



224 Lovely Street, Avon, CT 06001-4018
(860) 673-3301 www.stmatthewavon.org

SUMMER WORSHIP SCHEDULE

July 2: Outdoor Worship:

9:00 a.m. Outdoor Communion Service

July 9—August 27:

9:00 a.m. Sanctuary Confirmation Service

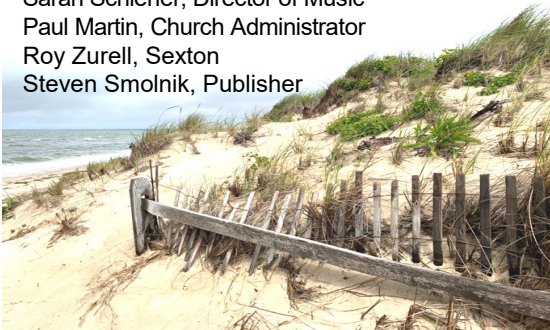


COUNCIL MEMBERS:

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.

Uplift the Parsonage

A Letter from the Council President

Dear Members of the St. Matthew Family,

For the past eight weeks, our Church Council and Property Committee have been assessing the current condition of the parsonage. Upon review, we have found some major issues which need to be addressed. The old saying...out of sight, out of mind fits perfectly for our parsonage. Recently, we held our annual church picnic. Did you even give a second thought that the parsonage was right behind us? Most of our members have never been in the parsonage and although the home has some beautiful features, there are areas which need fixing as well as areas which require updating. Some parts of the house have not been updated in over 50 years.

Over the years, former pastors, interns, sextons, and even parishioners have called 22 Greenwood Drive their home and there have been times when the house was vacant. Up until five months ago we anticipated that the house would be vacant again. However, we are all rejoicing in the fact that Pastor Brian is our new Lead Pastor and will be living in the house. The church as well as the house are both important assets of this congregation and we have a significant financial investment in both structures.

Our Council as well as our Property Committee on a yearly basis, work hard to maintain our facilities. The list of their accomplishments is many, however, we often find ourselves in the position of having to deal with unplanned problems. This results in us often having to determine which issues have to be addressed first, which means that some projects move farther down the to-do list. It's now recognized that we need to move forward in a timely manner to make the repairs and upgrades that are urgently needed in the parsonage.

Many of you will remember that in January of 2018 the parsonage furnace malfunctioned, and we lost heat. No one was living in the house at the time and the result was disastrous. The baseboard heating pipes all split and water was everywhere. Insurance covered \$65,000 of the cost. However, we decided that it was time to replace the heating system with a forced hot air system. That upgrade was not covered in the insurance settlement and we as a congregation covered the cost, which was \$18,000.

Currently, the Council is moving forward on making the necessary repairs needed in the house. Top on our list is eliminating the mold in the furnace room which is potentially unhealthy. The furnace room is located (cont.)

(cont.) directly behind the living room. The outside walls of the furnace room are made of field stone which allows moisture to seep in between the stones. It was a common building technique when the house was originally built but is certainly causing challenges today. Our goal is to eliminate the water problem in the furnace room, which is causing mold with an up-to-date drainage system, dehumidifier, sump pump, and the installation of rim joist insulation which will also help eliminate the constant rodent problem.

A sub-committee of the Church Council has been formed to oversee the task of both fixing problems and upgrading areas that need to be improved. A special thanks goes to Council Members Ellen Ericson, Sheila Jarka, George Reider, Kevin Reichler, and Pastor Brian for serving with me on the subcommittee. Thank you also to Ben Wright for joining our subcommittee in his capacity as our Property Committee chair and David Betsch for helping to formulize our ideas into workable designs for updating the second floor bathroom areas. Plans have been designed to bring the parsonage up to current 2023 standards. Three contractors have been contacted and cost estimates are being submitted for consideration. In order to get underway, we have Endowment dollars from previous years, which were earmarked for internal use, and for one reason or another were never required, available to us to begin the start of the restoration and repair of the parsonage. The Endowment Committee as well as the Church Council have authorized these funds to be used in order to begin some of the most critical repairs.

