



LIVING FAITH

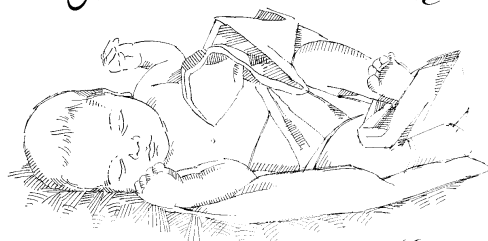
ST. MATTHEW'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

email: stmatthews@stmatthews.us

www.stmatthews.us

December 2007

And he will be their peace



Micah 5:5

CHRISTMAS EVE SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

CHILDREN'S SERVICE

Monday, Dec. 24, 5 p.m.

FAMILY SERVICES

Monday, Dec. 24, 7 p.m. & 9 p.m.

HOLY COMMUNION CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

Monday, Dec. 24, 11 p.m.

CHRISTMAS DAY -- THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

Tuesday, Dec. 25, 11 a.m. Service followed by a reception, see poster to indicate your participation.

If you would like to help provide poinsettias for the Christmas services, see the sign-up poster on the bulletin board. Plants may be taken home after the 11 a.m. service on Christmas Day (except for the white altar poinsettias).



The Fellowship committee will host a gathering between the 9 p.m. and 11 p.m. services. Please bring a snack to share. Beverages are provided. Children welcome. See poster to sign up.



GREENING ACTIVITIES

Greens Cutting, Tuesday, December 18

Greens Making, Thursday, December 20 & Friday, December 21, 10 a.m.

Greening, Friday, December 21, 7:30 p.m.

Making of the greens! The smell of pine, hot chocolate, and popcorn, Christmas carols, setting up the crèche --the excitement of the season--the wait is almost over! Everyone is invited to help decorate our church. During the two sessions on Thursday and Friday mornings, we will make the greens. NO previous experience necessary. You may want to bring your garden gloves and clippers. The decorating will be done on Friday evening. Please join us! See you there!

ADOPTED FAMILIES

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Please check the sign-up poster in the narthex to help provide gifts for someone who needs some Christmas love. St. Matthew's has the names of 20 families that we will be providing gifts and dinners for this Christmas. Food items will be provided by the SCS classes. Gifts are subscribed by signing the poster. Each item (clothing or toy) has a minimum amount of \$20. Gifts need to be brought to the church by **Wednesday, December 12**. See the poster for details.

NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES



2-Brent Howard
Renee Evans
Kristen Kinneberg
Ron Schmitt
3-Obediah Baker
Birgit Ralston
Carolyn Hodne
4-Bryan Orndorff
Ralph Scronce
Chase Phillips
Jonah Clark
5-Rebecca Bish
Jan Mouw
Mary Smith
7-Nicholas Woessner

8-Matthew Capobianco
Kathy Lambert
Molly Parker
Bill Schwentner
9-Ed Bayne
Brian Stevenson
Bill McCormack
Christel Merk
Ginni Schimpf
10-Art Reynolds
Caylin Nethercutt
Ken Welch
11-Emily Jacobson
12-Linda Ryson
Alexandra Gusberti
13-Caitlin Pfister
14-Pat Knock
Leslie Wilcox
15-Kevin Tamai
16-Glenn Renton
Zachary Larson
17-Vince Ogilvie
18- Lauren Kinneberg
Chris Skelley
19- Debbie Heimbach

Ian Knudson
20- Lynn Moonan
Matthew Smith
21-Darryl Lundgren
Donna Wiprud
Nancy Blazek
22-Kristen Wolf
24-Michelle Dorer
Tim Butcher
25-Richard Riley
Rex Stone
Emily Schreiber
26-Michael Urick
27-Marlies Smith
29-Patrick Young
30-Sharon Riley
Iver Bradley
Ellen Agosta
31-Brad Leiby
Bruce Leiby
Shannon Peterman
Leslie Kinneberg
McKenna Nowell

ANNIVERSARIES

3 – Steve & Monica Debban
9 – John & Stacy Urick
16 - Brian & Katie Badger
Keith & Sally Cotner

17 – Charles & Suzanne Harvey
Paul & Charlene Laird
21-Maureen & Randolph Steiner
22-Keith & Susan Kuhn
24-Ed & Carol Bayne

27-Mark & Sabrina Chandler
Anthony & Barbara Bombay
28-Charles & Marie Luedke
30 – Rick & Holly Ouellette
31-Carl & Sally Lay



CHOIR SCHEDULE

Mark the following choir rehearsals on your calendar!

Thursday, December 20 – Combined Cherub & Youth Choirs, 7-7:45 p.m.
Teen Choir, 8-8:45 p.m.

