

**Good News
From New Road
St. Matthew Lutheran Church, God's Family in Service**

October 2025

St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church



Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you.~Ephesians 4:32



What happens when you bring 3 South Dakota natives together for coffee and donuts? A great time and a reminder of how truly connected we all are. I met with Rilla Viereggs and her longtime friend Adaline for coffee and donuts on September 18, all three of us are originally from South Dakota! You betcha! From the time I started connecting with people here at St. Matthew, Rilla, was someone I connected with right away because as soon as she found out, I was from South Dakota, she let me know that she was too. Then the connecting and reminiscing began, as well as the sharing of her incredible pretzels that she makes! Being from the same place is a special thing, because you know certain things, people and places come alive in the mentioning of something familiar. It is a feeling of home that comes about.

We have a shared space of home here at St. Matthew Lutheran Church, some have been here a lifetime and some are just now calling St. Matthew home. The importance of home and belonging are central in our faith; we are called to express belonging and a sense of home to those we encounter here. It is a place we share our lives together, express and receive forgiveness, as well as learn and grow together as family. It is within the realms of home where we are to experience the love and care that God intends for all of us. To feel not as a stranger or even a guest, but like a child at home. (Cue the music from My Shepherd will supply my need.)

As we continue to walk as a family of faith together may we remember that home is a place where we can cultivate trust, nurture faith, and support one another. May we reflect an environment that reflects God's love and grace for us, so that all may flourish.

A prayer for all of us,

Gentle God, grant that at home, where we are most truly ourselves, where we are known at our best and worst, we may learn to forgive and be forgiven.~ The New Zealand Prayer Book

Dear St. Matthew family, peace and grace be with you all,
Pastor Austin Nickel



Finance Update

The balance in the checking accounts at the end of August was \$210,273.70



WELCA NEWS

It is with sadness that we say goodbye to Linda and Kelly as they transition to the next chapter of their lives. We all wish only the best for both of them in their new home as they settle in and make new friends. The following is a letter from Linda.

Dear St. Matthew Women of the ELCA,

I want you to know that it has been my pleasure to have known you and worked with you over these many years at St Matthew. It all started with a little encouragement from people like dear Wanda Kilstrom. I remember the many fundraisers we did selling Premier jewelry, taco soup and the infamous cookie jar mix! We had a lot of fun and a lot of laughs! You all were instrumental in helping with the Synod Fall Retreat a few years ago and it was a huge success! I will miss all the great meetings we had and the wonderful speakers. I hope you will continue to make WELCA a big part of your life at St Matthew. I will miss you all and hope to come back soon to visit. This is a big transition for me but I know it needs to happen sooner rather than later. Blessings to you all! And remember my house in Richardson will always be open to visitors.

Your Sister in Christ,
Linda Heyde

DATES TO REMEMBER

Circle of Faith **October 14** at 10:00 a.m.

NTNL Synod Convention **October 10 – 11** at
Calvary Lutheran Church in Richland Hills

Board Meeting Wednesday, **October 15** at 1:30 p.m.

GOD'S WORK - OUR HANDS

One of the many things we can do as we try to grow closer to God is simply **be kind to others**. In 1969 Glen Campbell recorded “**Try A Little Kindness**”, a **song that talks about our acts of kindness to our neighbors**. The song talks about helping those we see who are struggling, not ignoring those who are down and about shining our light for others to see. **God tells us in the Bible that we are to practice kindness**. Paul wrote to the church in Galatia that Christ lives in the heart of a person when they shine their light for everyone to see as they offer kindness to those around them. **When we are kind to those around us, Christ is seen through our actions**. Pastor Johnny Richards of Crabtree Valley Baptist Church said “One thing we need to understand is that **we can't fix the world's issues. The only thing we can do is make sure we are being kind**. We can make sure we **encourage one another**. We can make sure we **compliment people instead of belittling them**. We can try our best to **smile more than we frown**. We can try to **say thank you more often**. We can **listen** to someone who is hurting. **These are all acts of kindness that help us shine our light so the world will see Christ.**”

St Matthew's shows kindness through our food donations to **Caritas**, through our pet food donations to the **Meals on Wheels Pet Food Pantry**, through the food placed in our **Blessing Box**, through the toys we donate to **Mission Waco's Toy Store**, through the beautiful **quilts donated to Lutheran World Relief**, through the **School Kits** donated to Lutheran World Relief and through the **Health Kits** donated to Lutheran World Relief. Your acts of kindness bring happiness and hope to people who are in need of love. **Thank you for your generosity and for letting Christ's light shine out into the world through your acts of kindness.**

