

Baptism of Our Lord Holy Communion



9:00 a.m., January 12, 2025

Welcome to worship this morning!

We are glad you're here! Please know that **children** are welcome to remain in worship; they are also welcome to take a break in our "Kid's Korner" in the Gathering Space where the service audio is played through speakers. **Bathrooms** are located down the hall, past the church office. **Hymns** are printed in the red book (ELW) available in the pew rack.

We practice **open communion** at St. Matthew, meaning all who desire the sacrament of Holy Communion are welcome. If you prefer, you may also come forward for a blessing. During the distribution of Holy Communion, ushers will direct the congregation forward to receive communion in a **continuous line**. The pastor will distribute communion wafers, which you may intinct (dip) into red wine, or white grape juice, held by communion assistants. Please do not drink from the chalices. Gluten free wafers are also available. The pastor will deliver the sacrament to anyone unable to come forward. You may also use a pre-filled communion kit, available at the usher's table.

All are welcome!

PRELUDE: *Ar hyd y nos*

Wilbur Held

WELCOME

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
the fountain of living water,
the rock who gave us birth,
our light and our salvation.

Amen.

The presiding minister addresses the assembly.

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism,
we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness.

Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

Water will be poured into the font as the presiding minister gives thanks.
We give you thanks, O God,
for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters
and by your Word you created the world,
calling forth life in which you took delight.

Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family.
Through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom.
At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit.
By water and your Word you claim us as daughters and sons,
making us heirs of your promise and servants of all.

We praise you for the gift of water that sustains life,
and above all we praise you for the gift of new life in Jesus Christ.
Shower us with your Spirit,
and renew our lives with your forgiveness, grace, and love.

To you be given honor and praise
through Jesus Christ our Lord
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

OPENING HYMN: *Crashing Waters at Creation*

ELW 455

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

GLORIA

Glo-ry to God in the high - est, and peace to God's peo - ple on
earth. Lord God, heav-en-ly King, al-might - y God and
Fa-ther, we wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your
glo-ry. Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther,
Lord God, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world: have
mer - cy on us; you are seat-ed at the right hand of the
Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer. For you a - lone are the
Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord, you a - lone are the
Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir-it, in the
glo-ry of God the Fa - ther. A - - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, you anointed Jesus at his baptism with the Holy Spirit and revealed him as your beloved Son. Keep all who are born of water and the Spirit faithful in your service, that we may rejoice to be called children of God, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

The congregation may be seated.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 43:1-7

Near the end of Israel's exile in Babylon, God promises to bring the people home. They need no longer be afraid, because the one who formed, created, and called them by name now redeems them from all their enemies. God declares them precious and honored, and God loves them.

A reading from the prophet Isaiah:

- ¹ But now thus says the Lord,
 he who created you, O Jacob,
 he who formed you, O Israel:
Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;
 I have called you by name, you are mine.
- ² When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
 and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;
when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,
 and the flame shall not consume you.
- ³ For I am the Lord your God,
 the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.
I give Egypt as your ransom,
 Ethiopia and Seba in exchange for you.
- ⁴ Because you are precious in my sight,
 and honored, and I love you,
I give people in return for you,
 nations in exchange for your life.

⁵ Do not fear, for I am with you;
I will bring your offspring from the east,
and from the west I will gather you;
⁶ I will say to the north, “Give them up,”
and to the south, “Do not withhold;
bring my sons from far away
and my daughters from the end of the earth—
⁷ everyone who is called by my name,
whom I created for my glory,
whom I formed and made.”

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING: Acts 8:14-17

Peter and John are sent to support the new Christians in Samaria, a group that was recently baptized after hearing the good news of Christ through the preaching of Philip. Here the Samaritans receive the gift of the Holy Spirit in the laying on of hands.

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles:

¹⁴ Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. ¹⁵ The two went down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit ¹⁶ (for as yet the Spirit had not come upon any of them; they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus). ¹⁷ Then Peter and John laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

CHILDREN’S SERMON

Rev. Ryan

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Music: Fintan O'Carroll and Christopher Walker
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HOLY GOSPEL: Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

The reading opens with questions about the identity of the Messiah. John the Baptist insists that he is not the Messiah; instead he points ahead to one who is coming. And whether the voice of God was heard by all or only by Jesus, God settles the matter: Jesus is God's beloved Son.

