



THE VOICE

THE NEWSLETTER OF ST. MATTHEW LUTHERAN CHURCH, AVON, CT January 2011

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St. Matthew Lutheran Church
224 Lovely Street
Avon, CT 06001-4018
(860) 673-3301
Website: www.stmatthewavon.org
Sunday Worship 8:30 and 11:00 a.m.

DATES TO REMEMBER:

January 23 - 12:00 Annual
Congregational Meeting
January 29 - Chili Cook-off

LOOKING AHEAD:

February 6 - Cookie Packing for
College Students and Military

A LETTER FROM PASTOR

Dietrich Bonhoeffer is a Lutheran icon. The young German Pastor was imprisoned in 1943 and martyred by the Nazis in 1945. His writings are deep yet accessible, and whenever I contemplate gratitude, difficulties or new beginnings, my thoughts turn to him. Many of you have told me that you have come to cherish his writings too. This excerpt is from a letter he wrote from prison, to his parents, as 1943 was ending. I offer it humbly as an insight into the power and possibility of faith, and the love of our God...

Dear Parents,

Christmas is over. It brought me a few quiet, peaceful hours, and it revived a good many past memories...I lit candles that you sent me, read the Christmas story and hummed a few carols to myself, and in doing so, I thought of you all and hoped that, you might be able to enjoy an hour or two of peace...

I got interesting books and Christmas candies from the family, do thank them very much. I can only say that in these hard times I need you all more than ever, and that I cannot imagine the last months of my imprisonment at all without you.

The New Year, too, will bring a great deal of anxiety, though I think we may on this New Year's Eve sing with greater confidence than ever that verse from the old hymn:

Shut fast the door of woe,

In every place let flow

The streams of joy and peace,

That bloodshed now may cease.

I know no greater prayer or wish than that. Thank you for everything that you have done for me in the past year.

With all my heart, Your Dietrich.

I know of no greater prayer or wish than that either.

Happy New Year!

Pastor William Carter

Evening Readers

Our next meeting is on Tuesday, January 18th at 7pm in the Gathering Space. We will be discussing *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* by C.S. Lewis.

In February, we will meet on Tuesday, the 15th, at 7pm in the Gathering Space and we will discuss *Sally Hemings: A Novel* by Barbara Chase-Riboud.

In March, we will meet on Tuesday, the 15th at 7pm in the Gathering Space and we will discuss *Just Kids* by Patti Smith.



Noon Readers

We will meet on Monday, January 10th at Joan Hartley's, 5 Waterford Place, Avon. The book for discussion is *Double Black* by Wendi Clinch. Bring a sandwich and join us!

Flowers in Church

If you wish to donate flowers for Sunday Worship during 2011, please sign-up on the Flower Chart in the Narthex. Cost is \$30.00. Make checks payable to St. Matthew (flowers in memo line) and leave the check in the office when you sign up.

College Addresses Wanted!

If your son or daughter is away at college, please let the office know his/her address (even if it's the same as last year) so we may send the VOICE each month and cookies in February as noted on the next page. Leave a note on Diane's desk, call 860-673-3301 or send her an email at (dfirn123@sbcglobal.net).

Electronic Giving

To assist everyone in making the consistent offerings that are so important to St. Matthew, we ask you to consider making automatic, electronic donations. Please contact Diane in the church office (860-673-3301 or at dfirn123@sbcglobal.net) or Pat LaPierre (lapierrep@earthlink.net) with any questions or to sign-up.

Go Green and Receive The VOICE by Email Each Month!



Send Diane (dfirn123@sbcglobal.net) your email address and she will add you to the list to receive The VOICE each month in your email box. If you prefer, you can read The VOICE on St. Matthew's web site: www.stmatthewavon.org. Either way, let Diane know and she will remove your name from the paper VOICE mailing to save on postage.

Thrivent Financial Choice Dollars

Last year Thrivent Financial provided over \$100 Million to help congregations, communities and no profit organizations. Members who own Thrivent Financial products are able to choose where some of the Thrivent Financial's charitable outreach funds go by directing 'Choice Dollars'. Eligible members are designated 'Choice Dollars' which can be directed to Lutheran organizations you prefer nationwide including our congregation, St. Matthew Lutheran Church. Sign up is easy. Go to the Thrivent.com website, login and register to participate in 'Choice Dollars'. Once registered, you can direct the 'Choice Dollars' that have been designated to you. If you select St. Matthew Lutheran Church, you can allocate dollars on an annual basis, which must be done before March 31st each year for the prior year, or set-up a recurring direction where the funds are automatically directed to St. Matthew when the balance reaches \$10 or more. Don't let these Thrivent Financial dollars go unused. Visit the website at your next opportunity and designate an organization to receive your funds or contact Thrivent by phone at 800-847-4836.