This plan will enable us to begin some of the projects this summer. Bottom line...the congregation's investment in the parsonage will enable Pastor Brian to have a nice, safe, and healthy place to live which we can all be proud of. In the coming months, I will share with you the pictures of the problem areas in the house as well as our plans for improvements in a power point presentation which I presented to the Council last month. The purpose of this letter is to inform the congregation that the improvement of the parsonage has become a major focus of your church council and that during this summer and fall our goal is to **"Uplift the Parsonage"**.

Yours in Christ,

Jack Pietrick, SMLC Council President

A LETTER FROM THE PASTOR

Every June members of the New England Synod of the ELCA meet for Synod Assembly. At Synod Assembly we are given updates on the ministries of the synod and the ELCA as a whole, we review the synod budget, and consider resolutions to pass. It is also a great time for fellowship and connecting with Lutherans throughout the synod, and worshipping together with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

On June 9-10th I attended Synod Assembly with Sheila Jarka and George Reider who served as our congregational delegates and Bill Parchen who serves as a member of Synod Council. This year's Assembly was a good experience. It was held at the DCU Center in Worcester MA and began at noon on Friday. We heard from ministries like Ascentria, Camp Calumet, ELCA World Hunger, and the synod's Anti-Racism Team. We also heard an update from Faith Lutheran Church in Cambridge, MA, the congregation which suffered from a fire on Easter Sunday of this year. There was only one resolution which required voting; this involved a statement regarding Russia's war in Ukraine and our desire for peace. After a good deal of discussion and rewording, the resolution passed.

During Synod Assembly we also attended worship at Trinity Lutheran Church in Worcester and had the opportunity to attend various workshops. Some of us attended the World Hunger workshop, co-lead by Pastor Ben Hogue who preached at St. Matthew in May. On Day 2 of the Assembly it was announced that congregations in the New England Synod reached our goal to raise \$100,000 for ELCA World Hunger to match a generous donation for the cause. The total raised was \$132,000 making a grand total of \$232,000 to be donated to ELCA World Hunger. We were told this is the largest campaign by any synod in the entire history of ELCA World Hunger! Congratulations to the New England Synod for such tremendous generosity. St. Matthew contributed to this effort and we should feel proud of (continued...)

(... continued) our support for this excellent ministry!

Finally, another important item which was discussed is the fact next year Bishop Hazelwood's term will end and he has announced he will be retiring and not running again for bishop. The synod has organized a Bishop Election Process Team and they are asking pastors and congregation members to fill out a Synod Landscape Survey which you can find a link to in our weekly Constant Contact or below.

Overall, Synod Assembly was a good experience. Please feel free to talk to Bill, George, Sheila, or me about it. We're happy to share about the experience and will do our best to answer any questions we can.

Peace & Blessings,

Pastor Brian



SYNOD LANDSCAPE SURVEY

Next year the New England Synod will be electing a new bishop. As part of the process for preparing the synod for new leadership, the synod is asking all pastors and congregation members to take the Synod Landscape Survey, which is the synodical version of the CAT survey. The survey should take about 20 minutes to fill out. Your thoughts and perception of the synod are very valuable and appreciated. The survey can be accessed in our weekly Constant Contact or by using [this link](#).

Thank you for taking the time to help!

DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION UPDATE

Members of our hiring committee met on Zoom last month and had good conversation about our hopes for St. Matthew's Christian Education ministries and the Director of Christian Education we hope to find. We are still searching for candidates for the position and have reached out to local preschools and elementary schools, pastors from local congregations, and have posted on Indeed and the New England Synod website. Please feel free to reach out if you know anyone who might be a good fit!

