

# Presentation of Our Lord Holy Communion

9:00 a.m., February 2, 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: *Lobt Gott, ihr Christen, allzugleich*

Johann Gottfried Walther

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 is poured into the font while the congregation 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:** *Let All Together Praise Our God*

**ELW 287 (v. 1-4)**

### **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 and ever-living God, your only-begotten Son was presented this day in the temple. May we be presented to you with clean and pure hearts by the same Jesus Christ, our great high priest, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

*The congregation may be seated.*

## FIRST READING: Malachi 3:1-4

*The people's return to Judah after the exile was marred by economic and political troubles. Nevertheless, the prophet declares, Jerusalem and Judah will be restored. God will rejoice over Jerusalem as a bridegroom rejoices over the bride, and the people are called to the celebration.*

A reading from the Book of Malachi:

<sup>1</sup> See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. <sup>2</sup> But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; <sup>3</sup> he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. <sup>4</sup> Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## SECOND READING: Psalm 84

We will now read responsively from the Book of Psalms:

<sup>1</sup> How dear to me is your dwelling,  
O Lord of hosts!

<sup>2</sup> **My soul has a desire and longing for the courts of the Lord;  
my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.**

<sup>3</sup> Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest where she may lay her young,

by the side of your altars, O Lord of hosts, my king and my God.

<sup>4</sup> **Happy are they who dwell in your house!**

**They will always be praising you.**

<sup>5</sup> Happy are the people whose strength is in you,  
whose hearts are set on the pilgrims' way.

<sup>6</sup> **Those who go through the balsam valley will find it a place of springs,  
for the early rains have covered it with pools of water.**

<sup>7</sup> They will climb from height to height,  
and the God of gods will be seen in Zion.

<sup>8</sup> **Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer;  
give ear, O God of Jacob.**

<sup>9</sup> Behold our defender, O God;  
and look upon the face of your anointed.

<sup>10</sup> **For one day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere.**

**I would rather stand at the threshold of the house of my God than dwell  
in the tents of the wicked.**

<sup>11</sup> For the Lord God is both sun and shield, bestowing grace and glory;  
no good thing will the Lord withhold from those who walk with integrity.

<sup>12</sup> **O Lord of hosts,  
happy are they who put their trust in you!**

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.

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is written in treble clef. The first staff begins with a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note C5. The second staff begins with a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note C5. The melody continues with various rhythmic patterns and rests, ending with a double bar line.

Music: Finian O'Carroll and Christopher Walker  
Music © 1988 Finian O'Carroll and Christopher Walker, admin. OCP Publications, Inc. 5536 NE Hassalo, Portland, OR 97213.  
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## HOLY GOSPEL: Luke 2:22-40

*This story is a study in contrasts: the infant Jesus with the aged prophets; the joy of birth with the ominous words of Simeon to Mary; the faithful fulfilling of the law with the presentation of the one who will release its hold over us. Through it all, we see the light of God's salvation revealed to the world.*

The Holy Gospel according to Luke.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>22</sup> When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, [Mary and Joseph] brought [Jesus] up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord <sup>23</sup> (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”), <sup>24</sup> and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.”

<sup>25</sup> Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. <sup>26</sup> It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. <sup>27</sup> Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, <sup>28</sup> Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

<sup>29</sup> “Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,  
according to your word;

<sup>30</sup> for my eyes have seen your salvation,

<sup>31</sup> which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

<sup>32</sup> a light for revelation to the Gentiles  
and for glory to your people Israel.”

<sup>33</sup> And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. <sup>34</sup> Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed <sup>35</sup> so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too."

<sup>36</sup> There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, <sup>37</sup> then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. <sup>38</sup> At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

<sup>39</sup> When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. <sup>40</sup> The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**SERMON:**

**Pastor Brian**

**HYMN OF THE DAY: *In His Temple Now Behold Him***

**ELW 417**

## 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 generations, you instilled in Anna and Simeon faith, dreams, and the welcome of a child. Bless elders who embody faith and hope. Bless newborns and the newly baptized. Energize us to share faith from generation to generation. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God of creation, in you the sparrow finds a home and we find lush valleys and living water. Bless the birds of the air, the animals of the valley, and renew our stewardship of this bountiful creation. We continue to lift up the victims of the wildfires in California and ask your blessing on all those affected. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**



God of the nations, strengthen our resolve to care for all children and strive for peace among nations. Refine our nation where we have failed to root out racism and injustice and guide us in truth-telling and reconciliation. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God of hope, many long to see your presence revealed amid challenging circumstances. We hold in prayer all longing for sustainable housing, secure employment, access to medical care, improved mental health and spiritual wellness. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God of the people, you are made known in caring ministries. As you cared for Anna and Simeon in their old age, we ask you to bless the seniors in our community. Bless the homebound members of our congregation. Guide the ministry of those who serve as homebound visitors, eucharistic ministers, healing prayer ministers, and those who offer prayer support on St. Matthew's prayer chain. Reveal yourself in the loving care we give and receive. 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](http://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: *Be Thou My Vision*

Irish folk tune arr. Marie Pooler

Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;  
naught be all else to me, save that thou art:  
thou my best thought, by day or by night,  
waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.

