

**St. Matthew's Evangelical Lutheran
Church & School**

(Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod)

709 Milton Ave., Janesville, WI 53545

Church & School Phone: 752-1304

James Janke, Pastor 563-4383

Dale Beutin, Congregational Asst. 774-5177

Joel Sonntag, Principal 414-460-8305

www.stmatthewsjanesville.org

Worship for the 1st Sunday after Epiphany

January 9 & 12, 2025

♪ **Baptized into your name most holy,
O Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
I claim a place, though weak and lowly,
Among your saints, your chosen host,
Buried with Christ and dead to sin.
Your Spirit now shall live within.** (CW 680)

P: In the name of the Father and of the Son † and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

P: I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God

C: unless he is born of water and the Spirit.

P: Flesh gives birth to flesh,

C: but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.

P: Surely we were sinful at birth,

C: sinful from the time our mothers conceived us.

P: But we were washed, we were sanctified,

C: we were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

♪ **My loving Father, there you took me
To be henceforth your child and heir.
My faithful Savior, there you let me
The fruit of all your sorrows share.
O Holy Spirit, comfort me
When threat'ning clouds around I see.** (CW 680)

P: As baptized children of God, we confess our sins.

C: Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful and that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good. For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity. But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.

**♪ My faithful God, you fail me never;
Your promise surely will endure.
Oh, cast me not away forever
If words and deeds become impure.
Have mercy when I come defiled;
Forgive, lift up, restore your child. (CW 680)**

P: Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son † and of the Holy Spirit.
C: Amen.

**♪ All that I am and love most dearly—
Receive it all, O Lord, from me.
Let me confess my faith sincerely,
And help me your own child to be!
Let nothing that I am or own
Serve any will but yours alone. (CW 680)**

Prayer of the Day

P: Let us pray.

P: Father in heaven, at the baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan, you proclaimed him your beloved Son and anointed him with the Holy Spirit. Keep us who are baptized into Christ faithful in our calling as your children, and make us heirs with him of everlasting life; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Old Testament: 2 Kings 5:1-14

Na'aman, the commander of the king of Aram's army, was a great man in the opinion of his master. He was highly honored because the Lord had provided victory for Aram through him. Although he was a powerful warrior, he had leprosy.

²Raiding parties had once gone out from Aram and brought back a young girl. She served Na'aman's wife. ³She said to her mistress, "I wish my master stood before the prophet who is in Samaria, because he would cure him of his leprosy."

⁴So Na'aman went and told his master what the servant girl from the land of Israel had said.

⁵Then the king of Aram said, "Go there. I will send a letter to the king of Israel." So Na'aman went, and he took ten talents of silver and six thousand shekels of gold and ten sets of clothing. ⁶Then he took the letter to the king of Israel. The letter said, "Now, when you receive this letter, you will know that I am sending my officer Na'aman to you so that you can cure him of his leprosy."

⁷When the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his clothing and said, "Am I God that I can kill and make alive? Why is he sending a man to me for me to heal him from his leprosy? See how he is looking for a pretext to fight against me."

⁸But when Elisha, the man of God, heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, he sent a message to the king: "Why have you torn your clothes? Let him come to me, and he will know that there is a prophet in Israel."

⁹So Na'aman went with his horses and chariots and stopped in front of the door of Elisha's house. ¹⁰But Elisha sent a messenger out to him to say, "Go and wash seven times in the Jordan. Then your flesh will be restored and you will be clean."

¹¹But Na'aman was angry and he left, saying, "Look, I said to myself, 'He will certainly come out and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God and wave his hand over the place, and I will be cured of the leprosy!' ¹²Aren't the Abana and the Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Couldn't I wash in them and be cleansed?" So he turned and went away in a burning rage.

¹³But his servants approached and spoke to him. They said, “My father, if the prophet had told you to do some great thing, would you not do it? How much more when he says to you, ‘Wash and be clean?’”

¹⁴So he went down and dipped in the Jordan seven times, just as the man of God had said. Then his flesh was restored like the flesh of a small child, and he was clean.