ITEMS FOR A NEIGHBOR IN NEED

We are working to help a local single mom who has a nine year old girl and is expecting a baby boy in August. We are collecting baby items, kitchen items, and bathroom items. If you would like to donate anything you may bring them to the donation box outside the church office. A full list of items needed is available there and we ask that you check off the items you donate or plan to donate. You may also call the church office to see which items are still needed. Thank you for your support and generosity.

Household items:

Pots & Pans	Silverware
Toaster	Queen bed linens
Coffee table	Full bed linens
Night stands	Bed frames/headboards
2 Dressers	Several towels & washcloths
Rugs	3 Lamps/standing lights
Bath mats	3 sets of curtains

Baby items:

Wipes	Pampers (many)
Bibs	Bottle & bottle cleaner
Blankets	Diaper rash cream
Crib sheets	Infant pajamas
Baby shoes	Infant t-shirts
Hats	Other clothes
Baby wash	Burping cloths

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 style="margin: 0;">July 2023</h1>						1
2 9:00 Outdoor worship with Holy Communion	3	4 Independence Day 	5 9:30 WW Meeting 5:15 WW Meeting	6	7	8
9 9:00 Sanctuary Communion Service	10 7:00 Finance Committee	11 7:00 Avon Land Trust 7:00 Church Council	12 9:30 WW Meeting 5:15 WW Meeting	13	14	15 VOICE DEADLINE
16 9:00 Sanctuary Communion Service	17	18	19 9:30 WW Meeting 5:15 WW Meeting	20	21	22
23 9:00 Sanctuary Communion Service	24	25	26 9:30 WW Meeting 5:15 WW Meeting	27	28 	29
30 9:00 Sanctuary Communion Service	31					

Summer 2023



JUNE CHURCH COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

Finances are currently strong and members are reminded to continue giving throughout the summer.

The search for a Director of Christian Education continues. If you're aware of someone for this position, please refer them to Pastor Brian or Meg Kraft.

Pastor Brian shared his continuing education and vacation schedule for the summer. All replacement pastors are scheduled.

SUMMER OFFICE PROJECT



Our Office Administrator is looking for some assistance this summer. Paul will be cleaning, organizing, and updating the online member database. He will need some experienced eyes to look over the current list and see what changes need to be made. If you have any interest in helping, or have more questions about the project please [email the office](#).

BRIDAL TEA






The women of St. Matthew Lutheran Church are invited to a Bridal Tea for Sarah Schiener, Director of Music, Sunday, August 6th following the 9:00 a.m. church service. The event will be held at the home of Beth & Steve Wilson, located at 12 Hammersmith in Avon. We're requesting that those who wish to attend please bring your favorite recipe on a sheet of 8x11.5" paper so they may be made into a book for Sarah.

To RSVP, please email the office (office@stmatthewavon.org). Also, let us know if you'd like to sign-up to bring finger foods in 2"-3" size such as sandwiches (egg salad, chicken salad, cucumber and cream cheese), tea breads, scones, sweet desserts, fruits and vegetables.

CALLING ALL SUMMER BAKERS

We are looking for people who enjoy baking and would like to provide muffins or bread for our Sunday morning coffee hour. We need 2 people per Sunday. This will run from June 25th – August 27th. Please check out the new sign-up sheet on the bulletin board, and volunteer for any Sunday that works for you. Thank you!



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<h1>August 2023</h1>						
						
		1	2 9:30 WW Meeting 5:15 WW Meeting	3	4	5
6 9:00 Sanctuary Communion Service Bridal Tea for Sarah Schiener following the service.	7	8 7:00 Church Council	9 9:30 WW Meeting 5:15 WW Meeting	10	11	12
13 9:00 Sanctuary Communion Service	14 7:00 Finance Committee	15 VOICE DEADLINE	16 9:30 WW Meeting 5:15 WW Meeting	17	18 	19
20 9:00 Sanctuary Communion Service	21	22	23 9:30 WW Meeting 5:15 WW Meeting	24 	25	26
27 9:00 Sanctuary Communion Service	28	29	30	31	