Riches I heed not, nor vain empty praise,  
thou mine inheritance, now and always:  
thou, and thou only, first in my heart,  
great God of heaven, my treasure thou art.

Light of my soul after victory won,  
may I reach heaven's joys, O heaven's Sun!  
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,  
still be my vision, O Ruler of all.  
Amen.

*Be Thou My Vision*, arr. Marie Pooler © 1962, Augsburg Publishing House. All rights reserved.

## PRESENTATION HYMN

*All rise as the gifts are brought forward.*



What feast of love is of - fered here, what ban - quet come from heav - en?



What food of ev - er - last - ing life, what gra - cious gift is giv - en?



This, this is Christ the king, the bread come down from heav - en.



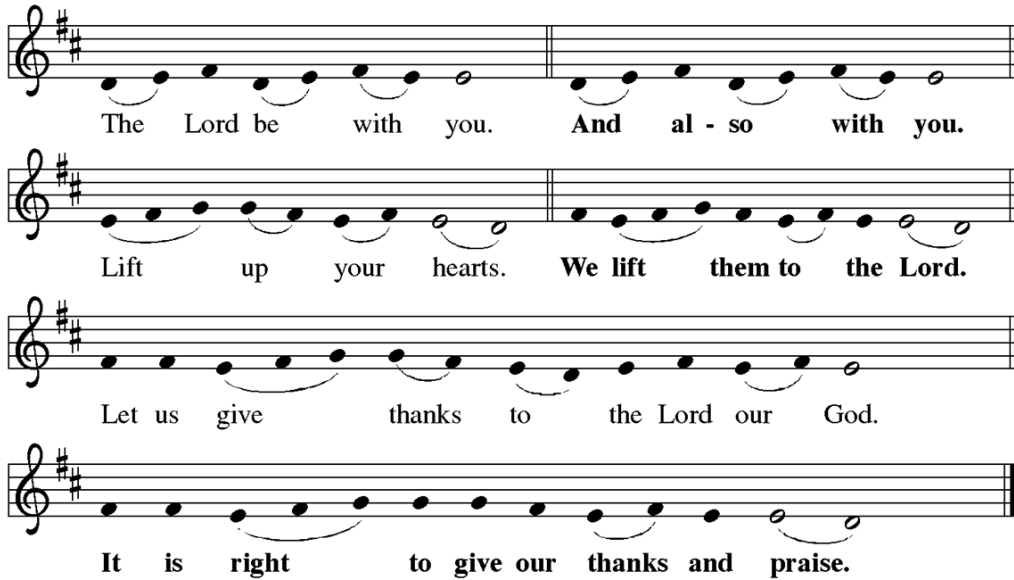
Oh, taste and see and sing! How sweet the man - na giv - en!

Text: Delores Dufner, OSB, b. 1939; © 1993 Delores Dufner, admin. OCP Publications

## OFFERING PRAYER

God of heaven and earth,  
from the beginning, you have called forth life,  
in which you take delight.  
The trees, the fields, and the seas sing for joy.  
Bless now these gifts, received from your bounty,  
that we may join the chorus of creation  
to tell of your salvation from day to day. **Amen.**

## HOLY COMMUNION



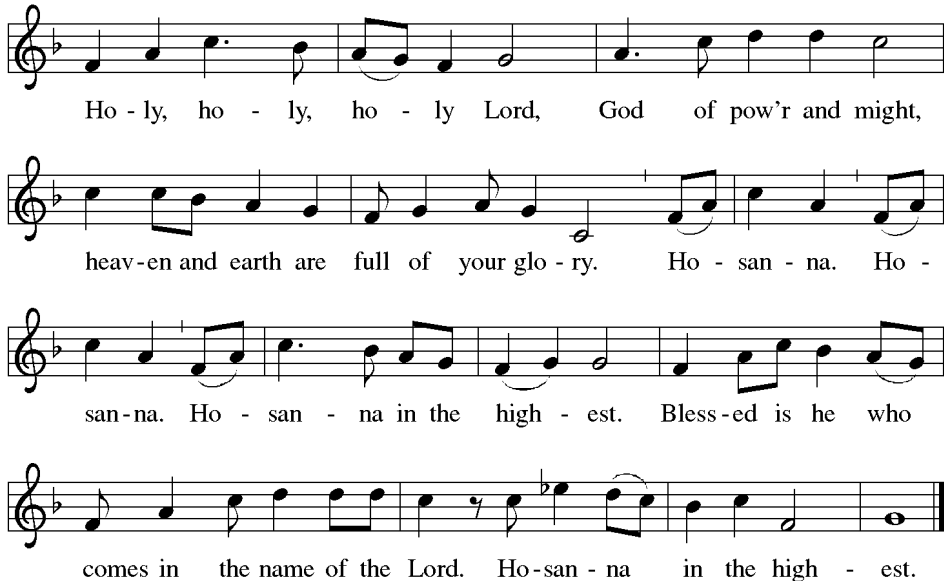
The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.  
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.  
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

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.

