



December 24, 2023  
9:30 a.m.

*ELW Setting 4*

*“Living God’s Love”*

**St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church**

400 North Broadway Street † Medina, Ohio 44256

330-725-8885 † office@stmatthewmedina.org

**www.stmatthewmedina.org**

## St. Matthew invites you to join us in celebration of Holy Communion!

The Lord's table is open to all who believe and are baptized.

Please join us as we receive the means of grace, where Jesus promises to meet us in the bread and the wine.

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*"Pages" are in the front of the hymnal.*

*"Hymns" are located toward the back of the hymnal.*

\*Please stand as you are able.

## GATHERING

### Prelude

*He Whom Shepherd Men Came Praising*

Paul Manz

### Welcome and Announcements

### Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who opens the heavens and draws near to us with salvation.

**C: Amen.**

P: God is patient and merciful, desiring all to come to repentance. Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sin.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

P: Everlasting God,

**C: you love justice and you hate wrongdoing. We confess the fear, greed, and self-centeredness that make us reluctant to work against oppression. We are complicit in systems of exploitation. We choose comfort over courage. We are careless with creation's bounty. Look upon us with mercy. Turn our hearts again to you. Make us glad to do your will and to walk in your ways for the sake of our waiting world. Amen.**

P: Hear these words of assurance: God clothes you with garments of salvation and covers you with robes of righteousness. In the tender compassion of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. God's covenant is eternal, and God's blessing rests upon us all.

**C: Amen.**

### \*Gathering Song:

*Signs and Wonders*

Hymn 672

### \*Greeting

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

**C: And also with you.**

**\*Prayer of the Day**

**Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that would obstruct your mercy, that willingly we may bear your redeeming love to all the world, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

**Advent Candle Song**      *Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah*      Hymn 240  
(verses 1-4)

**\*Advent Candle Prayer**

Praise to you, O God, who lives with us, sharing our flesh and bones. As Mary waited and Joseph dreamed, so we dream and wait for you. Bless us and let your face shine upon us, more radiant than these candles, and more dear than all else we seek. Restore us when we fail to refuse the evil and choose the good, and banish all our fears. We pray in the name of Emmanuel, your promised child and our Savior. Amen.

**Children's Sermon**

Deacon Lindsay Stertzbach

**WORD**

**First Reading**

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

<sup>1</sup>Now when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, <sup>2</sup>the king said to the prophet Nathan, "See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent." <sup>3</sup>Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you."

<sup>4</sup>But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: <sup>5</sup>Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? <sup>6</sup>I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle.

<sup>7</sup>Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" <sup>8</sup>Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; <sup>9</sup>and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. <sup>10</sup>And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, <sup>11</sup>from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a

house. <sup>16</sup>Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

R: The word of the Lord.      **C: Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm**

Luke 1:46b-55

<sup>46b</sup>My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,  
<sup>47</sup>my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,  
<sup>48</sup>**for you, Lord, have looked with favor on your lowly servant.**  
**From this day all generations will call me blessed:**  
<sup>49</sup>you, the Almighty, have done great things for me  
and holy is your name.  
<sup>50</sup>**You have mercy on those who fear you,**  
**from generation to generation.**  
<sup>51</sup>You have shown strength with your arm  
and scattered the proud in their conceit,  
<sup>52</sup>**casting down the mighty from their thrones**  
**and lifting up the lowly.**  
<sup>53</sup>You have filled the hungry with good things  
and sent the rich away empty.  
<sup>54</sup>**You have come to the aid of your servant Israel,**  
**to remember the promise of mercy,**  
<sup>55</sup>the promise made to our forebears,  
to Abraham and his children forever.

**Second Reading**

Romans 16:25-27

<sup>25</sup>Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages <sup>26</sup>but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—<sup>27</sup>to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

R: The word of the Lord.      **C: Thanks be to God.**

**\*Gospel Acclamation**

*Alleluia*

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**\*Gospel**

Luke 1:26-38

D: The holy gospel according to St. Luke, the first chapter.

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

<sup>26</sup>In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, <sup>27</sup>to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup>And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." <sup>29</sup>But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup>The

angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup>And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup>He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. <sup>33</sup>He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."  
<sup>34</sup>Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" <sup>35</sup>The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. <sup>36</sup>And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. <sup>37</sup>For nothing will be impossible with God." <sup>38</sup>Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

D: The gospel of the Lord.   **C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Sermon**

Deacon Lindsay Stertzbach

**Hymn of the Day:**

*The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came*

Hymn 265

**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.**

### **\*Prayers of Intercession**

P: With hope and expectation, we offer our prayers for the church, the world,  
and all who await God's day of restoration.