Cookie Bake and Care Packages for St. Matthew College Students & Service Members



It's that time of the year when hungry students and service members are in need of support from home. We will assemble care packages on Sunday, February 6th following the 11:00 a.m. worship. Watch for a poster in the Gathering Space where you can sign-up to provide cookies, treats or to help pack boxes for mailing on February 6th. Parents, please verify that the office has the latest address for your student and/or service member. Any questions, contact Lisa Hugel 860-651-1227.

Itsy Bitsy Spider Report

The other critters and I who live at St. Matthew were checking out the special Christmas treats around the building, and some looked pretty tasty. BUT, I am waiting for the annual Chili Cook-Off on Saturday, January 29th. It's the 4th competition, and we are waiting to see if Wolf Mielert will defend his title as best chili maker...and then there are the competitions for the best cornbread and best dessert.

Watch for the sign-up sheets in January, and plan to come! I will be hoping for cornbread crumbs and maybe some Rice Krispie treats!

Spidey

MOUSE

Woooooooooooooooooooooooooooo! Christmas was WONDERFUL in my house. I hope you had a similar time with family and friends, and with your faith...from the Sanctus Singers' Cantata to the Sunday School Pageant, to Grace Notes and Leading Tones singing on Christmas Eve at the early service...to the "German Shepherd" again and candles and carols and tears in eyes and a proliferation of embraces and joyful reunions...young and old and everyone in between (of course, everyone is in between) it was lovely, thanks to everyone who came...your presence MADE Christmas and our celebration of the birth of the Savior is now a memory; a memory of how we remember the story of the birth of Christ...Wow, it was so wonderful...Pastor Hille enjoyed his first Christmas with us and laughs at all the fun we have together at St. Matthew. We are so glad he's here, I know loads of folks worked to get the parsonage spiffy...I spied a lot of folks working with Jim O'Herron...he brought his wonderful neighbor, Jim Long to help, and I also saw Tom Leonard, Mark McPherson, Ed Gasser, Dave Betsch and Jim Holst were "frequent fliers" and I also noticed Bob Hoffman, Tom and Barb Mitchell, Peggy Beauregard, Gayle Murphy, Dave Erb, Bob Brown, Beth Wilson, Carl Foster, Tricia Pearce and Sandy Betsch...one thoroughly shaped up house...and a new addition in the Garth, don't miss the authentic reproduction of our "original" St. Matthew Church in Collinsville...made by a truly talented anonymous member of our Church as we take a last moment to remember our 125th Anniversary...We hope it gets some tenants in the spring...



Ah, spring....

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 New Year's Day
2 8:30 Worship 9:40 No Sunday School 9:40 Adult Forum 11:00 Holy Communion	3 9:30 Staff Meeting 7:00 Finance	4 4:15 Grace Notes and Leading Tones 7:30 Church Council	5 10:30 Lay Bible Study 7:30 Sanctus Singers	6	7	8
9 8:30 Holy Communion 9:40 Sunday School + Adult Forum 11:00 Worship VOICE deadline	10 9:30 Staff Meeting 12:00 Noon Readers at Hartley's	11 4:15 Grace Notes & Leading Tones 7:00 Evangelism	12 7:30 Sanctus Singers	13	14	15
16 8:30 Worship 9:40 Sunday School + Adult Forum 11:00 Holy Communion	17 Office Closed 7:00 Endowment	18 4:15 Grace Notes & Leading Tones 6:30 Property 7:00 Evening Readers	19 7:30 Sanctus Singers	20 9:30 Office Helpers 12:00 Prayer Shawl Ministry	21	22
23 8:30 Holy Communion 9:40 SS/Adult Forum 11:00 Worship 12:00 Annual Meeting	24 9:30 Staff Meeting	25 4:15 Grace Notes & Leading Tones	26 7:30 Sanctus Singers	27	28	29 Chili Cook-Off
30— 8:30 Holy Comm. w/ Healing Prayers 9:40 Sun School + Adult Forum 11:00 Holy Comm. w/ Healing Prayers	31 9:30 Staff Meeting					Jan. 2011



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