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Verse of the Day

♪ **Lord, I will tell while I am living,
Your love and grace with every breath
And greet each morning with thanksgiving
Until my heart is still in death,
And, when at last my lips grow cold,
Your praise shall in my sighs be told.** *(tune of CW 680)*

Gospel: Luke 3:15-23

¹⁵The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might be the Christ. ¹⁶John answered them all, “I baptize you with water. But someone mightier than I is coming. I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷His winnowing shovel is in his hand, and he will thoroughly clean out his threshing floor. He will gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” ¹⁸Then with many other words, he appealed to them and was preaching good news to the people. ¹⁹But after John rebuked Herod the tetrarch because of Herodias, his brother’s wife, and because of all the evil things he had done—²⁰Herod added this to them all: He locked John in prison.

²¹When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. While he was praying, heaven was opened, ²²and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love. I am well pleased with you.”

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise be to you, O Christ.

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 fully 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 in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy Christian 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.

Hymn: God's Own Child, I Gladly Say It CW 679

1 God's own child, I gladly say it: I am baptized into Christ!

He, because I could not pay it, gave my full redemption price.

Do I need earth's treasures many? I have one worth more than any
that brought me salvation free, lasting to eternity!

2 Sin, disturb my soul no longer: I am baptized into Christ!

I have comfort even stronger: Jesus' cleansing sacrifice.

Should a guilty conscience seize me since my baptism did release me
in a dear forgiving flood, sprinkling me with Jesus' blood?

3 Satan, hear this proclamation: I am baptized into Christ!

Drop your ugly accusation, I am not so soon enticed.

Now that to the font I've traveled, all your might has come unraveled,
and, against your tyranny, God, my Lord, unites with me!

**4 Death, you cannot end my gladness: I am baptized into Christ!
When I die, I leave all sadness to inherit paradise!
Though I lie in dust and ashes faith's assurance brightly flashes:
Baptism has the strength divine to make life immortal mine.**

Sermon: Titus 3:3-8

³ At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. ⁴ But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, ⁵ he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷ so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. ⁸ This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone.

Power Past Quitter's Day With Epiphany Inspiration

- I. The epiphany we see in the Jordan River today*
- II. The epiphany we see on our own baptismal day*
- III. The epiphany we see as we look to the Last Day*

Response to God's Word: God's Own Child, I Gladly Say It CW 679

5 There is nothing worth comparing to this lifelong comfort sure!

Open-eyed my grave is staring: even there I'll sleep secure.

Though my flesh awaits its raising, still my soul continues praising:

I am baptized into Christ; I'm a child of paradise!

Offering

Prayer of the Church for Epiphany

P: As we celebrate the epiphany of your Son, dear Father, we rejoice again to hear the good news of great joy that you sent your own dear Son to be the Savior of all nations. For fulfilling your prophecies and for sending your Son in the fullness of time to bring salvation to all people, we give you our heartfelt thanks and praise.

C: The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all people!

P: What a great mystery of our faith this is: that God has become fully human for our salvation, and yet he remains the all-powerful Lord of all who changes gloom to joy, shame to honor, and darkness to light.

C: Great is the mystery of our faith; that God appeared in a body!

P: What a great mystery of our faith this is: that our Savior who once came in such deep humility as a baby born in Bethlehem, still comes to us in the humble means of grace—the Gospel in the Word of God and the sacraments. Open our eyes to see the saving power of God that lies hidden beneath the humble forms of preaching, the washing of Holy Baptism, and our partaking of the Lord’s Supper.

C: Increase our desire to receive these precious gifts, so that we may continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

P: In the midst of our joy, we grieve for the many people in our world who do not know that Jesus has come to bring them forgiveness and healing. As the first followers of Jesus spread abroad the good news of the birth of the Savior born for all the world, may we also make use of the unique opportunities that our time presents to tell others of what we have seen and heard concerning the Savior.

C: Grant that the good news of peace with God through Jesus may comfort all people. Amen.

Lord’s Prayer

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done
on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.**

The Sacrament

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them up to the Lord

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

C: It is good and right so to do.

