

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

(Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod)
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*Worship for the 2nd Last Sunday of the Church Year
November 16 & 19, 2023*

Opening Hymn: Brief Life Is Here Our Portion TLH 448

1 Brief life is here our portion;
Brief sorrow, short-lived care.

The life that knows no ending,
The tearless life, is there.

O happy retribution:

Short toil, eternal rest;
For mortals and for sinners
A mansion with the blest!

2 And now we fight the battle,
But then shall wear the crown
Of full and everlasting
And passionless renown;
And now we watch and struggle,
And now we live in hope,
And Zion in her anguish
With Babylon must cope.

3 But He whom now we trust in
Shall then be seen and known;
And they that know and see Him
Shall have Him for their own.
And there is David's fountain
And life in fullest glow;
And there the light is golden,
And milk and honey flow.

4 The morning shall awaken,
And shadows shall decay,
And each true-hearted servant
Shall shine as doth the day.
There God, our King and Portion,
In fullness of His grace
Shall we behold forever,
And worship face to face.

Invocation

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

C: Amen.

Confession of Sins

P: We have come into the presence of God, who created us to love and serve him as his dear children.

C: **But we have disobeyed him and deserve only his wrath and punishment.**

P: Therefore, let us confess our sins to him and plead for his mercy.

C: **Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against you and do not deserve to be called your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray: Have mercy on me according to your unfailing love. Cleanse me from my sin and take away my guilt.**

P: God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, he has removed your guilt forever. You are his dear child. May God give you strength to live according to his will.

C: Amen.

Song of Praise

♪ Redeemed, restored, forgiven
Through Jesus' precious blood,
Heirs of His home in heaven
Oh, praise our pard'ning God!
Praise Him in tuneful measures
Who gave His Son to die;
Praise Him whose sev'nfold treasures
Enrich and sanctify.

P: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Prayer of the Day

P: Eternal God, merciful Father, you have appointed your Son as judge of the living and the dead. Enable us to wait for the day of his return with our eyes fixed on the kingdom prepared for your own from the foundation of the world; 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: Isaiah 25:6-9

⁶On this mountain

the LORD of Armies will prepare for all peoples

a banquet of rich food,

a banquet of aged wines,

with the best cuts of meat,

and with the finest wines.

⁷On this mountain

he will destroy the shroud

that covers all peoples,

the burial cloth

stretched over all nations.

⁸He has swallowed up death forever!

The LORD God will wipe away the tears from every face.

He will take away the shame of his people throughout the earth.

For the LORD has spoken.

⁹On that day it will be said,

“Look, here is our God!

We waited for him, and he saved us!

This is the LORD!

We waited for him.

Let us be glad

and rejoice in his salvation!

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Verse of the Day

♪ Now keep us, holy Savior,
In Your true love and fear,
And grant us by Your favor
The grace to persevere
Till, in Your new creation,
Our earthly troubles o'er,
Heirs of Your free salvation,
We praise You evermore.

Gospel: Matthew 24:1-14

As Jesus left the temple and was walking away, his disciples came up to him to call his attention to the temple buildings. ²Then he replied to them, "Do you see all of these things? Amen I tell you: Not one stone here will be left on another that will not be thrown down."

³While he was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately and said, "Tell us, when will these things happen? And what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the world?"

⁴Jesus answered them, "Watch out that no one deceives you. ⁵Because many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and they will deceive many people. ⁶You will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, because all these things must happen; but that is not yet the end. ⁷Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. ⁸But all these things are only the beginning of birth pains. ⁹Then they will hand you over to be persecuted, and they will put you to death. You will be hated by all nations because of my name. ¹⁰Then many will fall away from faith. They will betray each other and hate each other. ¹¹Many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. ¹²Because lawlessness will increase, the love of many will grow cold. ¹³But whoever endures to the end will be saved. ¹⁴This gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

P: This is the Gospel of our Lord.

C: Praise be to you, O Christ!

Hymn: Jerusalem the Golden CW 889

- 1 Jerusalem the golden, with milk and honey blest—
the sight of it refreshes the weary and oppressed.
I know not, oh, I know not what joys await us there,
what radiancy of glory, what bliss beyond compare:
to sing the hymn unending with all the martyr throng,
midst the halls of Zion resounding full with song.
- 2 O sweet and blessed country, the home of God's elect!
O sweet and blessed country that eager hearts expect,
where they who with their leader have conquered in the fight
forever and forever are clad in robes of white:
in mercy, Jesus, bring us to that dear land of rest
where sings the host of heaven your glorious name to bless.
- 3 The Christ is ever with them, the daylight is serene;
the pastures of the blessed are ever rich and green.
There is the throne of David, and there, from care released,
the shout of them that triumph, the song of them that feast.
To God enthroned in glory the Church's voices blend,
the Lamb forever blessed, the Light that knows no end.

