

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

Outdoor Service with Holy Communion

9:00 a.m., August 31, 2025



Welcome to worship this morning!

We are glad you're here! **Children** are welcome to remain in worship; they are also welcome to take a break at the playground or in our "Kid's Korner" in the Gathering Space. **Bathrooms** are located inside the back doors, just to the right. There are accessible toilets in the front of the church next to the kitchenette. **Hymns** are printed in the bulletin today.

We practice **open communion** at St. Matthew, meaning all who desire the sacrament of Holy Communion are welcome. As you come to the backyard today, you will see a table of pre-filled communion kits; please pick one up. We will all partake in Holy Communion together in our seats this morning. If, due to weather, we have moved worship indoors, we will practice communion at the rail. All are welcome!

PRELUDE: *Jesus, Lord, We Look to Thee*

arr. Cindy Berry

WELCOME

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

In the name of the Father,
and of the ✠ Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Baptized into Christ, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Merciful God,
you free us to love others,
but we neglect our neighbors and follow our own way.
You lead us by the Spirit of joy and peace,
but we turn away from the abundant life you offer.
You surround us with patience, kindness,
and generosity,
but we grow weary in doing what is right.
In your mercy, forgive us.
Do not give up on us.
Heal us, break our bonds,
and show us the path of life. Amen.

You belong to Christ Jesus
and you are God's children through faith.
In the cross of † Christ,
and through the power of the Holy Spirit,
your sins are forgiven.
Clothed with Christ, you are a new creation.
Amen.



1. Here in this place the new light is stream-ing, now is the dark-ness
 2. Here we will take the wine and the wa-ter, here we will take the
 3. Not in the dark of build-ings con-fin-ing, not in some heav-en,



van-ished a-way; see in this space our fears and our dream-ings
 bread of new birth, here you shall call your sons and your daugh-ters,
 light-years a-way— here in this place the new light is shin-ing,



brought here to you in the light of this day.
 call us a-new to be salt for the earth.
 now is the king-dom, and now is the day.



Gath-er us in, the lost and for-sak-en, gath-er us in, the
 Give us to drink the wine of com-pas-sion, give us to eat the
 Gath-er us in and hold us for-ev-er, gath-er us in and



blind and the lame; call to us now, and we shall a-wak-en,
 bread that is you; nour-ish us well, and teach us to fash-ion
 make us your own; gath-er us in, all peo-ples to-geth-er,



we shall a-rise at the sound of our name.
 lives that are ho-ly and hearts that are true.
 fire— of love in our flesh and our bone.

Gather Us In, Marty Haugen, ©1982 GIA Publications, Inc. Used by permission.

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.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God, you resist those who are proud and give grace to those who are humble. Give us the humility of your Son, that we may embody the generosity of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

The congregation may be seated.

FIRST READING: Proverbs 15:33; 16:18-19; 25:6-7a; 30:13-14

We will now read responsively from the Book of Proverbs:

³³ The fear of the Lord is instruction in wisdom,
and humility goes before honor.

¹⁸ Pride goes before destruction
and a haughty spirit before a fall.

¹⁹ It is better to be of a lowly spirit among the poor
than to divide the spoil with the proud.

⁶ Do not put yourself forward in the king's presence
or stand in the place of the great,

⁷ for it is better to be told, "Come up here,"
than to be put lower in the presence of a noble.

What your eyes have seen

¹³ There are those—how lofty are their eyes,
how high their eyelids lift!—

¹⁴ there are those whose teeth are swords,
whose teeth are knives

to devour the poor from off the earth,
the needy from among mortals.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



HOLY GOSPEL: Luke 14:1, 7-14

Jesus observes guests jockeying for position at the table. He uses the opportunity to teach his hearers to choose humility rather than self-exaltation. Jesus also makes an appeal for hosts to imitate God's gracious hospitality to those in need.

The Holy Gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹ On one occasion when Jesus was going to the house of a leader of the Pharisees to eat a meal on the Sabbath, they were watching him closely.

⁷ When he noticed how the guests chose the places of honor, he told them a parable. ⁸ “When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not sit down at the place of honor, in case someone more distinguished than you has been invited by your host, ⁹ and the host who invited both of you may come and say to you, ‘Give this person your place,’ and then in disgrace you would start to take the lowest place. ¹⁰ But when you are invited, go and sit down at the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he may say to you, ‘Friend, move up higher’; then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at the table with you. ¹¹ For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

¹² He said also to the one who had invited him, “When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers and sisters or your relatives or rich neighbors, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. ¹³ But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind.

¹⁴ And you will be blessed because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON:

Rev. Ryan

HYMN OF THE DAY: *As We Gather at Your Table*



1 As we gath-er at your ta - ble, as we lis - ten to your word,
2 Turn our wor-ship in - to wit-ness in the sac - ra - ment of life;
3 Gra - cious Spir - it, help us sum-mon oth-er guests to share that feast



help us know, O God, your pres-ence; let our hearts and minds be stirred.
send us forth to love and serve you, bring-ing peace where there is strife.
where tri - um-phant Love will wel-come those who had been last and least.