P: It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lived among us as a human being and revealed his glory as your only Son, full of grace and truth. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

Holy, Holy, Holy *Tune of CW 413*



1 Sing, "Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of hosts on high,
2 Ho - san - na in the high - est! How blest is Christ our King,



your ev - er - last - ing glo - ry fills earth and sea and sky."
who died as our Re - deem - er, e - ter - nal life to bring!



Our voic - es cry, "Ho - san - na!" Lord, hear our hum - ble plea:
How blest are you, Lord Je - sus, now com - ing in God's name!



in mer - cy, come and save us; in love, come set us free.
"Ho - san - na in the high - est!" our grate - ful hearts pro - claim.

Words of Institution

P: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: Amen.

Lamb of God *Tune of CW 641*

1 O Lamb of God, once lift - ed high up - on a
2 O Lamb of God, your sac - ri - fice has can - celled
cross to bleed and die, in per - fect love
sin, has paid its price; your per - fect love
you took our place— be - stow on us your sav - ing grace.
will nev - er cease— have mer - cy, Lord, and grant us peace.

Distribution

Distribution Hymn: "Draw Near and Take" CW 668

1 Draw near and take the body of the Lord,
and drink the holy blood for you outpoured.
Saved by his body and his holy blood,
with souls refreshed we give our thanks to God.

2 Christ our Redeemer, God's eternal Son,
has by his cross and blood the vict'ry won.
He gave his life for greatest and for least,
himself the off'ring and himself the priest.

3 Let us approach with faithful hearts sincere
and take the pledges of salvation here.
Christ, who in this life all the saints defends,
gives all believers life that never ends.

4 With heav'nly bread he makes the hungry whole,
gives living waters to the thirsting soul.
Lord of the nations, to whom all must bow,
in this great feast of love be with us now.

Distribution Hymn: The Gifts Christ Freely Gives CW 688

1 The gifts Christ freely gives he gives to you and me
to be his Church, his bride, his chosen, saved and free!
Saints blest with these rich gifts are children who proclaim
that they were won by Christ and cling to his strong name.

2 The gifts flow from the font where he calls us his own;
new life he gives that makes us his and his alone.
Here he forgives our sins with water and his Word;
the triune God himself gives pow'r to call him Lord.

3 The gifts of grace and peace from absolution flow;
the pastor's words are Christ's for us to trust and know.
Forgiveness that we need is granted to us there;
the Lord of mercy sends us forth in his blest care.

4 The gifts are there each day the holy Word is read;
God's children listen, hear, receive, and they are fed.
Christ fills them with himself, blest words that give them life,
restoring and refreshing them for this world's strife.

5 The gifts are in the feast, gifts far more than we see;
beneath the bread and wine is food from Calvary.
The body and the blood remove our ev'ry sin;
we leave his presence in his peace, renewed again.

Thanksgiving

P: O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.

C: And his mercy endures forever.

P: Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,

C: we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

P: We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us with this holy supper. We pray that through it you will strengthen our faith in you and increase our love for one another. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Benediction

P: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.

C: Amen

Closing Hymn: The Gifts Christ Freely Gives CW 688

6 All glory to the One who lavishes such love;

the triune God in love assures our life above.

His means of grace for us are gifts he loves to give;

all thanks and praise for his great love by which we live!

* * * * *

Communion Registration *Communicant members of St. Matthew’s are reminded to register for Holy Communion on the “Care Card” found in the pews. If you are visiting St. Matthew’s today, we request that you please speak with the Pastor before communing. Questions and answers which will assist you in preparing for partaking of the Lord’s Supper are found beginning on page 295 in the hymnal.*

Members, Visitors & Guests—Welcome to St. Matthew’s!

May the epiphanies we see in the Jordan River today, on our own baptismal day, and as we look to the Last Day inspire us to push on when our own Quitter’s Day comes.

If you are visiting our service, please sign a “care card” in the church pew or our guest book and come back to visit again soon.

Attendance Last Sunday—170 (110, 60) Bible Class - 57

Offering Last Week—\$10,183.50 Sunday School – 12

(Meeting our 2025 Ministry Plan requires weekly offerings of \$15,324.00.)