Sermon: Revelation 7:9-17

⁹After these things I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people, and language, standing in front of the throne and of the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and with palm branches in their hands. ¹⁰They called out with a loud voice and said:

Salvation comes from our God, who sits on the throne, and from the Lamb.

¹¹All the angels stood around the throne, the elders, and the four living creatures. They fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God, ¹²saying:

Amen. Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and might belong to our God forever and ever.
Amen.

¹³One of the elders spoke to me and said, "These people dressed in white robes, who are they and where did they come from?"

¹⁴And I answered him, "Sir, you know."

And he said to me:

These are the ones who are coming out of the great tribulation.

They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

¹⁵Because of this they are in front of the throne of God, and they serve him day and night in his temple.

He who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them.

¹⁶They will never be hungry or thirsty ever again.

The sun will never beat upon them, nor will any scorching heat,

¹⁷for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd.

He will lead them to springs of living water.

And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

Behold the Host Arrayed In White

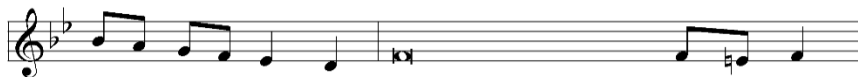
I. Learn their story

II. Share their glory

The Te Deum: (CW, p.48)



C: We praise you, O God, we acclaim you as Lord; all creation worships you,



Fa-ther ev - er - last - ing. To you all angels, all the pow'rs of heav'n,




cherubim and seraphim, sing in end-less praise: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of



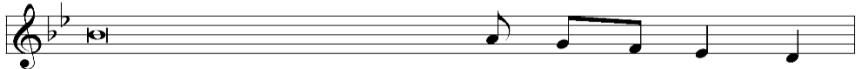
heav'n - ly hosts, heaven and earth are full of your glo - ry.




The glorious company of apostles praise you. The noble fellowship of



proph-ets praise you. The white-robed army of martyrs praise you.




Throughout the world the ho - ly Church ac - claims you:



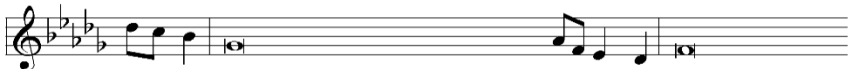
Father of majesty unbounded, your glorious, true, and on - ly Son,



and the Holy Spirit, ad - vo - cate and guide. You, Christ, are the King of



glo - ry, the eternal Son of the Fa - ther. When you became man to



set us free, you humbled yourself to be born of a vir-gin. You overcame the



sting of death and opened the kingdom of heaven to all be-liev - ers.



You sit at the right hand of God in the glory of the Fa - ther.



We believe that you will come to be our judge.



Come then, Lord, and help your peo - ple, bought with the price of



your own blood, and bring us with your saints to glory ev - er - last - ing.

Offering

Prayer of the Church

P: Lord Jesus Christ, eternal Son of the Father and our flesh and blood brother, how great is your love for us! You carried your cross to Calvary to suffer and die for us. You turned God's wrath away from us forever. You were condemned so we could be acquitted. You did not permit pain, suffering, or temptation to turn you away from the cross.

C: Give us that same single-minded dedication and unshakable commitment as we daily take up our cross and follow you.

P: As we journey through life, keep us from being entangled by sin. Remove all obstacles and stumbling blocks, and keep us from falling or going astray. Help us run with perseverance the race you have marked out for us. When that way involves suffering, pain, or loss, help us to see your loving discipline at work to draw us closer to you.

C: Strengthen our faith by the Gospel of your forgiveness as it comes to us in your holy Word and Sacraments. Through these means of grace, make us willing and able to carry the crosses that come into our lives, as you carried your cross for us.

P: Hold before us the example of those who have gone before us, bearing the cross for you. As you led them, lead us. As you strengthened them, strengthen us.

C: Keep our eyes fixed on you, for then we will certainly arrive safely at the heavenly home you have prepared for us.

P: Hear us for your mercy's sake and hear us as we pray as you taught us:

C: 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.

