



THE VOICE

THE NEWSLETTER OF ST. MATTHEW LUTHERAN CHURCH, AVON, CT March 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:

March 9 - Ash Wednesday 9:00a.m
& 7:30 p.m
March 16, 23, 30 - 9:00 a.m.
Lenten Morning Prayer
March 17, 24, 31 - 7:30 p.m.
Lenten Gathering
March 27 - Pastor Hille's Installa-
tion in the afternoon

LOOKING AHEAD:

April 6 & 13 - 9:00 a.m. Lenten
Morning Prayer
April 7 & 14 - 7:30 p.m. Lenten Gath-
ering
April 16 - 9:00-12:30 Lenten Retreat
April 24 - Easter Sunday
8:00, 9:30 & 11:00 Festival
Eucharist
May 7 - New York City Bus Trip; de-
part St. Matthew at 7:15 a.m.

A LETTER FROM PASTOR

We are "homo sapiens"...We "know" things. We are think-
ers. How about a "thinking" Lent?

As Christians, we know ourselves through a single story, a
single character...he lives and dies like everyone else usually
does; then he rises from the dead...that is not so usual.
Christianity is centered in that story. What do you think is the
nature of that story?

The story of Jesus is written by many hands for specific com-
munities and is like and unlike other stories. Gospels are like
and unlike other books. I invite you to choose a Gospel to
read from cover to cover (just like any other storybook) this
Lent. Mark is shortest and first to be written, John is longest
and written last, Matthew has Wise Men and is quite organ-
ized, Luke has the best known parables and lots of joy. The
three years of Jesus' public ministry are chronicled in the
Gospels, but, according to the novelist Mary Gordon, one of
the presenters at a Conference I attended last month at Trin-
ity Church on Wall Street in Manhattan, there are three in-
triguing themes that pervade all four Gospels:

- 1) Jesus had an intimate relationship with God. The gospels
deny a remote God and insist on a near one.
- 2) Jesus was
actively involved with people...personal relation-
ships...healing, teaching etc., again, remoteness is denied.
- 3) The most central symbol is the cross - a story of horrible
defeat, but the defeat is not final. Suffering is meaningful, not
absurd. There is not a spiritual cure for suffering, but a spiri-
tual meaning to it.

Let's do it! Come on, try. Choose a Gospel for Lent. Read it.
Think about the meaning of suffering, think about Jesus' rela-
tionship to God. Think about your relationship with God in
Christ and with other people. Let me know which Gospel you
choose...and how the "thinking" Lent works for you.

See you in church!

Pastor William Carter

Evening Readers

We will meet on Tuesday, the 15th at 7pm in the Gathering Space to discuss *Just Kids* by Patti Smith.



Noon Readers

Our next meeting will be Wednesday, March 9. This will be our first "Book Potluck". Each person reads a book of their own choice and presents it briefly to the group, explaining why they would or would not recommend it. We will meet at church at noon with Deb Steinberg hosting. Bring a sandwich and join us.



New York City Bus Trip

Join St. Matthew family and friends on a trip to New York City on Saturday, May 7. Spend the day on your own seeing the sights, enjoying a play or visiting a museum. We depart St. Matthew at 7:45 a.m. and depart New York at 7:15 p.m. Cost is \$27.00 per person. Sign up in the Gathering Space. Please leave your check in the office (New York Bus in the memo section) when you sign-up.



Lenten Plans For St. Matthew

Ash Wednesday, March 9th

9:00 a.m. A spoken service with the Imposition of Ashes / 7:30 p.m. Holy Communion with the Imposition of Ashes

Wednesday Mornings in Lent at 9:00 a.m.

We will offer a Lenten Morning Prayer, a spoken service with readings this year from scripture and the work of Dietrich Bonhoeffer on March 16, 23.30, April 6 and 13.

Thursday Evenings in Lent at 7:30 p.m.

Lenten Gatherings with Holy Communion, March 17, 24, 31, April 7 and 14. This year we will focus on the Commemorations of Christians across time and space...St. Patrick, Oscar Romero, John Donne, Lucas Cranach, and Johannes Bugenhagen. (As Jesus once famously said, "Come and see")

Saturday Morning Lenten Retreat

April 16th 9:00 until 12:30, "Passion and Palms" a quiet morning of scripture, worship and free time together with Pastor Carter.

Shared Lenten Experience...

New this year, St. Matthew, Christ Episcopal and Memorial United Methodist Churches and their clergy are working together to offer a Wednesday Evening Soup, Prayer and Reflection at Memorial United Methodist on West Avon Road from 6:30-7:30 p.m. on March 16, 23, 30, April 6 and 13. The theme asks "Is God With Us...or Not?" Try an ecumenical moment this Lent. Hear Pastor Hille on March 30th. Folks from Christ and Memorial will be invited to join in Pastor Carter's Saturday Morning Retreat at St. Matthew too.

Upcoming High School Youth Activities

Sun., March 13 - Game Night from 5-7pm

Fri., March 25– Sat., March 26 come for a 30 HOUR FAMINE Lock-in. Part service, part education & lots of fun activities!

Skiing at Okemo April 1-3....Sign-up in the Gathering Space for Lock-in and Ski Trip.

