

ST. MATTHEW MATTERS



ST. MATTHEW LUTHERAN CHURCH
11213 Highway 49, Gulfport, MS 39503

228-864-6264

E-Mail Address: m1919@bellsouth.net

Web Page: stmatthewgulfport.tripod.com

Sunday School 9:30 a.m.

Worship 10:45 a.m.

PASTOR

Rev. Dr. Jeffrey Dukeman, Ph.D.

Phone: 228-967-2820

E-Mail Address:

jeffreydukeman@gmail.com

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS*

Monday – Thursday

9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Closed on Friday

*or by appointment

Message from the Pastor

In this my final newsletter at St. Matthew I would simply like to say thank you and pray for God's blessings on us all for the future.

In my final sermon I plan on looking at some of the highlights of my time with you as pastor of St. Matthew. Instead of doing that here, I would rather like to say thank you. It is amazing in my view how God provides for us in our lives. I came out of seminary having done a lot of reflection on systematic theology. But my time here taught me extensively about Christian love. You have been so loving toward me and my family, and I hope that you feel that we have been so toward you as well. It's been amazing to see how the love I studied about in a more academic setting has gotten lived out in the flesh here at St. Matthew. I know that God has helped our family grow, and I believe he has helped you grow as well. I am so grateful for the fellowship we have shared together. I thank God for this, and I thank you as well as I know that God has worked through you.

I also would like to pray for God's blessings on us all for the future. I pray for this, but I also trust that God will do it because that is who God is. He loves us more than we can possibly know. I pray that he will continue to shower his love upon us. I pray that he would help us to more and more know the certainty and hope that are ours because of the cross of Christ. And I pray that we would continue to grow in Christian love through the power of the Holy Spirit in our midst. I pray that we would both know love from our fellow Christians as well as ourselves be full of love for others. I am confident in God's providence in these things, and for this reason I have great confidence in St. Matthew's future as well as our own family's future in our new ministry setting. In an ideal world, Christians would never be parted from each other. But this is not yet an ideal world, and I trust that God will help us in making decisions on how best to serve the world in his name. God will bless the people of St. Matthew and he will bless my family. That's what God does. He is faithful, and he will do it. I consider you all to be my family, brothers and sisters in Christ. May God bless us as his family, and may God bless his whole church on earth and through it his world that is in so desperate need of his love.

Pastor Dukeman

Stewardship

Caring for My Neighbor

If any of the Ten Commandments might tempt us to think that keeping the Law is easy, it would be the Fifth Commandment. After all, how hard is it to get through life without murdering somebody? The vast majority of people can handle that!

But Jesus famously blows up this notion by pointing out that the command, “you shall not murder,” goes much deeper — down to the heart.

You have heard that it was said to those of old, “You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.” But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, “You fool!” will be liable to the hell of fire. (Matt. 5:21–22)

Hatred and disdain come from the same sort of crookedness of heart as murder. With both murder and hatred, you look down on another person and think them of little worth.

In the Small Catechism, Luther also points out that every “do not” in the commandments also includes a “do this:” “We should fear and love God so that we do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body but *help and support him in every physical need*” (SC, Fifth Commandment, emphasis added).

We are not called merely to avoid evil; we must also do positive good.

So when Jesus drew near to us and became our neighbor by taking up our humanity, He came not only to avoid harming us, but He came to positively help us, bless us and serve us.

We are now called to show the love to our neighbors that Christ showed to us. Your neighbor is yet another gift that God has given you that requires your stewardship. We are called to show mercy, to be kind, to love and serve our neighbor. One aspect of this stewardship is financial: our neighbors need us to support the church’s work so that they can hear the Gospel and come to faith. Our neighbors need the church’s alms and mercy work. Our neighbors need our faithful service in all we do in the name of Christ.

