



St. Matthew Lutheran Church Newsletter May 2017

From the Pastor...

Confirmation

We are fresh from the experience of Thomas Vanderlinde's confirmation. Do you know where confirmation came from in the long story of the church? It is not to be found in the Bible, except that in Acts 8:14-17 Peter and John are sent to Samaria to lay their hands on the Samaritans, who have been baptized, but who have not yet shown any signs of receiving the Holy Spirit. In the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern churches confirmation is considered a sacrament that brings the Holy Spirit to the person who has already been baptized. It is almost always a bishop who presides over the confirmation.

Martin Luther resisted the idea of keeping confirmation in the churches of the Reformation. He knew the Bible's teaching: the Spirit is promised in baptism. Confirmation as practiced in the medieval church carried a different message that took away from baptism. But many people were distressed at the idea their children would not be confirmed. Luther at last agreed to a confirmation service if it was understood as a recognition for youth, but not a giving of the Spirit. So, Lutherans have maintained confirmation, but we have not always done so according to Luther's wishes.

The Spirit is promised in baptism. Peter and John's journey to Samaria was an exception to the rule, for reasons we can surmise, but not know. Perhaps God was forcing a face-to-face meeting of Jews and Samaritans—ancestral enemies—by withholding the Spirit for a time. That doesn't change the truth of what Peter declared on Pentecost: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit..." Acts 2:38.

So this means baptized children, no matter how small, are to be treasured in the church as Spirit-filled just like adults. They are to be taught the truth of the Bible from early on, and they are to be shown by example how to worship and be part of the Christian community: the church. When confirmation comes along it should be a recognition of the evidence of faith we have already seen in the person to be confirmed. We have certainly seen it in Thomas.

VBS

Vacation Bible School is fast approaching. June 12-16 will find children from the community here in the afternoons learning about God. This is just the kind of ministry one would expect from a church that believes the Spirit is given to children in baptism, and that the church is now called to care for their upbringing in the faith.

Retro-VBS is our theme. We will attempt to capture the learning and fun of VBS in years past. We can use your help, and we need to find all the children we can reach with this proven ministry. [A registration form is included at the end of this newsletter.](#) [Note: LWR Quilting will not be held the Tuesday of VBS – June 13.]

Lincoln event coming

“Trampling Out the Vintage: Lincoln, the Bible, and the Wrath of God”

Religion played a significant role in emotions and decisions leading up to the Civil War. The moral and ethical question of slavery weighed heavily on the minds and consciences of many Christians in a nation headed for violent conflict. “A house divided cannot stand,” said Senate candidate Abraham Lincoln in 1858, quoting Jesus, whose life he had personally studied. With the start of the War, the Northerners’ religious interpretation of the times came to expression in the words of The Battle Hymn of the Republic; “He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored...”

The changing role of the Bible in Lincoln’s own life and decision-making will be the subject of a free public presentation on Tuesday, May 23, at 7:00 P.M. by Dr. Frederick W. Baltz of St. Matthew Lutheran Church of Galena. Learn the little-discussed, religious reason behind Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation. Members of the St. Matthew Choir will perform the Battle Hymn of the Republic following an overview of the lyrics for their imagery, coming largely from the Old Testament prophets who had confronted injustice in their day. A panel of area Civil War historians will also be on hand to offer their responses. They are: Steve Repp, Carl “Skip” Schwertfegger, and Bob Todd.

Our ministries

Sometimes it is good for all of us to see just how many ministries we are involved in through this church. Here is a list for you.

- United Churches of Galena Community Food Pantry We supply volunteers, goods, and money—we also support the food pantry through the golf outing.
- Clothing distribution each month.
- Nursing home Bible study each week bringing God’s Word and companionship.
- The Lutheran Church of South Sudan in great need of many kinds of help.
- Sister congregation Christ the Victor in Arizona, developing its ministries as a recent mission start.
- With These Hands, bringing hand-made items to people near and far in need of encouragement.
- Special Focus Ministries:
 - Ixtapa Mission in Mexico
 - Malaria Bed Net Project
 - Fill the Well, providing fresh water in developing countries
 - Lutheran Military Veterans
 - Children of Mendi, a school in Ethiopia
 - World Food Crisis
 - Riverview Center
 - Jo Daviess Workshop

- Ministry to hospital patients, nursing home residents, and homebound.
- Apple Tree ministry, new this year, providing materials for school children.
- Hosting Little Learners Preschool and making building available for other groups.
- Lutheran World Relief projects—quilts, school kits, health kits distributed World-wide.