“I was cast on you from the womb.

From the belly of my mother you have been my God”

Psalm 22:10

Announcements:

- 1. **Altar Flowers** The flowers on the altar have been given by George and Jan Ehlers in celebration of their 50th wedding anniversary. God’s blessings and congratulations!

2. **Sunday Morning Bible Class** – Sunday morning Bible class resumes today between services in the Fellowship area. We will continue studying the book of Malachi.
3. **The Women’s Bible Study** The Women’s Bible Study has started the New Year with a new mini study of Joseph, the son of Jacob. We just studied the story with his special coat and his dreams. The women meet in the library at 9:30 a.m. All women are welcome to attend!
4. **Sunday School** Sunday School will begin at 9:15 a.m. We will meet in the library for opening devotion. The children may be picked up in their classrooms at 10:15 am.
5. **Annual/Open Forum Meeting** We will have an Annual/Open Forum Meeting on Sunday, January 19 in between services. We will review the past year and preview what lies ahead for us. Please plan to attend.
6. **Kindergarten Parents’ Meeting for the 2025-2026 school year** will be held on Wednesday, January 15 at 6:30 in the kindergarten classroom. Parents of children turning 5 years old by Sept. 1st are invited to attend to receive information about kindergarten for the coming school year. If you know of someone who might be interested in receiving information about our school. please let us know.
7. **Wanted** Newspaper of any kind for a STEM lab that the school children will be doing. Newspapers are needed by Monday, January 20th. If you have newspapers to drop off, please drop them off in at the church/school office. Thank you!
8. **Cereal Boxes Needed** Cereal boxes are also needed for a project for the school children, 150 or more if we can swing it. If your family is big into cereal, could you save your boxes for Miss Moeller? Thank you in advance!
9. **Evangelism/Outreach Meeting** will be held on Tuesday, January 14 at 6:30 p.m. in the library. If you would like to help plan activities for the coming year, we would love to have you join us!
10. **The Annual Boys Mustang Invitational Tournament** will be a 6 team tournament held only on Saturday, January 25th. Games will start at 9:00 a.m. with the last game beginning about 5:30

p.m. If you are interested and available to volunteer some hours to help us out, please sign up on the lower bulletin board or talk to Mrs. Fleming. Help is needed for concessions, tickets, and score table and high school students needing volunteer hours are encouraged to sign up.

11. **2025 Offering Envelopes** Your 2025 offering envelopes are located in the bump out area at the end of the ramp. If you have not picked your envelopes up, please do so soon. Thank you!
12. **Forward in Christ 2025** If you'd like to receive a copy of Forward in Christ each month, please fill out the envelope located on the bulletin board in the lower hallway and return with payment to the church office. A check can be made out to St. Matthew's Lutheran Church. The cost of the magazine is **\$12.00** for the year. **Checks are due by Sunday, January 12, 2025.**
13. **2024 Flower Chart** If you would like to supply altar flowers for a Sunday in 2025, please sign up on the bulletin board in the lower hallway. Thank you!
14. **The Ladies Guild** would like to send a gift card to support all St. Matthew's members who are away at college or in the military. Please email their address to Theresa Biele at tbiele28@yahoo.com or call her at 608-751-1050. You could also contact Deb Lenser at 608-728-3120.

Assisting with Worship

Organist:

Tom May

Ushers:

8:00 a.m. – George Ehlers, Bob Williams, Mike Fox, Nico Caminata

10:30 a.m. – Tom May, Ben May, Eddie May

Next Week Ushers:

8:00 a.m. – Gerald Wellnitz, Evan Burnside, Alex Schmidt

10:30 a.m. – Steve Sage, David Johnson

CODS:

Sunday, January 12, 8:00 a.m. – Brian Hartwig

Sunday, January 12, 10:30 a.m. – Briton Peterson

Thursday, January 16, 6:30 p.m. – Tim Stirmel

Next Week CODS:

Sunday, January 19, 8:00 a.m. – Phil Fry
Sunday, January 19, 10:30 a.m. – Trevor Sanchez
Thursday, January 23, 6:30 p.m. – George Ehlers