The Holy Gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹⁵ As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶ John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷ His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

²¹ Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, ²² and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON:

Pastor Brian

HYMN OF THE DAY: *When Jesus Came to Jordan*

ELW 305

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.
Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

With the Spirit of Christ shining upon us, let us boldly pray for the church, the world, and all of creation. I invite you into a prayerful posture of kneeling, standing, or sitting.

A brief silence.

God of new life, you call us by name and form us. We give thanks for the gift of baptism. Nurture all the baptized and equip your people to proclaim the good news. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God of creation, your voice sounds over the waters. Speak words of healing over the rivers and lakes, seas and oceans. Heeding your voice, lead us to care for water, and the land and creatures it nourishes. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God of the nations, uphold all who serve the common good. Guide federal and state legislators, city and county officials, judges and juries. Strengthen our resolve to serve all in need. We pray for those affected by natural disasters, by the wildfires in California, and all those experiencing the terror of war. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God of healing, you are with us in challenging times. Draw near to all who are ill, undergoing treatment, or recovering from surgery. Accompany individuals and families affected by addiction or mental health challenges. Uphold each person as your beloved. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God of all people, you draw us into community. Embolden ministries of racial reconciliation, nurture work on behalf of immigrants and refugees, and equip each to use their gifts for the sake of neighbors near and far. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God of eternity, grant peace and comfort to all who grieve the loss of loved ones. Dwell with us in this life and, at the last, join us with the saints whom you have created, formed, and named. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

We entrust our prayers to you, O God, in the sure and certain hope that your promise is revealed among the people. **Amen.**

PEACE

The Peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

The congregation may be seated.

OFFERING

At this time, ushers will pass the offering plate if you desire to give a financial gift. Donations may also be given online at stmatthewavon.org/give, using the QR code in this bulletin, or mailed directly to the church. Thank you for your continued generosity and faithfulness!

OFFERTORY: *The Baptism Carol* by Donald Busarow, text by G.B. Timms

The sinless one to Jordan came,
To share our fallen nature's blame;
God's righteousness he thus fulfilled,
And chose the path his Father willed.
Uprising from the waters there,
The voice from heav'n true witness bear
That Christ, the Son of God, had come
To lead his scattered people home.

Above him see the heav'nly Dove,
The sign of God the Father's love,
Now by the Holy Spirit shed
Upon the Son's anointed head.
How blest that mission then begun
To heal and save a race undone!
Straight to the wilderness he goes
To wrestle with his people's foes.

Dear Lord, let those baptized from sin,
Go forth with you a world to win:
And send the Holy Spirit's pow'r
To shield them in temptation's hour.
On you may all your people feed,
And know you are the Bread indeed,
Who gives eternal life to those
That with you died, and with you rose.

The Baptism Carol, Donald Busarow © 1995, Concordia Publishing House. All rights reserved.

PRESENTATION HYMN

All rise as the gifts are brought forward.



Now bring him in-cense, gold, and myrrh; come, peas-ant, king, to own him.



The King of kings sal - va - tion brings; let lov - ing hearts en - throne him.



Raise, raise the song on high, the vir - gin sings her lul - la-by;



joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mar - y!

