



224 Lovely Street, Avon, CT 06001-4018  
(860) 673-3301 [www.stmatthewavon.org](http://www.stmatthewavon.org)

### NOVEMBER WORSHIP SCHEDULE

#### November 5, 12:

9:00 a.m. Sanctuary Communion Service  
10:30 a.m. Sunday School & Adult Forum

#### November 19 & 26:

9:00 a.m. Sanctuary Communion Service

#### COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Jack Pietrick, President	Ellen Ericson
Sheila Jarka, Vice President	Fred Fenn
Meg Kraft, Secretary	Rick Hanson
George Spoering	Kevin Reichler
Pastor Brian Rajcok	George Reider
	Jason Lindquist

#### STAFF:

Brian Rajcok, Pastor  
Sarah Schiener, Director of Music  
Paul Martin, Church Administrator  
Roy Zurell, Sexton  
Steven Smolnik, Publisher



**We Are Here For You** A reminder that your pastor is here for you whenever you have a pastoral need. The pastor is fully vaccinated and is making in-person visits. He can also talk and pray with you over the phone, in a Zoom meeting, outside, or socially distanced indoors at church. Please call the office if you have a pastoral need.

### A LETTER FROM THE PASTOR

November has always been a month when I try to call to mind what I'm thankful for. With Thanksgiving at the end of the month, the time leading up to it can be used as time to reflect on the gifts we've been given and all the blessings we have in life. And while Thanksgiving is not a religious holiday, it certainly offers us a chance to consider all the blessings God has given us. The human brain has a way of focusing on the negative. It's been said 'the positive' slides off our brain like Teflon and 'the negative' sticks to our brain like Velcro. Biologically this has purpose as it has helped our survival as a species, because it's more important to think about the lion that could kill you than about the pretty flowers that smell nice. However, this has led to a modern tendency to always reflect on the negative; and reveals just how much we need to train our minds to intentionally count our blessings and focus on the positive.

The practice of thanksgiving and gratefulness is a wonderful spiritual practice, especially this time of year. In the past I've done an exercise to take five minutes and write as quickly as possible as many things I can think of that I'm thankful for. This is an excellent way to kick-start your practice of gratefulness. Then work on the art of gratefulness whenever you get the chance. Being attentive to the details of every day, and considering the beauty of all we see, is a powerful way to direct our minds toward gratefulness. This time of year also sees the leaves change and the air smell of harvest. Be attentive to this as much as possible, directing your attention to gratitude and thanksgiving. Gratitude can also be grown when we reflect on the blessings of our relationships. Remembering loved ones who have departed, and spending time with those still with us, can instill a sense of love and gratitude for the gift of family and friends. In addition to the beauty of the world and the beauty of relationships, we can reflect on the mystery of life and feel intense gratitude. Reflect on the sense of thankfulness you feel for the gift of life. Feel the simple awe at the fact that you are alive—the miracle that you have being, awareness, and conscious experience. It is truly the most mind-blowing thing in the universe! Finally, reflect with thanksgiving on God's love for you. Let this love sink in and pour out of you to others. Reflect on the love of God shown to us in Jesus Christ and practice the art of gratitude as you grow more and more in love with God.

Blessings to you this month as you practice the art of thanksgiving and gratefulness. I pray that you have much to be thankful for and that you know may know how much you are loved by God.

In gratitude,  
Pastor Brian





### **PASTOR BRIAN'S INSTALLATION**

We will celebrate Pastor Brian's installation as senior pastor of St. Matthew on Sunday November 5th at 4:00 p.m. A dinner reception will follow. Join us for this wonderful celebration!

### **INTERFAITH THANKSGIVING SERVICE**

St. Matthew will host Avon's annual interfaith Thanksgiving service this year! It will be Tuesday Nov. 21st beginning with a soup supper at 6:00 p.m. and interfaith worship at 7:00 p.m. We hope you'll join us as we host our brothers and sisters of different faith traditions, and worship God together!

### **SUNDAY SCHOOL**

Sunday School will meet November 5, 12, and 19 this month. We will not have class Thanksgiving weekend. On November 19 we will not have regular class but instead will hold our annual Operation Christmas Child packing event. We hope you'll join us for this intergenerational event!



### **CONFIRMATION**

Our confirmation class will be volunteering at Grace Lutheran Church in Hartford on Friday Nov. 3rd. Parents have the option of carpooling from St. Matthew or meeting us there.

Confirmation class will be held November 12 and 19 this month. We will not have class Nov. 5 due to Pastor Brian's installation, and we will have off Thanksgiving weekend as well.

### **BIBLE STUDY**



Bible Study will meet at 10:00 a.m. the first and third Thursday of November: the 2nd and 16th. All are welcome!

### **CENTERING PRAYER**

Centering Prayer group meets on Zoom Thursdays at 2:00 p.m. The group has decided not to read a book together this fall; instead we will pray together and focus our discussion on whatever short devotion is chosen for the day. All are welcome!



### **MEN'S GROUP**

Our monthly men's breakfast will be Saturday Nov. 18 at 8:30 a.m. RSVP by Thursday Nov. 16 so we know how many to prepare for. See you there!

### **SMLC TAG SALE UPDATE - BENEFITTING FOODSHARE**

The Tag Sale will be held on Saturday 11/11/23 from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. and is cash only. Volunteers are asked to arrive at 8:00 a.m. There will be two shifts, a.m. and p.m. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the Gathering Space. Many hands and talents are needed. Reminder, NO clothing or bedding. Handbags and small furniture items o.k.