In addition to all this, meals for area needy are now being considered in the Council. This may develop into another important way we meet local needs. This church reaches out in many directions. Please continue to support our ministries as you are able.

Video progress

The video project, “They Gave Us the Gospels,” is moving ahead with two director’s cuts now complete and two to go. I’m looking forward to our “world premiere” later this year.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Frederick W. Baltz

President’s Letter to the Congregation **May 2017**

Dear Members of the Congregation,

I pray each of you found great hope and joy during this Easter season as we celebrated Christ’s Holy Passion in our weekly Lenten services and in the celebration of the holy days of Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter.

The past month has been especially meaningful because we celebrated important events in the lives of our younger members and their families: Thomas Vanderlinde on his confirmation, and Lila Anderson, Izabella Farrey and Grace McIntyre on their first communions.

Thank you, everyone, who helped make these events for Thomas, Lila, Izabella and Grace, and their families, very special.

I also want to thank Pastor, our staff and members who worked and volunteered to make this Easter season so uplifting. I also include everyone involved with setting up and taking down the Shroud display and assisting with our public presentations, and also those members who helped with spring cleaning of the sanctuary on April 22.

Every month our church is in need of volunteers...volunteers for many tasks, but especially for our Saturday evening and Sunday morning services. A sign-up sheet titled “Those Who Serve” is always in the Welcome Center. We need Ushers and Acolytes, Lectors, Communion Servers, Offering Counters, and Worship Bulletin Folders.

If you have not signed up in the past to help, I invite you to do so now. Please call the church office, Pastor Baltz, or myself if you are willing. We'll make sure you are trained beforehand and if necessary, pair you with an experienced church member who will teach you the ropes!

Volunteering at your church is a wonderful way to praise and thank the Lord for all of the blessings He has bestowed upon you. I guarantee you will leave church on the day you serve with an uplifted heart.

Coming up in May, there will be many more special days to celebrate, including the holy days of The Ascension of our Lord and of The Visitation.

Bernadine Anderson, a member of our congregation and an ILT student, will conduct services the first two weekends in May while Pastor and his family are on vacation.

Mother's Day. Give thanks to the Lord for the mothers, grandmothers, aunts, daughters, nieces and special friends in your life, for each of them has the heart of a mother.

On May 20 our country will celebrate Armed Forces Day. Please remember in your prayers Tim Grass, Andrea and Ali, and also Elliott Baltz as he prepares to serve his country.

On Sunday May 21, the Sunday school children will be "pinned"!

On May 23, Pastor will present for the public at 7 pm a special program, Trampling Out the Vintage: Lincoln, the Bible and the Wrath of God. He and a panel of local Civil War historians will discuss the significant role of religion in the period leading up to the Civil War. The question of slavery will also be discussed, in addition to the role of the Bible in Lincoln's own life. Members of our choir will perform the Battle Hymn of the Republic, following an overview of the lyrics. This will be a unique event for all who are interested in our country's history.

And on May 29, Memorial Day, we will remember those who sacrificed their lives in the defense of our country.

Posted on the bulletin board in the narthex are two "thank you" notes from Riverview Center, our Special Focus Ministry earlier this year – one from the Executive Director of the organization and a hand-written note from a member of the Board of Directors. Thank you for your support. State funding has been cut drastically to the Center, but the need continues.

Preparation is underway for the June 8 Annual Golf Outing, in support of the Galena Food Pantry and of our own ministries. I encourage everyone to participate – golf, dining or otherwise. Please call Roger Johnson at 815-777-8523 after May 4 if you're interested in serving. There are many opportunities to become involved. If you're new to our congregation, it's a great way to meet other members of your church family.