Stewardship Chair

Donald Shotzberger

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LET US PRAY. . .

for those on the
St. Matthew prayer list,

for our members who are confined to their homes
and, if possible, go by to visit them:

Donna Johnston
Rosa O'Bannon
Don Burnett

and for those
in the
Armed Forces,
Fire and Police Departments

O Father, whose care reaches all parts of the earth,
we humbly ask you graciously to behold
and bless those in the military; those who
fight fires; and those who serve in law
enforcement. Defend them from all
dangers of soul and body and grant that
both they and we, drawing nearer to
you, may be bound to your love.
In Jesus' name. Amen



CHECK OUT
ST. MATTHEW'S WEB PAGE

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*To those celebrating
we wish you a
Blessed and Happy Birthday*

February	
2	Ana Dukeman Diane Moore Phil Rutledge
9 11	Judy Parker Carl Noble
15	Shirley East
20	Maria Dukeman Natalie Myers

Blessed and Happy Anniversary

10	Carl & Elizabeth Noble
18	Phil & Janet Rutledge

*(If your birthday or anniversary date does not appear
above or is incorrect, please e-mail the church or call
the church office, 864-6264, and give us the information
so our files can be updated.)*

For Your Information

FOR THOSE NEWER TO THE CHURCH: Thank you for being with us today! Please consider filling out the Connection Card in your bulletin, which can be placed in the offering plate during the offering or simply given to an usher or to the pastor. There is also information about the church on the table in the narthex; please feel free to take as much of this as you would like. The class "Exploring the Christian Faith" with pastor is also available upon request if you have any interest (online video and book versions of the course are also on our website). Please also let pastor know if you have interest in becoming a member of St. Matthew. Typically, when people become a member we either have a short rite during the service or, as some people are not comfortable with this, simply have an acknowledgement in the bulletin. There is also a "Prospective and New Member" folder on the table in the narthex that contains information that can help introduce new and prospective members to the church and help them connect with the church. Finally, if you would like to receive a statement of your offering for the year, please pick up a box of envelopes on the table and sign the accompanying sheet to be registered in our secretary's database (once registered in the database, offering envelopes will also be sent to you).

SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS We are asking if anyone would like to volunteer to teach Sunday School on a rotating monthly basis this year. If interested, please see Raymond Holmquist.

GIRL SCOUTS will meet at the church each other Friday from 5:30 to 7:15 pm. Please contact Cheryl Boatner if you know of someone that is interested.

SPREADING THE WORD: Please consider taking church trifolds or business cards to a local business if you have a contact or if you just want to do a cold call. Please also consider taking some of these resources or some church devotionals with you to give to a friend.

The **CONTAINERS** for medicine bottles, eyeglasses, egg cartons and Mardi Gras beads are on the table in the first hall pass the foyer. These items will be donated to charity.

REFRESHMENTS. Each Sunday we need one person to provide refreshments. There is a sign-up table in the narthex. The person providing refreshments should also help make sure that the fellowship hall is cleaned up afterwards and the trash is taken to the curb.

February 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 St Matthews Quilters 10:00 a.m. Choir at Pastor's House 6:00 p.m.	2	3
4 <i>Fifth Sunday after Epiphany</i> (Green) LWML Mites	5	6 LWML Bible Study 1:00 p.m.	7	8 St Matthews Quilters 10:00 a.m. Choir at Pastor's House 6:00 p.m.	9	10
11 <i>The Transfiguration of Our Lord</i> (White) <i>Souper Bowl Sunday</i>	12	13	14 Ash Wednesday Service 12:00 PM 7:00 PM	15 St Matthews Quilters 10:00 a.m. Choir at Pastor's House 6:00 p.m.	16	17
18 <i>First Sunday in Lent</i> (Purple) <i>Potluck Lunch</i>	19	20	21 Soup and Sandwich 6:00 p.m. Lent Service 7:00 p.m.	22 St Matthews Quilters 10:00 a.m. Choir at Pastor's House 6:00 p.m.	23	24
25 <i>Second Sunday in Lent</i> (Purple)	26	27	28 Soup and Sandwich 6:00 p.m. Lent Service 7:00 p.m.	29 Choir at Pastor's House 6:00 p.m.		

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