Item Drop off: In the Fireside Room, in the rear corridor. For larger items requiring assistance please call ahead. When church is not open, a bin will be available near the front door.

- ◆ Drop off will begin Sunday, 11/5 right after the service until 1:00pm.
- ◆ Monday – Wednesday. The building is open 8am - 3pm.
- ◆ Set-up will begin Thursday – 9am – 7pm in the Hall of the Evangelists
- ◆ Set-up continues Friday – 9am – 4pm in the Hall of the Evangelists



**SAVE THE DATE: OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD - NOVEMBER 19**

We will hold our annual intergenerational event, building boxes for Operation Christmas Child on Sunday November 19 beginning after service.



Bring your friends and family. This year we will put together special boxes for 8-10 year old boys and girls around the world. If you are still interested in donating items please drop them off to the main office with Paul. Also, if you are interested in helping to set up the event the day before or morning of, please reach out to Paul and he will let Melissa know.

**WE NEED YOU: SPECIAL CHOIR FOR INSTALLATION SERVICE**

The St. Matthew Choir needs additional voices for Pastor Brian's installation service on November 5th at 4 pm! Our numbers are especially low this fall, so having more singers will make all the difference for the special occasion.

There will be 3 rehearsals for the service, but if you cannot attend all three, please speak with Sarah Schiener-Redenz to work out another way to prepare.

There was one rehearsal held on Oct. 25th, and the next two rehearsals will be held on:

- ⇒ 2. Wednesday, November 1, 7:00-7:45 p.m.
- ⇒ 3. Sunday, November 5, 3:00-3:30 p.m.

Please join us so we can show our support for Pastor Brian with a strong choir! There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the Gathering Space so Sarah can prepare enough music for everyone.

**COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS**

- On the recommendation of the finance committee, **a new CPA will be hired** effective November 1.
- **Repairs and upgrades for the parsonage are progressing nicely.** Contribution for the Uplift the Parsonage fund are still being donated.
- **Pastor Brian's Installation and Dinner** will be held on Sunday, November 5 beginning at 4:00pm.
- **St. Matthew will host the Avon Interfaith Thanksgiving Service** on Tuesday, November 21. Soup supper will be at 6:00 p.m. and the service will be held at 7:00 p.m.
- The Christian Education hiring committee and Church Council have **agreed to hire Ryan Heckman** to be St. Matthew's Director of Christian Education. Ryan will begin November 1st--we are excited to welcome him!

**DONATIONS FOR AN IMMIGRANT FAMILY**



In partnership with Grace Lutheran and Emanuel Lutheran in Hartford, an immigrant family of four moved into the parsonage intern apartment last week. They will likely be staying for several weeks. If you would like to help this family you can consider donating grocery items, such as cereal, granola bars, snacks, etc. Please bring your donations directly to the office anytime from 8:00 am - 3:00 pm, Monday - Thursday. Thank you for your support!

**HANDS OF GRACE DONATIONS**

Hands of Grace in New Hartford is a wonderful food ministry in our area. They are currently in need of donations of juice and coffee. If you would like to donate bottles of juice or containers of coffee you may bring them to the church office or place them in the donation bin outside the office. Thank you for your support!

**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.*

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
 <h1>November 2023</h1>			<b>1 ALL SAINTS DAY</b> 9:30 WW Meeting 5:15 WW Meeting 7:00 Overeater's Anonymous 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	<b>2</b> 9:00 Christmas Cottage 10:00 Bible Study 2:00 Centering Prayer	<b>3</b> 9:00 Christmas Cottage	<b>4</b> 9:00 Christmas Cottage
<b>5 DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME ENDS</b> 9:00 Sanctuary Communion Service 10:15 Sunday School & Adult Forum  4:00 Pastor Brian's Installation	<b>6</b>	<b>7 ELECTION DAY</b>	<b>8</b> 9:30 WW Meeting  5:15 WW Meeting 7:00 Overeater's Anonymous 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	<b>9 VOICE Deadline</b>  2:00 Centering Prayer	<b>10</b>	<b>11 VETERANS' DAY</b>  9:00 Tag Sale
<b>12</b> 9:00 Sanctuary Communion Service 10:15 Sunday School & Adult Forum  5:00 Confirmation	<b>13</b>  7:00 Finance Committee	<b>14</b> 7:00 Avon Land Trust 7:00 Church Council	<b>15</b> 9:30 WW Meeting  5:15 WW Meeting 7:00 Overeater's Anonymous 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	<b>16</b> 10:00 Bible Study  2:00 Centering Prayer	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> 8:30 Men's Breakfast
<b>19</b> 9:00 Sanctuary Communion Service 10:15 Operation Christmas Child  5:00 Confirmation	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> 6:00 Interfaith Soup Supper 7:00 Interfaith Thanksgiving	<b>22</b> 9:30 WW Meeting  5:15 WW Meeting 7:00 Overeater's Anonymous 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	<b>23 THANKSGIVING</b>  OFFICE CLOSED	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b> 9:00 Sanctuary Communion Service	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> 9:30 WW Meeting  5:15 WW Meeting 7:00 Overeater's Anonymous 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	<b>30</b>  2:00 Centering Prayer		
						

November 2023

SAINT MATTHEW LUTHERAN CHURCH  
 224 Lovely Street, Avon, Connecticut 06001-4018

