



# First Lutheran Church

## Gospel of Matthew

### Summer 2026 Reading Challenge



## Introduction

### Week 1: Matthew chapters 1 and 2

#### Chapter Outline

Matthew 1:1-17 - the Genealogy of Jesus  
Matthew 1:18-26 - the Birth of Jesus  
Matthew 2:1-12 - the Visit of the Wise Men  
Matthew 2:13-24 - the Escape/Return to Egypt and Slaughter of the Innocents

#### What to Expect

The opening chapters of Matthew's Gospel lay theological foundations and represent a narrative arc that will be experienced in the whole of the Gospel.

The Genealogy is Matthew's way to represent Jesus' connection to the history of Jesus. Don't worry if there are names you can't pronounce, say it like you mean it. There are resources online, such as Bible Gateway ([www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com)), that have pronunciation guides if you need them. As you do read this list, what names do you recognize from knowing some Old Testament stories? What names do you need to look up to figure out who they are? Wikipedia is an online encyclopedia that would have some rather basic information on these individuals, look up the article titled "Genealogy of Jesus" for great information and a deeper dive into who all these name are, as well as a comparison with the genealogy found in Luke's Gospel.

The Birth narrative is quite short here, and suggests that Joseph and Mary were already living in Bethlehem at the time of their betrothal. This contradicts again Luke's story and reminds us that these Gospels are not necessarily reporting factual history, but telling a theological story for a purpose. Matthew is concerned with Jesus fulfilling prophecy in a different way than Luke was.

Chapter 2 with the visit of the Magi and the Egypt story (see this week's deep dive 2 for more on the slaughter of the innocents), is again Matthew's theological framework for understanding Jesus as a whole, this Messiah and God's Kingdom will be clashing with the kingdoms of this world the whole way through.

#### 2026 Summer Reading Challenge

Throughout this summer, First Lutheran Church will engage the Gospel of Matthew.

Each week we will read 2 chapters of Matthew.

Resources will be available along the way, including:

- An introduction to the week
- A Deep Dive into a big theme of Matthew's Gospel
- A Deep Dive into one part of this week's reading
- A Devotional based on one part of this week's reading
- A Video to read along with Pastor Jamie.

Check out our website and our Facebook page for weekly and daily postings related to this reading challenge.

Gathered by God, we live our faith with: Compassion, Grace, Gratitude, and Joy

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