OFFERING PRAYER

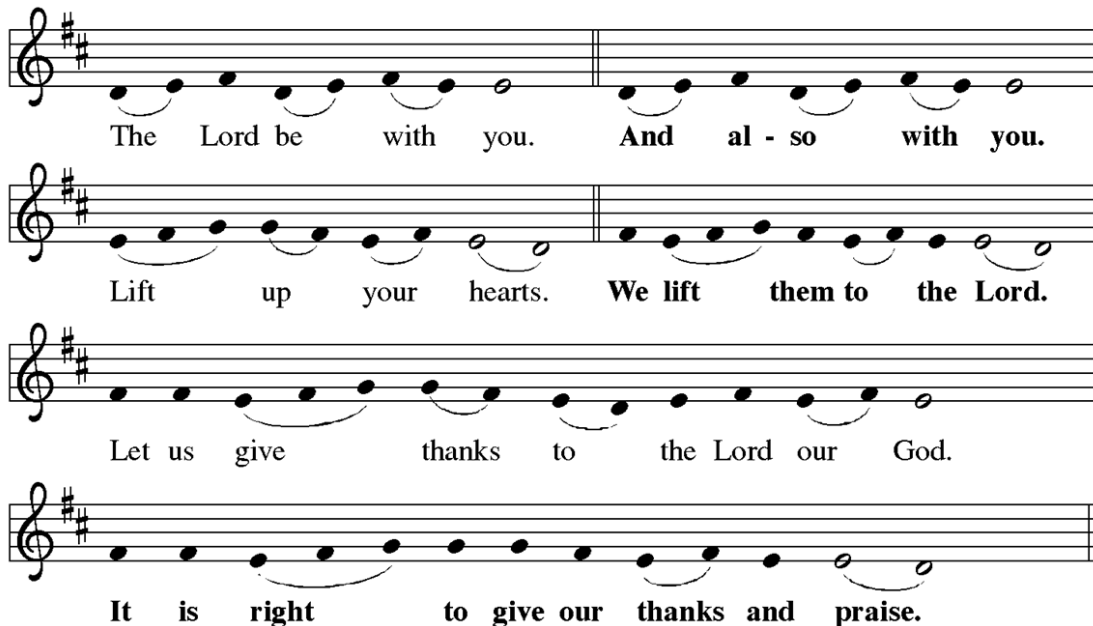
God of grace, your love reaches to the heavens,
and your abundance to the depths of the seas.

Bless what we offer to your service:
our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts.

Let us overflow with gratitude and generosity,
now and always.

Amen.

HOLY COMMUNION



The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.

By the leading of a star he was shown forth to all nations;
in the waters of the Jordan you proclaimed him your beloved Son;
and in the miracle of water turned to wine he revealed your glory.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

SANCTUS

ELW Setting 3

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -
san - na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:
Blessed are you for the birth of creation.
Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.
Blessed are you for your promise to your people.
Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.
Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.
Blessed are you for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

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

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

With this bread and cup
we remember your Word dwelling among us,
full of grace and truth.

We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.

We look with hope for his coming.

Come, Lord Jesus.

Holy God, we long for your Spirit.

Come among us.

Bless this meal.

May your Word take flesh in us.

Awaken your people.

Fill us with your light.

Bring the gift of peace on earth.

Come, Holy Spirit.

All praise and glory are yours,

Holy One of Israel,

Word of God incarnate,

Power of the Most High,

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

At this time, ushers will direct the congregation to form two lines. You will receive a communion wafer from a pastor, which you are invited to intinct (dip) into the red wine or white grape juice held by the communion assistants. Please do not drink from the chalices. You may also use a pre-filled communion kit in your seat or indicate to an usher to have a pastor deliver the sacrament to your seat.

Come to the banquet for all is now ready.

