MORE INFO IS NOW ON THE CHURCH WEBSITE UNDER EVENTS AND IN THE ONLINE ATC!