Friday, December 21 – Teen Caroling, 6 p.m.

Thursday, December 27- No Cherub Choir
Youth & Teen Choirs, 7-7:45 p.m.

No Preschool Choir on either December 24 or 31.

Advent Dinner December 2, 5:30 p.m.



“Prepare” will be the theme of this year’s Advent Dinner. Plan to welcome the season by sharing a meal with your St. Matthew’s family. Following a covered dish supper, activities

will highlight preparing for the coming of the Christ child – and lighting the first candle of the Advent wreath. Supplies will be available for all ages to enjoy fashioning three-dimensional figures which tell the story of preparing for Jesus’ birth. Instructions and materials for assembling a family Advent calendar will be available for each family to take home following the program. Each family is asked to bring 2 empty toilet tissue or paper towel rolls.

Students in Grades 7-12 will join in filling holiday stockings for others in need. Adults are invited to enjoy Advent table discussions based on Biblical stories of preparing for the Messiah. The evening will conclude with a brief devotion in the nave. Visit the church bulletin board for more information about what to bring.

Follow-up Advent activities for families to enjoy at home might be star gazing; baking star, sheep or angel shaped cookies; or driving through the neighborhood to enjoy the lights.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING & CHURCH COUNCIL ELECTIONS

A **Congregational Meeting** is scheduled for the period between the worship services on **December 9th**. Several very important items are on the agenda: we will vote on our Program Budget for 2008, we will select those who will provide the leadership for our congregation’s joyful work into the next year, and two members for the Mission Endowment committee.

On-Going Ministries

Volunteer at the **ACTS Thrift Store**: Tues., Dec. 4 and Tues., Jan. 8, **2008**.

Help us collate, fold, label, sort, and bundle **church mailings**. Meet in the narthex at 10:00 a.m. on **Friday, December 14**. Enjoy chatting with other workers while your fingers fly.

PreSchool Choir

There are still openings for children to join the PreSchool Choir. Children who are three to five years of age and potty-trained are eligible to join. PreSchool Choir meets on Monday afternoons from 4:00-4:30 p.m. in a classroom right off the day school playground. The children sing, dance, play simple instruments and move with scarves and streamers while learning songs about their faith. We make regular “field trips” into the nave to practice reverent behavior and take a close-up look at the paraments, altar and organ. Please consider letting your child join this unique experience. The children will sing with the Cherub Choir at a church service at the end of the school year, if they are comfortable doing so. If you have any questions, please call Kathy Lundgren at 703-494-3090 (daytime) or 703-494-9100 in the evenings.

Welcome New Members



Please welcome the following families who recently joined St. Matthew’s.

Debra BARON; Ed
John & Joy CLADY; Jake, Mark & Kate
Paul & Jennifer KNICK; Hannah
Paul & Charlene LAIRD; Courtney & Daniel
Mike & Linda MAZZUCCHI
Birgit RALSTON
John & Jenni RIGOT; Derek & Marisa
Wayne & Lisa STOHS; Amy



Church Women News

On Tuesday, December 11, at 7:30 PM, all women are invited to

Advent Reflections at Nancy Blazek's (12859 Valleywood Dr. 703/491-2582). During your Advent waiting, take a few quiet moments to consider the passing year and to anticipate the one ahead. Search out some appropriate words to share. These words will become a gift of encouragement for a sister in Christ.

We also will be collecting an offering that will include "stocking stuffers" for children (ages 4 and up) in Prince William County foster care.

There will be No Women's Evening Study Group in December. The next session will be 7:30 p.m., Monday, January 21, 2008. The group will continue its study of Blessed Are You with Lesson 4: "Pure in Heart." *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.* (Matthew 5:8) You're invited to begin a new year sharing discussion with this small group.

There will be a special **Women's Retreat Planning Meeting** on Saturday, January 5, 2008. Come and help us get ready for the big, three-day event.

Tuesday, January 8, at church, at 7:30 PM, guest presenter Leigh Anne Adusie, a certified fitness instructor who is a member of Abiding Presence Lutheran Church, will offer a program on women's fitness. Leigh Anne calls herself a "fitness enthusiast for the Lord", and she will share her commitment to good health by demonstrating quick and convenient ways to create an effective work-out at home. Don't miss Leigh Anne's "pep rally for God." Wear comfortable clothing as we will be practicing some of the techniques. If you're the least bit confused by work-out equipment you may have on hand at home—bands, balls, free weights, bag them up and bring them along. Leigh Anne will help us figure out how to use them effectively.

Tuesday, February 12, Cookie Bake, at church, at 7:30 PM. Parents, please update college student addresses.