Nour-ish us with sa - cred sto - ry till we claim it as our own;
Give us, Christ, your great com-pas-sion to for - give as you for - gave;
There no more will en - vy blind us nor will pride our peace de - stroy,



teach us through this ho - ly ban-quet how to make Love's vic - t'ry known.
may we still be - hold your im - age in the world you died to save.
as we join with saints and an - gels to re - peat the sound-ing joy.

Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944
Music: IN BABILONE, Oude en Nieuwe Hollandse Boerenlides en Contradansen, 1710
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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

Let us pray for the church, the creation, and the whole people of God, for God is near.
I invite you into a prayerful posture of standing or sitting.

A brief silence.

For the leaders of the church, we pray. Inspire deacons, pastors, Sunday school teachers, and all those who teach in our church with a passion for speaking the word of God. Equip all the baptized to share your word of grace. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

For the well-being of creation, we pray. Sustain farm workers in the Farmington Valley and throughout Connecticut who grow the food we eat and enjoy. Revive plains and pastures, and provide for the cattle and creatures who rely on the land for their sustenance. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

For the leaders of towns, cities, provinces, states, and nations especially leaders in our town of Avon, we pray. Guide them to enact equitable laws and policies for all. On this LaborDay weekend, we pray that you make us mindful of laborers. We give you thanks for craftspeople, tradespeople, financiers, administrators, clerks, nurses, doctors, teachers and all who work inside and outside of the home. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Provide for the needs of vulnerable communities. Accompany all who need reassurance of your loving presence. We especially pray for the families who were impacted by the recent shooting at a church school in Minneapolis. We cry out to you, O God, in deep sadness that places of education and worship continue to be targeted for violence. Inspire us to act, to change laws, to support mental and social health, and to work to end violence. We confess our inaction, and we repent promising to act. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

For all the saints who from their labors rest, we give thanks. With them, we offer our sacrifice of praise to you, O God, the same yesterday and today and forever. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Confident in God's presence and promise, we entrust our prayers to the one who always receives them; through Jesus Christ, our wisdom and companion. **Amen.**

PEACE

The Peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

The congregation may be seated.

OFFERING

Your offering may be placed in a plate on table near the entrance to the church after worship. If worship has been moved indoors, the ushers will now pass collection plates. Donations may also be given online at stmatthewavon.org/give or mailed directly to the church. Thank you for your continued generosity and faithfulness!

DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heav'nly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
Amen.

OFFERING PRAYER

Creator God,
in your wisdom you bring forth all that is good
and the harvest is plentiful.
Strengthen us at your table with these gifts of the earth
and our labor,
that we may work for the good of all;
through Jesus Christ, our Savior.
Amen.

HOLY COMMUNION

The Lord be with you.
Lift up your heart.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

And also with you.
We lift them to the Lord.
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;
who on this day overcame death and the grave,
and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.

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.

You are indeed holy, almighty and merciful God.

You are most holy,

and great is the majesty of your glory.

You so loved the world that you gave your only Son,
so that everyone who believes in him may not perish
but have eternal life.

We give you thanks for his coming into the world
to fulfill for us your holy will
and to accomplish all things for our salvation.

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.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Christ has died.

Christ is Risen.

Christ will come again.

We ask you mercifully to accept our praise and thanksgiving
and with your Word and Holy Spirit to bless us, your servants,
and these your own gifts of bread and wine,
so that we and all who share in the body and blood of Christ
may be filled with heavenly blessing and grace.

To you, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
be all honor and glory in your holy church, now and forever.

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

Come to the banquet, for all is now ready.

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.

THE DISTRIBUTION

At this time, we will commune together as a congregation using pre-filled communion kits. If we have moved the service indoors due to weather, we will commune at the altar rail.

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION

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

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Oh God, we give you thanks that you have set before us this feast, the body and blood of your Son. By your Spirit strengthen us to serve all in need and to give ourselves away as bread for the hungry, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

BENEDICTION

May the Lord bless you and keep you.

May the Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

May the Lord look upon with you with favor and give you peace.

In the name of the Father, and the Son \dagger and the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

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



1 "Go, my chil - dren, with my bless - ing, nev - er a - lone.
2 "Go, my chil - dren, sins for - giv - en, at peace and pure.
3 "Go, my chil - dren, fed and nour - ished, clos - er to me.



Wak - ing, sleep - ing, I am with you, you are my own.
Here you learned how much I love you, what I can cure.
Grow in love and love by serv - ing, joy - ful and free.



In my love's bap - tis - mal riv - er I have made you mine for - ev - er.
Here you heard my dear Son's sto - ry, here you touched him, saw his glo - ry.
Here my Spir - it's pow - er filled you, here my ten - der com - fort stilled you.