As the School Kits collection drive winds down it is **time to start collecting the items for the Health Kits**. In 2024 St Matthew donated 83 **Health Kits** to Lutheran World Relief. These kits are distributed around the world anytime people are in need. Diane Jones is in charge of **this extremely important opportunity to show kindness to people in one of their darkest times in their life**. The kits include a dark colored bath towel, bars of soap (2), toothbrush, sturdy wide tooth comb, and metal nail file or nail clippers with the file attached. **Please look for the handouts with more detailed information**. Please donate what you are able. **Thank you in advance for your generosity.**

OPPORTUNITIES

Texas A&M Agri Life Extension upcoming classes include Sourdough Basics Baking, Cooking Well With Diabetes, Kids in the Kitchen, and Taste of the Mediterranean. These classes are taught by Rachel Esquivel (254-757-5180) at the office located at 4224 Cobbs Drive, Waco, TX 76710. Rachel has spoken at two of our general meetings and does a wonderful job presenting information in an easy to understand way. I took her class on canning and successfully canned green beans and canned sweet peppers. The cost of the class includes all materials that will be needed in class.



St. Matthew at Ridgecrest

Join us on **Thursday, October 2nd at 10:00 a.m. at Ridgecrest Retirement Home** on 1900 W Hwy 6 West, for a **Lutheran Worship service with communion and Melissa on piano**. All are welcome to attend.



Animal Blessing

In honor of St. Francis, we will have an animal blessing on **Saturday, October 4th at 10:00 a.m.** outside of the church. Please bring

your animals or pictures of your animals to be blessed.



Faith in Film

On **Friday, October 17th at 6:00 p.m.**, bring your own dinner and join us as we watch the film *Hotel Transylvania* and discuss different biblical and theological themes that come up in the film. **Please sign up on the podium outside the sanctuary**. We will meet in the fellowship hall, **come one, come all!**



Church tour for new and regular members
Saturday, October 18th 2:00—4:00 p.m.

Coffee Fellowship

On **Thursday, October 23rd from 1-3 p.m.** we will have a **coffee fellowship** in the fellowship hall. Please come to hang out, chat, and have some coffee!



Oktoberfest

Save the Date for St. Matthew Oktoberfest on **October 26** from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. Join us for traditional German food/drinks, games, and fellowship. **Please sign up on the podium outside the sanctuary.**

Offering Statements

If you would like an offering statement for the first three quarters of 2025; please contact Nate at the church office by phone (254-772-9349) or email (smlcoffice@stmattwaco.org) to have one made for you. These statements will be distributed around Stewardship Sunday in November; and full statements will be provided to all members without request in January 2026 as usual.

Stephen Ministry Information and Upcoming Class



Would you like to know more about our Church's **Stephen Ministry** or even be a part of this important service to our congregation? **We will be offering a 5 class course this coming January that will prepare you to be a Stephen Friend.** The course is available to everyone even if you don't plan to be commissioned as a Stephen Friend. Normally the training to be a Stephen Minister is 50 hours but we realize very few of us have time for that. Therefore **we have developed a 10 hour course** that trains you to be a Stephen Friend. **Please feel free to contact Bill Abright if you have any questions about this training** (254-652-4053 / b_abright@yahoo.com).

I imagine that most of you know that our congregation has a **Stephen Ministry Program** but that many of you don't fully understand the services we are able to provide.

Of course, **we continue to provide our services to this congregation's shut-ins**, bringing them communion, praying with them and providing hope and friendship. This is a very important part of our church's ministry. **However there is so much more to Stephen Ministry** that we would love to be able to share.

Every person at one time or another needs a non-judgmental person to talk with; someone who will really actively listen and not judge. We all have difficult times, difficult decisions to make, or difficult choices to consider and it could be very helpful to have an objective person sharing these stressful times with you. **Stephen Ministers and Stephen Friends** are trained in the skills necessary to do that and confidentiality is an extremely important cornerstone of our ministry. We do not provide counseling but we are trained in helping people through difficult times in an uplifting Christian manner. Examples of issues we can assist people with include relationship problems, worries about finances or jobs, pending retirement or other major life changes, loneliness, depression, stress, long term trauma, confusion about life goals and many more.