NEWSLETTER SUNDAY CHURCH SCHOOL Christmas Program Rehearsal Schedule

The Sunday School Christmas program is December 16, 6 p.m. Below is the rehearsal schedule.

Sat., Dec. 1

9:00-10:00—Narrators

Sat., Dec. 8

9:00-12:00—All Characters & Narrators

10:00-11:00—Kindergarten & Grades 1, 4, 5

11:00-11:20—3 and 4 Year Olds

11:15-12:00—Grades 2, 3, 6, 7, 8

Sat., Dec. 15

Same Schedule as Dec. 8

Sun., Dec. 16

Short run-through during the regular SCS hour

On the evening of the program, (**Sun., Dec. 16**) all students should arrive **NO LATER THAN 5:45 P.M.** They should be dressed in costume and go directly to their class areas where their teachers will meet them. **Each family** is asked to **bring 2 DOZEN COOKIES** to share at the reception following the program.

Costumes

3 and 4 Year Olds	Angels (provided)
Kinder/Grade 1	Shepherds (costumes not provided)
Grades 2 & 3	No costumes/collars provided
Grades 4 & 5	No costumes
Grades 6, 7 & 8	No costumes

Gifts of Hope

Gifts of Hope is a well loved part of Christmas in many Lutheran congregations in the Washington metro area. This year, as always, every penny spent on a Gift of Hope goes to the organization delivering the gifts. Come see this year's exciting new catalog at the "Market Table" in the narthex. Included is a Christmas card and an insert describing your gift. [Great gifts for teachers, friends and grandparents!]



CONFIRMATION MEALS FOR DECEMBER

<u>DATE</u>	<u>MEAL</u>	<u>COOKS</u>
5	Pizza	1. Barb Carr 2. Leslie Kinneberg 3. Julie Schwentner
12	Holiday Ham	1. Janet Woessner 2. Laura Carlson 3. Karen Miller 4.

7TH & 8TH GRADE YOUTH



Back by popular demand, and weather permitting, The Harris Pavilion once again will be St. M's holiday, ice skating destination. Sign up to meet at church at 11:00 AM, on

Thursday, December 27. We will skate, have lunch, and return to church at 3:30 PM. Admission is \$6.50, and skate rental is \$3.00. Bring additional \$ for food. Questions? Call Pr. Stevenson at 703/494-3090.

Watch for a sign up sheet for the SKI TRIP ON SATURDAY, JANUARY 26.

Mark the date – SHEKINAH, MARCH 7-9.

SENIOR HIGH YOUTH

Circle these dates:

Fri.-Sun., Nov. 30-Dec. 2, CHRYSALIS check the bulletin for departure information

Sun., Dec. 2, Advent Dinner

Sun., Dec. 16, Christmas Party, 5:30 p.m.

Thurs., Dec. 27, Ice Skating

LOOKING AHEAD: SKI TRIP



January 25 & 26
Watch for more info and a sign up sheet.

Financial Secretary & Treasurer's Report, October 2007

October Giving by Category

Current	\$ 40,678
Benevolence	8,533
Building	10,963
Memorial	250
Pass Through	2,934
Total	\$ 63,358
Year to Date	\$ 692,671

To date we have given \$73,607 toward our congregation's benevolence commitments. \$5,102 has been given through our Samaritan Fund towards emergency needs for utilities, rent, gas, food, car insurance, day care, medicine and a \$500 gift to Help the Homeless in support of the Walkathon. Thank you for your continued faithfulness in giving as we look to the end of the year.

Hugh Miller Receives Dean's Cup from the Center for Immigration Law and Practice

On Thursday, November 8, at a ceremony at the Haitian Embassy, Hugh Miller was awarded the Dean's Cup by the Center for Immigration Law and Practice for his support in performing financial analysis for the Law Center. Bishop Schneider also received a Dean's Cup award for his support of the Center.

Both Hugh and Pat Victorson have been actively involved in the Law Center ministry for a number of years. The Center for Immigration Law and Practice is one of the ministries supported by the congregation's benevolence support. In addition, the Center is the Congregation's Choice for the Gifts of Hope campaign.

Congratulations on your award, Hugh, and thank you for all you do on behalf of St. Matthew's.