Thank You

Many thanks to Lorrie St. Pierre who has been delivering weekly contributions of food to the local food pantry for the past few years. As of last month, Phil Rogers has taken over this task. Thanks to Lorrie and Phil.



St. Matthew Music Notes

by Sarah Hernandez

A sign-up sheet has been placed on the bulletin board in the Gathering Space for all those who are interested in providing music for the Thursday Evening Lenten Gatherings. The first service will be Thursday, March 17, at 7:30 pm. If you would like to help by leading the congregation in two hymns, please add your name to the sheet or contact me if you have any questions; I'd be happy to help. We appreciate you considering this offering of your time and talent.

The Grace Notes and Leading Tones are happy to welcome new member Leighton Wittig. We are happy to have you with us, Leighton! Despite the inconvenience of regular Tuesday snowstorms, the Grace Notes and Leading Tones have continued, undeterred, in the diligent preparation of their choir anthems.

Interfaith Brunch

It has been 40 years since a group of men representing each of the 7 Avon Churches, a group which had made a practice of meeting regularly to discuss matters of common faith & interests, hit upon the idea of sharing the Christian fellowship that they had found by organizing a town wide brunch, open to all who were interested in sharing and fellowship. 2011 marks the 40th edition of that event, and the brunch will be held on Sunday, April 3rd at the Farmington Woods Clubhouse. The featured speaker for this year's program will be Avon resident, Lt. Col. Doug Sutter, Army National Guard, who has just completed a tour of duty in Iraq. All tickets are \$10 and must be purchased in advance of the brunch. Contact Ellen Gregory at 860-673-1706 or eegregory3@sbcglobal.net.

Itsy Bitsy Spider

Well, we had a fabulous chili cook-off, more than 50 people, which meant there were not leftover crumbs from the first place cornbread! Here are the winners: sweetest chili, Kathy McPherson; spiciest chili, Dave Kraft; most unusual chili, Michael Murphy; best overall chili, Wolf Mielert—again! Best cornbread, Joan Farquhar; best dessert, Amy Pelehach. We also had a surprise birthday cake for Michael Murphy, which was delicious too.

And you know it's said that the best-laid plans of mice and men often go awry—well, they went awry for the St. Matthew Night-Out, which had to be canceled. The Fellowship Committee is planning a fine time for Pastor Hille's Installation in March and the Taste of St. Matthew on May 21.



MOUSE

As the ice is slowly beginning to melt, and the hints of spring are fluttering in the air, it seems as though the church is bustling with the activities of people ready to shake off the weight of cabin fever. In these long cold weeks of winter, a special thanks goes out to all those who participated in and gathered at the chili cook-off. The Hall of Evangelists was filled with hearty food, warm bellies, and gregarious laughter. I even got to sample some of the treats and though only some received awards, every dish on hand was a winner. The High School Youth Group has been gearing up and with youth comes the loud footsteps, empty soda bottles, though it is good to have company on weekend nights. There was a special glow in the sanctuary recently as we welcomed our newest sister in Christ into the family of God. A special welcome goes out to Maryn, and a special congratulations to the Peterson family. It's always special to see new people welcomed into Christ's ever expanding community. Pastor Hille's office has been a whirlwind of meetings, priming and preparing for Sunday School 2011-12. If the echoes I'm hearing in the walls are true, there is already much excitement and buzz about next year's Sunday School—expect great things. As the mounds of snow are starting to diminish, the talks and whispers of grounds keeping and landscaping are starting to arise. How lovely it will be to have color and vegetation out here on Lovely Street once again.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 4:15 Grace Notes and Leading Tones 7:30 Church Council	2 10:00 Monthly Bible Study 7:30 Sanctus Singers	3	4	5
6 8:30 Worship 9:40 Sunday School + Adult Forum 11:00 Holy Commun- ion / Baptism	7 9:30 Staff Meeting	8 4:15 Grace Notes & Leading Tones 7:00 Evangelism	9 9:00 Worship w/ Imposi- tion of Ashes 12:00 Noon Readers 7:30 Ash Wed., Holy Communion w/ Imposi- tion of Ashes; Sanctus Singers follows worship	10 7:00 Fellowship	11	12 Set Clocks AHEAD one hour
13 8:30 Holy Communion 9:40 Sunday School + Adult Forum 11:00 Worship 12:00 Youth Advisors 5:00-7:00 Youth Group Game Night	14 9:30 Staff Meeting	15 4:15 Grace Notes & Leading Tones 6:30 Property 7:00 Evening Readers	16 9:00 Lenten Morning Prayer 7:30 Sanctus Singers	17 12:00 Prayer Shawl Ministry 7:30 Lenten Gathering	18	19
20 8:30 Worship 9:40 SS/Adult Forum 11:00 Holy Commun- ion	21 9:30 Staff Meeting	22 4:15 Grace Notes & Leading Tones	23 9:00 Lenten Morning Prayer 7:30 Sanctus Singers	24 7:30 Lenten Gathering	25 Youth Lock-In	26 Youth Lock-in
27— 8:30 Holy Communion 9:40 Sun School + Adult Forum 11:00 Worship Pastor Hille's Installa- tion	28 9:30 Staff Meeting	29	30 9:00 Lenten Morning Prayer 7:30 Sanctus Singers	31 7:30 Lenten Gathering	March 2011	



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March 2011