## HEALING PRAYER

*During the distribution of Holy Communion, healing prayer ministers will be available to pray with you. After you receive Holy Communion, you are invited to approach a healing prayer station where you can share a prayer request for which they will pray.*

## 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.

**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: *I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light***

**ELW 815**

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Live in hope.

**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:** Doreen O'Leary & Kris Pearson

**Assisting Minister:** Rick Hanson

**Ushers:** Kevin Reichler

**Acolyte:** Matthew Yanke

**Lector:** Kathy Alsgaard

**Live Stream:** Greg Boyd

**Coffee Hour:** Robin Pietrick

## STAFF

**Pastor:** The Rev. Dr. Brian R. Rajcok – [pastorbrian@stmatthewavon.org](mailto:pastorbrian@stmatthewavon.org)

**Associate Pastor:** The Rev. Ryan Heckman – [revryan@stmatthewavon.org](mailto:revryan@stmatthewavon.org)

**Director of Music:** Sarah Schiener-Redenz – [music@stmatthewavon.org](mailto:music@stmatthewavon.org)

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

**Sexton:** Roy Zurell – contact the office

## VISIT US ONLINE

**Website:** [www.stmatthewavon.org](http://www.stmatthewavon.org)

**Facebook:** [SaintMatthewLutheranChurch](https://www.facebook.com/SaintMatthewLutheranChurch)

**YouTube:** @StMatthewAvon

**Instagram:** @stmatthewlutheranavon



## ADULT FORUM

Adult Forum topics through February will be focused on the theme "Love." You're invited to join these conversations and develop a biblical, theological, and poetic foundation on what love is and can be in our world! This Sunday, February 2, Rev. Ryan will kick the series off with a look at Biblical Romance. Join him after 9:00am worship in the Gathering Space as we explore romance stories in our scripture... come "feel the love!" Oooh la la!

## THE WEEK AHEAD

<b>Sunday</b>	9am: Sanctuary Worship w/ Holy Communion	10:20am: Sunday School & Adult Forum	10:30am: Confirmation Class
<b>Tuesday</b>	10am: A.A. (Open to All)	12:30pm: Threads of Faith	2pm: Choir Rehearsal
<b>Wednesday</b>	9:30am & 5:15pm: W.W		
<b>Thursday</b>	10am: Bible Study	2pm: Centering Prayer	
<b>Sunday</b>	9am: Sanctuary Worship w/ Holy Communion	10:20am: Sunday School & Adult Forum	10:30am: Confirmation Class

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### DIASTER RELIEF: CALIFORNIA WILDFIRES

Lutheran Disaster Response is coordinating with the Southwest California Synod, Pacifica Synod and other partners to assess the needs of people impacted by the wildfires. We will work with them to provide for immediate needs and recovery amid the widespread destruction. Lutheran Disaster Response is committed to accompanying recovering communities for months and years to come.

If you'd like to give to these efforts, please write a check to "St. Matthew Lutheran Church" and write "Lutheran Disaster Response" in the memo line.

## THREADS OF FAITH A New Sewing Ministry!

There's a new opportunity for fellowship at St. Matthew beginning **Tuesday, February 4, 2025 at 12:30pm**. Stacey H. & Rev Ryan invite you to join them in the Hall of Evangelists for "Threads of Faith" a new sewing ministry. You do not need to be a quilter or sewing enthusiast to join....all are welcome. We will be sharing our thoughts on sewing, quilting, and sharing skills!

Throughout the year, we will collaborate on projects to be donated. If you sew, fantastic. If you don't sew, but are interested in learning, join us. If you're available to help in non-sewing ways, there's a place for you and tasks to be done. If this first date and time doesn't work for you please reach out to Stacey or Rev Ryan to let them know for future planning. We want to find the best time to welcome those who are interested! You can reach Stacey at [mkcheart@gmail.com](mailto:mkcheart@gmail.com) or Rev. Ryan at [revryan@stmatthewavon.org](mailto:revryan@stmatthewavon.org).

## SMLC WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

**Tuesday, February, 11th from 12:30 PM - 2:00 PM**

February is the month of love and the Women's Fellowship gathering will be filled with love and lots of sweet things.

One of our sweet projects will be decorating a Valentine cookie and a second project will be creating Valentine goody bags for some very special people.

Please make sure you save your appetite for our special dessert to share while socializing, because what could be sweeter than a Valentine Brownie Sundae Bar with all of the fixings?

We hope to see you there to help spread the love and fellowship.



## 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](http://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.***