Go, my chil - dren, with my bless - ing, you are my own."
Go, my chil - dren, sins for - giv - en, at peace and pure."
Go, my chil - dren, fed and nour - ished, joy - ful and free."

Text: Jaroslav J. Vajda, b. 1919, alt.
Music: AR HYDY NOS, Welsh traditional
Text © 1983 Concordia Publishing House

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DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Christ is with you.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

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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: Paula Cunningham & Deb Brodeur

Assisting Minister: Roy Zurell

Lector: Ben Wright

Ushers: Tim Jarka

Coffee Hour: Deb Brodeur

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: www.facebook.com/SaintMatthewLutheranChurch

Instagram: @stmatthewlutheranavon

THE WEEK AHEAD

| | | |
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| Monday | Office Closed | |
| Tuesday | 10am: A.A. | |
| Wednesday | 9:30am & 5:15pm: W.W | 7pm: O.A. |
| Thursday | 2pm: Centering Prayer | |
| Sunday | 9am: Sanctuary Worship w/ Holy Communion | |

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SEASONS OF GIVING: FALL HARVEST

The Outreach Ministry is continuing its Seasons of Giving initiative by supporting Hands of Grace in New Hartford beginning on September 7th. The theme will be "Fall Harvest", and we're looking to collect all kinds of non-perishable food items to aid those that need a bit of extra help during the holidays. There will be more details and advertising materials available in the weeks to come. Keep an eye on our weekly emails and displays in the Gathering Space for more information!

SUNDAY SCHOOL & CONFIRMATION REGISTRATION | OPEN NOW!

If you have children from age 3 through 6th grade, be sure to pick up the 2025-26 Sunday School Registration packet which you can find on the small tables outside of the sanctuary TODAY! Also, if you have a middle schooler in your family (7th-9th grades) you are invited to sign them up for Confirmation at St. Matthew! Registration forms and information are available as well.

Spread the word about Sunday School & Confirmation at St. Matthew by taking a flyer and posting it on your favorite community bulletin board. Invite your neighbors and friends to give it a try too! People sometimes say, "I'm interested in my kids doing something like Sunday School or Confirmation... but my past experiences with church aren't so great." Invite them to the welcoming, creative and love-based program at St. Matthew and ask them to join your kids!

If you are interested and would like to learn more, or would like help in making an invitation to a friend or neighbor, you can reach out to Rev Ryan at revryan@stmatthewavon.org.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP RETURNS! | Tuesday, Sept. 9 | 12:30 - 2pm

Our first women's gathering on Tuesday, September 9th, will be focused on some of the following questions:

- Why read the Bible outside of Sunday worship?
- Is there a favorite book or verse you have from the Bible?
- When did you learn to read/study the Bible?
- What or who influenced your study?
- How has your reading/understanding of the Bible changed over the years?

The sharing and discussion will be facilitated by Sandy Betsch. Hope to see many women there on September 9th

RALLY DAY | Sunday, Sept. 14

Join us on Sunday, Sept. 14th for the kick-off to the program year! There will be plenty of food, fellowship, and fun to go around, including a bounce house & slide for the kids! This event is our annual celebration that marks the beginning of Sunday School, Confirmation, Adult Forum, and all of the other programs that take place from Fall to Spring at St. Matthew.

PASTOR BRIAN'S 10 YEAR ORDINATION ANNIVERSARY

Sunday, Sept. 21, Following Worship

Pastor Brian will be celebrating 10 years of ordained ministry on September 19th! This is a major milestone and St. Matthew will be celebrating him and his ministry on Sunday, September 21st after worship!

The whole congregation is invited to a special coffee hour after worship on September 21st to mark PB's 10 years of ministry. There will be a basket for cards at this celebration if you'd like to honor Pastor Brian with a card. We are so blessed with Pastor Brian's ministry here at St. Matthew and give thanks to God for his call to ministry 10 years ago!

OCCASIONAL BAKERS WANTED

SMLC Coffee Hour

Looking for a low-key and occasional way to be involved? The Fellowship Team is looking for volunteers to help out occasionally, as you are able, with either a home baked/prepared OR store bought food item to enjoy at our gatherings where food is partaken (Sunday coffee hour, receptions, concerts, etc.) Can we put your name on the list? Thank you for considering this nourishing opportunity. The sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board outside the office

THRIVENT ACTION TEAM GRANTS

Signup Sheet Available Now!

Are you a member of Thrivent Financial? If you are, you can apply for two \$250 grants per year to help fund specific projects or events at St. Matthew! Below is a list of annual projects and events at St. Matthew that you can apply for a \$250 grant to help fund.

There is a signup sheet available on the bulletin board in the Gathering Space. Put your name next to the project you'd like to fund with one of your two action grants. If you have the details you need for the project (because you're involved in it) then go to your Thrivent account and apply! If you need information to apply, ask one of the pastors.