The **Stephen Ministry** relationship can be an on-going one but it can also be useful for just one or two visits if that is what is desired.

We are available to this congregation and their families and we are ready and willing to help! For more information, please contact Pastor or any of the following Stephen Ministers: Bill Abright, Elaine Copeland, Sally Engelbrecht, Beth Pristash, Meridith Sellers, and Peggy Tooker.

God's Work Our Hands – LWR Kits

We are collecting items for **Lutheran World Relief Health Kits**. Cleanliness may not actually be next to godliness, but it certainly helps a person feel more human. **When families find their homes destroyed or must flee for their safety, soap and a towel rarely make the cut for what they can carry.** Arriving in a refugee camp or other place of safety they are scared, vulnerable and dirty from the travel. **These simple items included in a Health Kit provide hope for a better future.**

Please donate these items:

Bath towels - lightweight, dark colors
Bath size bars of soap (in original packaging)
Adult-sized tooth brush (in original packaging)
Sturdy comb (no pocket combs)
Metal nail clippers

Video & Camera Upgrades Fund

Many members appreciate the option to see our services online and many enjoy seeing it in person. Due to **technology improvements** and our need to stream our service in the parish hall and showing parts of our service on the screens in the church like the children's sermon **we would like to let anyone who wants to contribute to our need of \$6,000 to purchase 3 PTZ cameras with a controller and items needed to connect and make it all sync together!** Please feel free to give if you can in the **white pew envelopes or mail in or through Vanco in additional giving.** We will update our amount received weekly. We hope to have the funds by mid-October so we can utilize these improvements in our Holiday Services! Blessings to All! -Church Council



Sunday Learning

Our Sunday Learning classes will be after worship. We will have an Adult class, Children's class, Preschool class, and Kindergarten class.

The Adult class will continue working through Together by Grace: Introducing the Lutherans. Whether you are a lifelong Lutheran or brand new to our church, you are welcome to join us! Our lessons this fall will focus on our place in the global Lutheran church and the relationship between Lutheranism and other faith traditions, both Christian and non-Christian.

Confirmation Classes

If you or someone you know is interested in participating in confirmation, please let Pastor Austin know and sign up on the sheet located in the Narthex. Once we have an idea of how many would participate, we will develop a schedule and meet to discuss the process.

What is confirmation? It's a time for young people to explore their faith, learn about Christianity from a Lutheran perspective, and decide how they will live out their faith as confirmed members of the church.



Fellowship for Single Women

Fellowship for Single Women will be meeting on **Tuesday, October 28th**, at **10:00 a.m. at Cafe Cappuccino**. We meet the **fourth Tuesday** of every month. **All singles are invited**. For any questions, please contact Rosemary Fielder (fielderatwaco@aol.com)

Friday Quilters Meetings

Friday Quilters meet in the Fellowship Hall on **Fridays at 8:30 a.m.** We usually finish up around **10:30 a.m.** Come join us. If you can tie a knot, you can help us assemble the quilts. We have a great fellowship time.



Art as Worship



Art as Worship is the **annual art exhibit** that graces our hallways and fellowship hall for the seasons of

Thanksgiving, Advent, and

Christmas. **In this small way, we celebrate our Creator God from whom we all receive our own creative spirits.** This is **our 15th annual exhibit**, and each year we display **25-30 pieces of art that respond to the theme for the year.** A few of the artists are from St. Matthew, and we have welcomed artists from all over Central Texas and beyond.

This year's theme is ANCESTORS, and the call for artists is out now, so **if you want to create something or you know someone who might want to participate, please go to this website:** for all of the information that is needed for submitting artwork.

<https://fineartsministry.blogspot.com/2025/02/2025-art-as-worship-theme-announcement.html>



The **deadline** for artwork is **November 10**. There are also photos on that site showing all of our exhibits over the years to give you an idea of how transformative the exhibit is in our spaces.

And please make plans to attend the opening gala on Saturday, November 15 from 6:30-9:00 p.m. We have hors d'oeuvres, wine and other beverages, and live music, all alongside the newly hung art and festive atmosphere.

If you have any **questions** about the exhibit, please reach out to **Jeanne Dittmann** or **DeAnna Toten Beard**, and *if you would like to help with the evening's food, please speak with Beth Pristash.*

Prayer Requests and Concerns

We continue to pray for one another and those close to us. If you have an update or a concern, please call the office and leave a message.