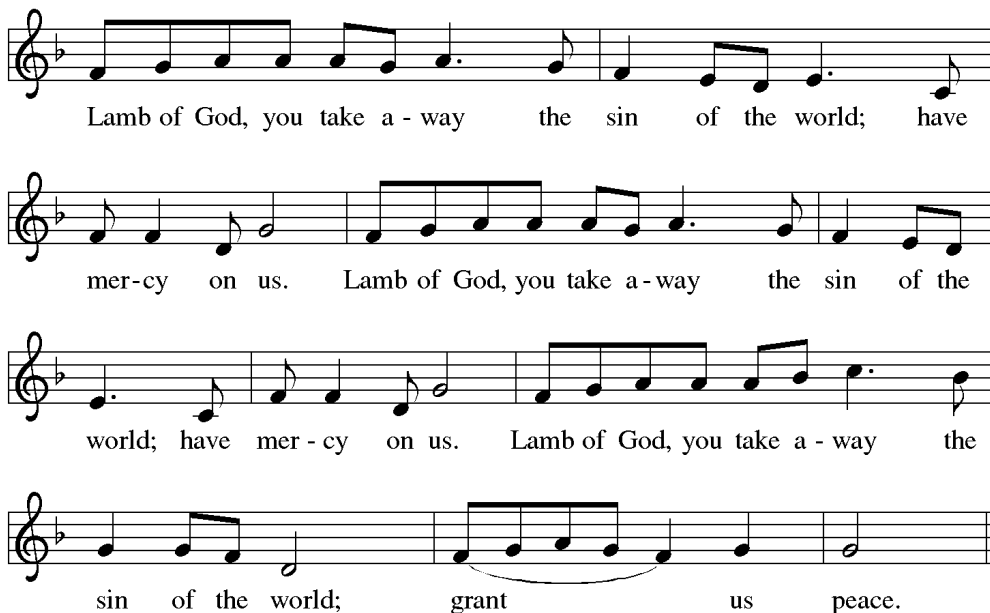
THE DISTRIBUTION

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

AGNUS DEI

ELW Setting 3



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace.

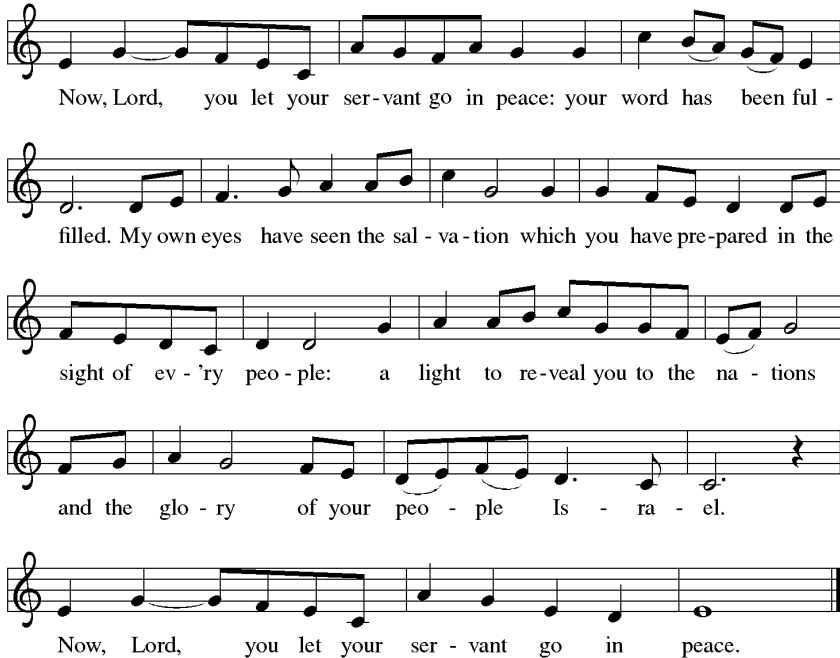
COMMUNION HYMN: *Shall We Gather at the River*

ELW 423

BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION

May the body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

NUNC DIMITTIS



Now, Lord, you let your ser-vant go in peace: your word has been ful -
filled. My own eyes have seen the sal - va - tion which you have pre-pared in the
sight of ev - 'ry peo - ple: a light to re-veal you to the na - tions
and the glo - ry of your peo - ple Is - ra - el.
Now, Lord, you let your ser - vant go in peace.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Nourishing God,
at this table you have refreshed us
with holy gifts of food and drink.
Strengthen us for service,
and send us out to embody your good news
of liberation and healing for the sake of the world.
In the name of Christ we pray, **Amen.**

BENEDICTION

May the Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.
The Lord look upon you with favor ☩
And give you peace. **Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN: *Go, My Children, with My Blessing*

ELW 543

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Live in hope.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE: *Lobt Gott, ihr Christen, allzugleich*

Dietrich Buxtehude

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Today's Altar Flowers are provided for the glory of God!