*A brief silence.*

P: You promise mercy to Abraham and Sarah and their descendants forever.  
Bring your church into thoughtful, caring, and collaborative relationship with  
those of other faiths. Strengthen our shared values, that we work together in  
caring for our world. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

P: As fields and crops lie dormant, bless them with holy rest. Prepare them to  
thrive, that they provide abundant food in due season. Protect animals who  
hibernate and provide for all who scavenge for food in the lean season.  
Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

P: You raise up the lowly and cast down the arrogant. Teach humility to all in  
positions of authority. Break down systems of oppression, especially  
systems that perpetuate inequity and exclusion. Do not allow wealth, power,  
or pride to become idols that obscure your call to justice. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

P: Look with favor upon all who cry out to you. Accompany with tenderness all  
who are afraid or ill especially Ingrid, Judy, the Naysmith Family, Joyce,  
Melanie, Brenda, Elizabeth, Jerry, Peg, Darine, Todd, Stevie, Tom, Logan,  
Adam and Family, Sandi, Steve, and those we now name aloud or hold  
tenderly in our hearts. Rescue all who experience abuse or who live under  
threat of violence, especially refugees, immigrants, and asylum-seekers in  
search of a safe and stable home. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

P: You are pleased to make your home among us. Make our homecomings  
joyful as we gather with friends, families, and chosen families in celebration.  
Grant safety to all who travel. Sustain the work of Lutheran Immigration and  
Refugee Services and other ministries that assist in setting up new homes.  
Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

P: Blessed are you for Mary and all your servants in every generation who lived according to your promise of mercy. Strengthen us by their example until the revelation of your glory is made known. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

P: Listen to these and all our prayers, O God of hosts, and restore us with your great and everlasting mercy.

**C: Amen.**

**\*Sharing of the Peace**

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

**C: And also with you.**

**MEAL**

**Offertory Solo**

*He Shall Feed His Flock*  
George Fredrick Handel

Nancy McNeal, Flute

**Offertory Response**

*O Come, O Come Emmanuel* (vs. 7-8)

Hymn 257

**Offering Prayer**

P: God our provider, by your merciful hand abundance springs up from the earth. Receive and bless these gifts of your own bounty. Let them be a sign of your steadfast love and faithfulness for all people, through Jesus Christ our Savior.

**C: Amen.**

**\*Great Thanksgiving**

P: The Lord be with you. **C: And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts. **C: We lift them to the Lord.**

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

**C: It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

**\*Proper Preface**

**\*Holy, Holy, Holy**

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**\*Eucharistic Prayer**

**\*Lord's Prayer**

**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**

P: In this meal, righteousness and peace meet together. Come, take your place at the table.

**Lamb of God**

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**Communion Hymn**

*The King Shall Come*

Hymn 260

**Table Blessing** (*"The body and blood..."*)

**Thankful Hearts**

Hymn 204

**\*Prayer after Communion**

P: Generous God, in bread and cup you have revealed your glory for all people to see together. Nourished by this meal, send us out to proclaim your good news of liberation and release, brought to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior.

**C: Amen.**

## SENDING

**\*Blessing**

P: The God of peace bless you, the love of Christ sustain you in hope, and the anointing of the Spirit ✠ remain upon you now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

**\*Sending Song:**

*Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus*

Hymn 254

**\*Dismissal:**

D: Go in peace. Keep awake.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

**\*Postlude**

*Hosanna To the Living Lord*

F.W. Zachow

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## PRAYERS

**Prayers for Healing:** Ingrid Schaller, Judy Weir, The Naysmith Family, Joyce, Melanie, Brenda Disbrow, Elizabeth, Jerry Jakovcic, Peg Huber, Darine Prok, Todd Costello, Stevie, Tom Thornton, Logan, Adam and Family, Sandi, and Steve Combs.

## TODAY'S WORSHIP & EVENTS

**Fourth Sunday of Advent**, we worship in person and via livestream at 9:30 a.m. with ELW 4 and holy communion.

**No Sunday School**

**Christmas Eve Services**, Candlelight Worship with communion in person at 7:00 & 9:00 p.m. *Children's message and livestream at 7:00.*

## NEXT SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31, AT ST. MATTHEW

**Next Sunday, First Sunday of Christmas**, we will worship in person and via livestream at 9:30 a.m. with Lessons & Carols, litany of healing, and holy communion.