Bible Studies

Women's Bible Study
Weds., 9:30-11 a.m.
Childcare provided
Pr. Tarja Stevenson

Weekday Bible Study
Thurs., 10-11:30 a.m.
Pr. David Bohannon

Women's Evening Study
3rd Mon. of each month, 7:30 p.m.
Led by study group members

Men's Bible Study
Monthly, see bulletin for date and time
Pr. David Bohannon

FASTNACHT 2008

"Team Spirit" will be the theme of the 2008 Fastnacht Talent Show on February 3. Plan to wear your favorite team's colors, and begin thinking about setting your favorite sport to music. Crew fans might consider "Row, Row, Row Your Boat", and save "Moonlight Bay" for the regatta group. There are trail riding or rodeo songs for the equestrians and golfers may want to ponder "Double Bogie Blues." Watch the church bulletin board for a sign-up sheet and more suggestions.

Book Group

On Sunday, January 20, 2:30 p.m. Sue Orndorff will facilitate discussion of Water for Elephants by Sara Gruen. We will meet for refreshments at Pat Victorson's home (12753 Quarterhorse Lane, 703-730-7449.) Here is the product description from Amazon: *surprising, poignant, & funny...that rare novel with a story so engrossing one is reluctant to put it down; with characters so engaging, they continue to live long after the last page has been turned; with a world built of wonder, a world so real, one starts to breathe its air.*

Thank You Notes

The following letters have been received by the congregation in thanks for support we have provided.

The first letter is from Prince William County Schools and refers to a student we have provided assistance for.

"I have enclosed a picture of { }'s smile. Thank you and everyone at Emergency Services for expeditiously gathering resources to help this youngster obtain dental care. She is doing well and is eating all kinds of food that she could not eat before the surgery. She is not in any pain and appears happier."

From Fellowship Square Foundation:

Dear Members of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church;

We are especially gratified and encouraged to receive the support of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church for our affordable housing ministry to the low-income elderly and disabled.

We are most pleased to acknowledge your recent gift of \$3,000 through the United Lutheran Appeal. This was received to support the ancillary services for our Fellowship House residents. St. Matthew's is a key partner in our ministry at our Woodbridge Fellowship House and we are grateful for the time and service your community provides.

On behalf of our residents, staff and directors, please accept this letter as an expression of our appreciation; please thank the members of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church for their most generous contribution.

Sincerely,

James F. Garrett, Executive Director

From Anita London:

Dear Friends,

It has been a pleasure working with all of you this past year – your warm welcome made me feel at home right from the start. Thank you for all the help you offered so generously that made this such a positive year.

The leather bound ELW inscribed with your blessing is a wonderful gift. Wherever I go in ministry I will be reminded of the incredible year I spent in your company. God bless you as you continue in your faithful service on behalf of our Lord.

Peace, Joy & Love,
Anita

Dear Friends,

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve as your intern this year. My time at St. Matthew's has been an amazing experience, one that has given me many opportunities to learn and grow into my future role as pastor. I again realize I can't imagine having been anywhere else for this important and formative year.

Thank you so much for the beautiful red stole. It is the embodiment of generosity that is so much a part of St. Matthew's in its envisioning for tomorrow. I look forward to wearing it for the first time on my ordination day.

Finally, I thank you for your gifts of encouragement and support, your friendship and all the fun we had over the past year. You have profoundly touched my life – "I thank my God every time I think of you." Phil. 1:3

Peace, Joy & Love,
Anita

Day School Holiday Mode

St. Matthew's Day School is into its version of "holiday mode." Grandparents have been invited to visit on November 20 & 21 for fellowship, a sing-along with the grandchildren, and a classroom visit. This is the fifth annual Grandparents' Day and we anticipate 200 or more guests. In past years they've come from far (Peru, East Asia, Sweden) and near (folks who have been life long Woodbridge area residents). Grandchildren prove themselves to be powerful magnets – attracting and attracted to Grandma and Grandpa – sometimes even Great Grandma and Grandpa!

NEWSLETTER

We've been collecting food for the ACTS food pantry as the teachers weave talk of bounty and thanks giving into snack time conversations. Their cans and boxes of non-perishables will be toted into the nave at the time of the sing-along and placed in front of the altar. Congregation families will add to them at the Thanksgiving Eve service.

On December 3rd the children will begin to bring in toys that they've out-grown to share with the needy families adopted by our congregation. On December 15th the children of the families we're assisting this year will be invited to "shop through" a treasure trove of gently used toys, adding them to the new toys and clothing they receive from congregation members.

The classes talk about a different Fruit of the Spirit each month of the school year. December's fruit is patience, and it's fitting. (Have you noticed how quickly the days and months of our adult years fly by? Do you remember how slowly time passed between one Christmas and the next when you were a child?) During December "circle" times, the children hear the story of the nativity, meeting a new character each day and adding it to their crèche. They light another candle on the Advent wreath, take another link off the waiting chain, and sing a "waiting" song. Patience. Some (little) folks still feel the need for it.