MANY THANKS FOR TODAY'S VOLUNTEER WORSHIP LEADERS

Altar Guild: Doreen O'Leary & Deb Brodeur

Acolyte: Matthew Coslett

Assisting Minister: Will Abbott

Lector: Anne Fenn

Ushers: Kevin Reichler

Live Stream: Perry Hasson

STAFF

Pastor: The Rev. Dr. Brian R. Rajcok – pastorbrian@stmatthewavon.org

Associate Pastor: The Rev. Ryan Heckman – revryan@stmatthewavon.org

Director of Music: Sarah Schiener-Redenz – music@stmatthewavon.org

Office Administrator: Paul Martin – office@stmatthewavon.org or (860) 673-3301

Sexton: Roy Zurell – contact the office

VISIT US ONLINE

Website: www.stmatthewavon.org

YouTube: @StMatthewAvon

Facebook.com/SaintMatthewLutheranChurch

Instagram: @stmatthewlutheranavon

THE WEEK AHEAD

Sunday	9am: Sanctuary Worship w/ Holy Communion		10:20am: Sunday School & Adult Forum		10:30pm: Confirmation Class
Tuesday	10am: A.A. (Open to All)	12:30 - 2pm: Women's Fellowship	2pm: Choir Rehearsal	7pm: Avon Land Trust	7pm: Finance Committee Mtg.
Wednesday	9:30am & 5:15pm: W.W		7pm: O.A.		
Thursday	10am: Bible Study			2pm: Centering Prayer	
Sunday	9am: Sanctuary Worship w/ Holy Communion		10:20am: Sunday School	10:20am: SMLC Annual Mtg.	

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADULT FORUM

This morning Pastor Brian will lead an adult forum lesson on the Hebrew Prophets of the Old Testament. Come learn about the historical context of ancient Israel and the message the prophets spoke to their leaders and their people.

2025 ANNUAL MEETING

Mark your calendars for our Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 19th, immediately following the morning worship service. Join us as we review and discuss the Annual Reports, providing valuable insights into the milestones and accomplishments of the past year. Your active participation is crucial as we come together to shape the future of our community. We look forward to your presence and engagement in this important gathering.

2025 COUNCIL NOMINATIONS

As we approach the new year, we invite you to actively participate in the future of our community by nominating individuals for the 2025 Council. Your input is invaluable in shaping the leadership that guides our congregation. Please take a moment to submit your nominations via email or by using the nomination box located in the Gathering Space during our Sunday gatherings. We are looking to add several new Council members, so your suggestions will play a crucial role in ensuring a diverse and dedicated council that reflects the strength and unity of our faith community.

SMLC WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP | Tues., Jan. 14th from 12:30 – 2:00pm

Happy New Year! We are kicking off 2025 with a special project and a time of fellowship. Join us for our monthly Women's Fellowship on January 14 from 12:30 PM to 2:00 PM in the Hall of the Evangelists.

This month, we will begin a Birthday Postcard Writing Project! We'll be creating heartfelt birthday messages for members of our church family throughout the year. It's a simple but meaningful way to connect and share blessings. This will be a wonderful opportunity to connect with one another, serve together, enjoy a small snack and share in conversation.

We hope to see you there as we start the year off with kindness and community!

2025 ALTAR FLOWER SIGN-UP

The sign-up sheet for 2025 Altar Flowers is now available outside the Sanctuary.

Please note that the price will be increasing to \$50 this year.

Please write your dedication on the lines provided. If there is already a dedication on your desired Sunday, please try to choose another open date. Thank you.

ONLINE GIVING

Make a one-time gift, or set-up recurring donations, via Vanco! You may use the QR code below to access the website, or visit: stmatthewavon.org/online-giving

We ask those that wish to set-up recurring donations, please select the "GENERAL OPERATING FUND" and choose withdrawals to take place on either the 1st or 15th of the month. Thank you! If you have any difficulty, please contact the church office or see one of the Pastors after service!



St. Matthew Mission Statement:

St. Matthew Lutheran Church is a worshipping community called to proclaim God's love for all and to grow spiritually together. Challenged by Jesus' example, we strive to connect people of all ages, abilities, and needs, and to nurture them to be disciples of Christ. Guided by the Holy Spirit, we reach out to the wider community and welcome our neighbors to a life of worship, preaching, teaching, Christian care, service, and spiritual growth.

In Christ, We Are Digging Deep, Reaching Out, Changing Lives.