- 1 Behold a host, arrayed in white,
like thousand snow-clad mountains bright!
With palms they stand; who is this band
before the throne of light?
These are the saints of glorious fame,
who from the great affliction came
and in the flood of Jesus' blood
are cleansed from guilt and blame.
Now gathered in the holy place,
their voices they in worship raise;
their anthems rise where God resides,
mid angels' songs of praise.
- 2 Despised and scorned, they sojourned here;
but now, how glorious they appear!
Those martyrs stand, a priestly band,
God's throne forever near.
So oft in troubled days gone by,
in anguish they would weep and sigh;
at home above the God of love
fore'er their tears shall dry.
They now enjoy the Sabbath rest,
the heav'nly banquet of the blest;
the Lamb, their Lord, at festive board
himself is host and guest.
- 3 O blessèd saints in bright array,
now safely home in endless day,
extol the Lord, who with his Word
sustained you on the way.
The steep and narrow path you trod;
you toiled and sowed the Word abroad;
rejoice and bring your fruits and sing
before the throne of God.
Swing high your palms, lift up your song,
yes, make it myriad voices strong!
Let heaven ring—to Christ the King
all praise and thanks belong!

Prayer

P: Almighty God, we thank you for teaching us the things you want us to believe and do. Help us by your Holy Spirit to keep your Word in pure hearts that we may be strengthened in faith, guided in holiness, and comforted in life and in death, through 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: There Is a Higher Throne *CW 885*

1 There is a higher throne
than all this world has known,
where faithful ones from ev'ry tongue will one day come.
Before the Son we'll stand,
made faultless through the Lamb;
believing hearts find promised grace;
salvation comes. (Refrain)

Ref Hear heaven's voices sing;
their thund'rous anthem rings
through em'rald courts and sapphire skies;
their praises rise.
All glory, wisdom, pow'r,
strength, thanks, and honor are
to God our King who reigns on high forevermore.

2 And there we'll find our home,
our life before the throne;
we'll honor him in perfect song where we belong.
He'll wipe each tear-stained eye
as thirst and hunger die;
the Lamb becomes our Shepherd-King;
we'll reign with him. (Refrain)

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

Let us see the glory and learn the story of the host dressed in white before God’s throne in heaven so that at last we may join them.

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 – 252 (42/210) Open Forum Meeting – 60

Offering Last Week – \$15,129.50 Sunday School – 18

Women’s Bible Class – 15

“Finish The Work” Contributions to Date – \$28,731.75

(Meeting our 2023 Ministry Plan requires weekly offerings of \$14,735.00.)

“Hasten, O God, to save me; O LORD, come quickly to help me”

Psalm 70:1.

Announcements:

1. **The Thanksgiving arrangement** on the altar is given to the glory of God by the Jack and Diane Schroeder family.
2. **Thursday Service** Please keep in mind that our final Thursday evening service for 2023 is this week’s service on Thursday, November 16. There will be no Thursday evening service on Thanksgiving Day nor will there be Thursday evening services during the month of December. Please keep in mind, however, our Thanksgiving Eve and Thanksgiving Day services and our Wednesday evening Advent services!
3. **Thanksgiving Services** Thanksgiving is right around the corner! There will be two opportunities for members of St. Matthew’s to gather in God’s house to give thanks to the Lord and Giver of all. We have a Thanksgiving Eve Service scheduled for 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, November 22; and a Thanksgiving Day Service which will begin at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, November 23. The students of St. Matthew’s school will sing in the Thanksgiving Eve Service making for a very full house in that service, but please do not forget the Thanksgiving Day Service if Wednesday evening doesn’t work for you.
4. **St. Matthew’s Annual Pie Night** Come join us Wednesday, November 23rd in the Fellowship Hall following the Thanksgiving Eve church service for a piece of your favorite pie and a time of Christian fellowship with your St. Matthew’s family.