**Members with Prayer Concerns:**

Rita Bruer, Cora Gillespie, Bill Gillespie, Ty Henrichs, Jean Moeller, Stephanie Partin, Tammy Vickrey, Sharon Peterson, Farrel Bolte,

Florence Anderson, Denise Self, Arlene Schwarz, Jay Peterson and Jerry Cureton.

**Those for whom prayer is requested:**

Elizabeth Dale, John Woods, Michael Puig, Dora Torres (Beth Pristash), Rodney Roller, James Hurst, Janice Byrd, Rich Buckner, Tony Knoss, Larry Burgin (Terry Roller), Jimmy Moore, Harold Strand, Joy Peterson (Ross & Kim Browne), Wanda Stanford, Cory Stanford, Jacen Stanford, Kathryn Medford (Linda Stanford), Vicki Terry, Vikki Dzamba (Carol Linda), Curtis Forrester (Bill & Diane Jones), Frank Simons, Ruthie Simons, Kris Braswell, (Colleen Early), Octaviano Estrada Jr., Abby Peters, Ann Mitchell (Meridith Sellers), Renlee Montgomery, the Montgomery family (Marcyl Howell), Bryan and Zoe Cruse (Lee & Marilyn Cruse), "Red" Tiner, Kathy Coleman, Nancy Hensel (Del & Sue Hensel), Diana & Saul Guajardo (Ashley Jenson), Wendell Mosley (Paula Jenson), Rhonda Smith Owens (Denise Self), Wolfgang, Gert Gstatenbauer, Werner Gstatenbauer (Roger & Betty Fornelius), Robin Waite (Billie Hueske), Dylan James Tristian Smith (Teresa Umberger), Joann Bottoms, Darlene Gemath, Hannah Herring (Mary Herring), Lambring & Collander Families (Maggie Lambring), Reba Widmer, Roland & Sharon Krienke (Teresa Bancale), Todd Butts (Bancale & Krienke families)

October Birthdays

Lauren Clinger	10/04
Stephanie Abright	10/06
Betty Fornelius	10/06
Kemper Beard	10/07
Andrew Ronnevik	10/07
Jacen Stanford	10/07
Michael Bancale	10/09
Ross Browne	10/09
Sha Towers	10/12
Cindy Hutyra	10/14
Lanah Bagley	10/17
Bobby Rawlings	10/23
Jay Dittmann	10/24
Roger Fornelius	10/24
Doris Schuetze	10/25
Marianna Busch	10/28
Ben Wolle, Jr.	10/28
Heather Baker	10/30
Cora Gillespie	10/30
Heather Baker	10/30
Andrew Dittmann	10/31

October Anniversaries

Roger & Betty Fornelius	10/11
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Our monthly newsletter deadline is the **3rd Sunday of each month.** Please send

submissions to

cvanauken@grandecom.net or you may place your handwritten information and thank you notes in the wooden box near the entrance of the workroom. Thank you!

**Did You Know?**

That you can fill out an attendance card online? Scan the QR code at the front of the bulletin.

That you can use your phone or electronic device to view the Sunday Worship bulletin?

That St. Matthew has a new website? Check it out: www.stmattwaco.org

October 2025							Nov 2025 ▶
◀ Sep 2025	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2 10:00am Communion Worship at Ridgecrest	3 9:00am Quilters	4 10:00am Animal Blessing
5 9:30am Worship Service 10:45am Sunday Learning	6		7 12:00pm-1:00pm Deanery	8	9	10 Office Closed 9:00am Quilters	11 9:00am-4:00pm Calligraphy Guild
12 9:30am Worship Service 10:45am Sunday Learning	13		14 10:00am Circle of Faith	15 1:30pm WELCA Board Meeting	16	17 9:00am Quilters 7:00pm Faith in Film	18
19 9:30am Worship Service 10:45am Sunday Learning	20		21 11:00am-4:00pm Domino (42) Group	22	23	24 9:00am Quilters	25 9:00am-4:00pm Calligraphy Guild
26 9:30am Worship Service 10:45am Sunday Learning 5:00pm-7:00pm Oktoberfest	27		28 10:00am Fellowship for Single Women	29	30	31 9:00am Quilters	