**No Sunday School.**



*Oh, Come let us adore Him*

**Christmas Eve  
Candlelight Services**

**7:00 p.m. & 9:00 p.m.**  
Children's Message at 7:00 service  
*7pm Livestream at [www.stmatthewmedina.org](http://www.stmatthewmedina.org)*

**St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church**  
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Rev. Steven Mahaffey  
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# ANNOUNCEMENTS

**2024 Altar Flowers** - The 2024 Altar/Memorial Flowers charts are displayed in the narthex and available for you to pick your preferred dates. When you sign up for altar flowers, please fill out a form for the office with the information you would like printed in the bulletin. The forms are available at the bottom of the Altar Flowers chart. *Place the postcard and payment in the office administrator's mailbox. Checks made payable to St. Matthew Lutheran Church.*

**Annual Reports** - Executive Council members and Five-Star Ministry Chairs, please have your annual reports in to the office by January 15, 2024 so that annual report can be completed and available for the February Annual Meeting.

**“Getting to Know You”** - St. Matthew started featuring a St. Matthew family in our weekly Shout-Outs as a way to get to know our fellow St. Matthew members. We would love to feature your family! Go to your most recent Shout-Out to access the link to complete your profile. If you have any questions, please send a text to Beth Johnson (Communication Evangelism) at 301-501-0473. We look forward to *GETTING TO KNOW YOU!*

**How can you help with the Renovation Project?** *Mail a check to St. Matthew OR Simply Giving Link* - Go to [www.stmatthewmedina.org](http://www.stmatthewmedina.org), Click on “Give”, At the bottom of the page under “Online,” click “Give Here”, Select “St. Matthew Refresh/Renovation”, Choose from a one-time donation or recurring donation. Recap for October: No identified renovation expenses. Recap for November: No identified renovation expenses. \$280 reno restricted giving in November. Balance as of November 30, 2023 is \$66,745.63.

**Pull Tabs** - We continue to collect all types of pull tabs for Ronald McDonald House. Collection bins are located in the Narthex and the Room of the Cross.

**The Don Hodek Memorial Library** has many books on a variety of Christian topics, and is located in the hallway down the stairs by the elevator entrance. Please stop by and take as many books as you would like, and share with friends.

**The church office will be closed:**

Monday, December 25 &  
Tuesday, December 26

## Finance Report Update for October, November & Year-to-Date St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church

	<u>Month of October, 2023</u>	<u>Month of November, 2023</u>	<u>Year-to-Date January-Nov., 2023</u>
General Offering Unrestricted	\$ 34,897.12	\$ 70,983.97	\$ 344,675.33
2023 Approved Mission Plan	<u>\$ 33,333.33</u>	<u>\$ 33,333.33</u>	<u>\$ 366,666.63</u>
Budget Variance (Loss)	\$ 1,563.79	\$ 37,650.64	\$ (21,991.30)

**WOW MONTH!!! Financial Update:** St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church received the unrestricted offerings as compared to the 2023 approved Mission Plan objective shown for the months of October, November and 2023 year-to-date. Please prayerfully consider increasing your offering to support the church and its mission of Living God's Love. Estate planning is for everyone, it is an opportunity to create your legacy at St. Matthew. Thank you for your continued generosity.

By setting up recurring donations online, you enable us to maintain financial stability and plan for the future of St. Matthew. St. Matthew has 60 (increase 3) member families that contribute through Vanco. Please increase our participation and consider signing up for Simply Giving at: <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-Z4MP/home>

**SPECIAL NOTE:** St. Matthew has set-up in Simply Giving Link easy access for donations directly to the Renovation / Refresh Project. Please select from a one-time donation or recurring donation and contribute as you are able. If you have any questions about your current account or setting up your account, contact our Financial Director Bruce Reed at (412) 848-0219 or email Bruce at [brucerreed@comcast.net](mailto:brucerreed@comcast.net) .



### WORSHIP SERVANTS

Acolytes:	Andrew & Evan Hogan
Reader:	Adam Scheid
Communion Servers:	Delores Ivan
Ushers:	Alan & Delores Ivan
Sound:	Joe Obermeier
Video:	Scott Johnson
Altar Guild:	Sandy Andrews
Advent Candles Prayer:	The Weight Family

## St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church Staff

The Rev. Steven Mahaffey	Pastor
Deacon Lindsay Stertzbach	Director of Youth & Family Ministries
Cindy Piovarchy	Organist
Deb Musil	Office Administrator
Joyce Davis	Maintenance Supervisor
Brenda Disbrow	Parish Nurse
Nancy McNeal	Luther Choir Director
Rachel Knaggs	Kids of the Kingdom Director
Kaitlyn Taraschke	Nursery Attendant

### **Pastor Steve's Contact Information**

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### **Deacon Lindsay's Contact Information**

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Cell Phone: 440-376-8338



Hearing Loop  
System available.