5. **Thank you to all** who participated in the extended Scrip program. Be sure to check out the newly stocked ‘store’ after first service and before second service if you forgot to order something.
6. **A special thank-you** to those who painted the hallway by the church and school office. Your work is greatly appreciated! It looks great!
7. **Wednesday Evening Confirmation Class** Wednesday evening confirmation class will be dismissed at 6:00 this week and throughout the Advent season. The early dismissal will allow students to attend the Thanksgiving Eve service and our Wednesday evening Advent services.
8. **Voters’ Meeting** From the Voters’ meeting last Sunday, the following men were elected for council positions. Karl Kroening was elected to serve as Vice President of our congregation, Briton Peterson was elected to serve as our Financial Secretary, and Kyle Stade was elected to serve as our Fellowship/Outreach chairman. We thank Doug McIlvain, Tom Timmermann, and Steve Sage, who have completed their terms in office, for their faithful service.
9. **Call Meeting** A Call meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday, November 29 after the 6:30 p.m. Advent Service. We will be calling a 7th and 8th grade teacher and principal and a 5th and 6th grade teacher and Athletic Director. May God bless our endeavors.
10. **Call** Please keep Victoria Schewe – Before & After Care Coordinator/ Kindergarten in your prayers as she deliberate her Call to St. Matthews.
11. **New Hymnals** Recently, more new hymnals were purchased for the church. A special thank-you to the 5th and 6th graders for breaking in the new hymnals (bindings) and placing them in the pews for congregational use.
12. **Sunday Morning Bible Class** – We have begun a study of the Minor Prophets in Bible Class. We are currently studying the book of the prophet Hosea. Bible class meets at 9:15 a.m. in the Fellowship area downstairs. You are invited to join us.

13. **Woman's Bible Class** – Women's Bible Class is held Wednesday mornings at 9:30 a.m. This week we will do a lesson summary of topics we have been studying. If you have any questions, please contact Deb Lenser at 608-728-3120.
14. **Seedlings** St. Matthew's is looking to start a new group for 0-3 year olds and parents. Join us for an informational meeting on Tuesday, November 21st at 8:00 a.m. in the library to discuss our Seedlings group. If you have any questions, please reach out to Claire Hinz at 608-774-5353 or Liz Sanchez at 847-346-2066.
15. **Jolly Jingle Parade We Need You! (Janesville Christmas Parade – December 2, 2023)** We want to spread the word to the community about the wonderful blessings that we have here at St. Matthew's Lutheran Church and School. Can you spare some time to help decorate a float? Would you like to come and walk in the Christmas light parade and hand out fliers and candy? People of all ages are welcome to come and help, yes, even the children! If you are interested in helping spread the true meaning of Christmas, please sign up in the narthex or contact Liz Sanchez at (847)-346-2066. **Friday, December 1 from 3:00-5:00 p.m. and Saturday, December 2 from 2:00 -5:00 p.m. are scheduled work dates.** Float preparation will take place at St. Matthews. The parade starts at 6:00 p.m. Lineup downtown will start at 5:00 p.m.
16. **Extra Candy** If you have leftover candy from trick or treating and would like to get rid of it, please bring it to the church office and we will use it for the Jolly Jingle Parade on Saturday, December 2. Thank you!
17. **Advent by Candlelight** Evening Guild will be holding an Advent by Candlelight for all women of the congregation, and their female family members, friends, and neighbors, on December 3rd, Sunday, at 2:00 p.m. in the fellowship hall. Please join us for this wonderful afternoon of the Word, music, and fellowship to help you prepare your hearts for the Advent season before the holidays get into full swing! Sign up now for this important event on the bulletin board. The theme this year is "The King Shall Come".

18. **Christmas for Kids!** Please consider volunteering for Christmas for Kids on Saturday, December 9, 2023 (8:45-11:45 a.m.). In order to make this event successful we need your help! If you are interested in teaching, helping, or setting up please contact Cathy Sonntag or Ashley Phillips or sign up on the board in the Narthex.
19. **Christmas for Kids Registration has begun. Early registration is needed for planning.** Please sign your child (age 4 through 6th grade) up by *Sunday, December 3*. Signup sheets are located in the narthex (next to the mailboxes) and you can also signup ONLINE at www.stmatthewsjanesville.org by clicking the link Event and following the directions. Please take extras (to give to neighbors & friends). Since this program is an outreach event, we strongly encourage invitation of your child's friends and neighbors. Enrollment can also be done by calling the church at 608-752-1304.
20. **Attention Bakers of St. Matthews!** We will need 20 **dozen** unfrosted cutout sugar cookies for the children to decorate during our Christmas for Kids program. If you would like to donate some cookies, please sign up on the bulletin board in the lower hallway. Thank You!
21. **Snack Donations Needed for Christmas for Kids** We are in need of various snack items for Christmas for Kids. If you are able to contribute, please sign up on the bulletin board in the lower hallway. Thank you!
22. **Martin Luther College has a new devotion book for you!** This Advent we invite you to explore the mysteries surrounding Christ's birth in *The Mysteries of Christmas: Many Millennia, Many Mysteries, One Messiah*. The coming of Jesus has always been shrouded in mystery. In his first coming, as a baby in Bethlehem, thousands of years of mysterious promises were resolved and realized—and not always in ways God's people expected. His second coming—at the End of All Things—is also shrouded in mystery. No one even knows the day or hour he'll reappear. Join us this Advent for 25 meditations that look back on the mysteries of the Messiah's first coming and look ahead to the mysteries of his second coming. **There is a free copy on the counter in the Narthex.**