Greeters

Sunday, January 12, 8:00 a.m. – Bev Boughton
Sunday, January 12, 10:30 a.m. – John & Joanne May

Next Week Greeters

Sunday, January 19, 8:00 a.m. – Dale & Lynn Beutin
Sunday, January 19, 10:30 a.m. – Karin Delong-Eichman

Church Cleaning:

January 18, 2025 – Richard Lehmann & Mike Lenser families
January 25, 2025 – David Newlin & Fred Shadoski families

This Week at St. Matthew's

Sunday

Worship with Communion 8:00 & 10:30 a.m.
Sunday School/Adult Bible Class 9:15 a.m.

Monday

Principal's Conference (Gr. 7 & 8 dismissed at 11:15 a.m.)

Tuesday

Fellowship/Outreach Meeting 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday

Women's Bible Study 9:30 a.m.

Sr. Choir 5:45 -6:45 p.m.

Kindergarten Parents Meeting for 2025-2026 school year in the
Kindergarten classroom at 6:30 p.m.

Thursday

Worship with Communion 6:30 p.m.

Sunday

Worship 8:00 & 10:30 a.m.

Sunday School 9:15 a.m.

Annual Meeting / Open Forum Meeting 9:15 a.m.

2024 In Review

The following information was presented by our treasurer at Wednesday evening's church council meeting:

	<u>Needed</u>	<u>Received</u>	<u>Difference</u>
General Fund	\$766,206.00	\$745,446.00	(\$20,760.00)
Missions	\$ 56,600.00	\$ 56,600.00	0
Lakeside LHS	<u>\$ 48,300.00</u>	<u>\$ 48,300.00</u>	<u>0</u>
	\$871,106.00	\$850,346.00	(\$20,760.00)

As the information above indicates, St. Matthews was richly blessed by our gracious God in the past year. Our offerings for the year compare favorably with our offerings last year. Current year offerings total \$850,346.00; at the same point last year our offerings totaled \$836,469.00. That means our offerings for 2024 finished the year \$13,877.00 ahead of last year's offerings. For these wonderful blessings we thank our gracious God whose boundless love in Christ has made the hearts and hands of his people here at St. Matthews so generous to support his work in this world.

In addition to these General Fund offerings, \$5,121.20 was collected for the Obadiah Lutheran Synod and \$3,780.00 was received to assist victims of Hurricanes Milton and Helene.

Please remember that a ministry plan for 2025 has been adopted by the voters. The plan calls for total income of \$964,854.00. Of that amount approximately \$146,000.00 is projected to come from school tuition while the balance, just over \$800,000.00 is projected to come from member offerings. Highlights of the plan include:

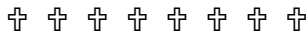
- The new ministry plan does not require anything for monthly payments for the mortgage on our school loan. That's because although we started this year still owing just under \$212,000.00 on the mortgage, God in his grace through the generous gifts of his people allowed us to completely pay off the mortgage. "Now thank we all our God!"
- The new ministry plan calls for 5% increases in wages for called and non-called workers.
- There are upgrades to the technology in both church and school built into the new plan.

- The new plan calls for a \$500.00 per student increase in tuition for new school year. The voters made it clear that we have ample tuition assistance on hand for families for whom the increase may present a hardship.

- The plan for 2025 calls for increases for our costs for gas, electricity, water, trash collection, and cleaning supplies.

- The plan will require member offerings to increase by approximately 4% over the current year.

It was noted that there are no planned capital improvements built into the ministry plan for next year. In the current year we have replaced windows in the church narthex and entry, the roof over our school, several furnaces and an air conditioner in our facility. Total cost of these items was about \$217,000.00. Again, because God is gracious and his people here at St. Matthew's are generous, all of these improvements were completed with needing to borrow money or take out new loans. "Now thank we all our God!"



*We will have an Annual/Open Forum Meeting on
Sunday, January 19 in between services.*

*We will review the past year and preview what lies ahead for us.
Please plan to attend.*