Assisting with Worship

Organists:

Kathi Hendee

Ushers:

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

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

Next Week Ushers:

8:00 a.m. – Gerald Wellnitz, Evan Burnside, Tom Timmermann,
Alex Schmitt

10:30 a.m. – Tim Stirmel, Connor Stirmel

CODS:

Thursday, November 16, 6:30 p.m. – Marc Augsburger

Sunday, November 19, 8:00 a.m. – Jim Daley

Sunday, November 19, 10:30 a.m. – Phil Fry

Next Week CODS:

Thanksgiving Eve, November 22, 6:30 p.m. – George Ehlers

Thanksgiving Day, November 23, 9:00 a.m. – Trevor Sanchez

Sunday, November 26, 8:00 a.m. – Jim Daley

Sunday, November 26, 10:30 a.m. – Tim Stirmel

Greeters

8:00 a.m. – Bev Boughton

10:30 a.m. – John & Joanne May

Next Week Greeters:

8:00 a.m. – George & Jan Ehlers

10:30 a.m. – Jean Ruppier

Church Cleaning:

November 25, 2023 – Richard Stout & Tom Truppe families

December 2, 2023 – Kathy Tanko & Tom Timmermann families

This Week at St. Matthew's

Sunday

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

SS/Bible Class 9:15 a.m.

Gr. 5-8 Sing at St. Johns,
Milton 9:00 a.m.

Pick Up Extended Scrip Orders

Tuesday

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

Wednesday

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

Confirmation Class 5:00-6:00 p.m.

Wednesday (continued)

Thanksgiving Eve Service 6:30 p.m.

Pie Social 7:30 p.m.

Thursday

Thanksgiving Day Service 9:00 a.m.

No School

Friday

No School

Sunday

Worship with Communion

8:00 & 10:30 a.m.

SS/Bible Class 9:15 a.m.

Jesus Cares Ministry

Our First "Worship at the Cross" service for people with an Intellectual Disability (including Down Syndrome, Autism and Dementia), is scheduled for Monday, November 20, 2023 at 6:30 PM at Peace Lutheran Church, 1550 S. Osborne Ave., Janesville, WI. A treat selection will follow worship.

We will offer a simple, visual, enjoyable worship service that worshipers can participate in. This may be the only worship service of its kind in Rock County.

Additional worship services will follow on the 3rd Monday of the month (e.g. December 18, 2023 and January 15, 2024) at 6:30 PM. At the January Worship service, we will decide if the current Worship day and time is working well, or if we would like to change it to a better day and time each month.

Please pass this information on to anyone you think might be interested. For more information, contact Peace Lutheran Church at 608-752-0258 or peacetoyou33@gmail.com



Upcoming Worship Services

St. Matthew's Thanksgiving Services

Wednesday, November 22 at 6:30 p.m.

(Preschool – 8th Grade & Jr. Choir Sing)

Thursday, November 23 at 9:00 a.m.

Advent Mid-Week Services

November 29, 6:30 p.m. (K-2 Sings)

December 6, 6:30 p.m. (Gr. 5-8 Sings)

December 13, 6:30 p.m. (Gr. 3 & 4 Sings)

St. Matthew's Christmas Services

Sunday, December 17, 10:30

(Sunday School Christmas Service – Sr. Choir Sings)

Friday, December 22, 6:30 p.m.

(Christian Day School Service in The Gym)

Sunday, December 24, 9:00 a.m.

Sunday, December 24, 6:30 p.m.

(Candlelight Service – Sr. Choir Sings)

Monday, December 25, 9:00 a.m.

(Christmas Day Service with Orchestra)

Sunday, December 31, 9:00 a.m.

(No New Year's Eve Service)



WORSHIP SERVICES