Pastor is hard at work planning Vacation Bible School, June 12- 16, 1- 4 pm. He's selected a "retro" theme – cookies, Kool-Aid and poodle skirts – a throwback to the 50's and 60's when Pastor was in VBS. No, Pastor wasn't wearing poodle skirts back then, but I was. We are in need of volunteers....teachers, kitchen helpers, and more. Please let Pastor know that you will help.

On behalf of your Council, I want to report that the 2017 Painting Project of the addition, and part of the Phase 2 Lightning Protection Project, are in the planning stages for this summer. We must paint the exterior of the addition to properly maintain the siding. Because we'll need to rent a lift to accomplish this work, we'll also use the lift to complete another phase of the Lightning Protection Project, and save a bit of money overall.

We also have a number of smaller maintenance and repair projects on the "honey do" list: scraping, painting, digging, lifting, and more. Please call Dale Knipschild, 815-777-1399, if you have time, talent or treasure to help maintain our beautiful and historic church. Dale is Chairman of our Board of Trustees. The Trustees are responsible for many things, but most importantly the care of our facilities.

Last but not least, following my letter to you is a report from Charlie Marsden on the second meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee. Members gathered several weeks ago and discussed at length – two hours – the vision of our church, past, present and future. We all were tired that evening, but I must say it was the fastest two hour meeting I've ever attended. Once we started talking and sharing, the conversation took off. I encourage you to visit with Charlie, 815-777-1461, if you have questions or input as we prepare for Pastor's well deserved "retirement" and a new minister to lead our church family in the years to come.

I leave you with the verse of the day:

James 5:16

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

You are always welcome to call or email with your thoughts and questions: 563-424-0129 or njahyman@gmail.com. It is my blessing and honor to be your Council and Congregational President.

Your sister in Christ,
Nancy Hyman

Report from the Strategic Planning Committee
May 2017

Members and Friends of St Matthew,

The Strategic Planning Committee met on April 10, 2017. Our focus was on developing a Vision Statement for St Matthew Lutheran Church. I was personally very pleased with the depth and breadth of the discussion. Members of the committee were forthright and brutally honest. They came prepared, and it was obvious that we have a good, diverse group of people on the committee. People with experiences in other congregations and some people with long-time membership at St Matthew blended together to allow us to openly discuss our strengths and weaknesses. This will be a very good foundation for the development of our strategic plan.

We discussed the following topics:

1. Who are we?
2. Where does God want us to go?
3. What do WE want this church to look like?
4. Where do we want to be 1, 3, 5 years from now?

The outcome of all of this will be St Matthew Lutheran Church with a focus on the Study of the Word and being a Word-based congregation that allows us to become a very vibrant community of Believers. We will be a welcoming, warm and genuine congregation involved in mission and outreach locally, nationally, and internationally. We will offer our members and friends lots of things to choose from in their Faith journey, something for all ages. Our focus will be on families and age diversity in the Congregation. And since we are the only LCMC Congregation in the Tristate area, we will become the “Leading Church in the Tristate area.”

This brief summary is not just fancy words that make us all feel good; it is backed up by clear, concise statements of who we are and where we need and want to go. More on that when the final plan comes together.

Our next meeting will be on May 16, 2017. We will be focusing on wrapping up our Vision Statement and moving on to working on our Mission Statement and Values Statement.

I look forward to your thoughts, ideas, questions, and comments. And, I look forward to sharing the SPC discussions with you in more detail. Call me at 815.281.2628 or email me at ckmarsden@outlook.com.

May the Lord Bless Us and Keep Us,

Charles R. Marsden
SPC Committee Chair

The Augsburg Confession – Part Three and Final

Bernadine Anderson: Seminary Student - The Institute of Lutheran Theology (ILT.org)

This is the final installment of “The Augsburg Confession” in the monthly newsletter. I can’t believe my first year of seminary is almost over and I have loved every minute of it. This Article, that the Council has so graciously allowed me to do, is a project for my History Class on the Book of Concord. I thank you very much for taking the time to let me know what you think about it as I will have to write a paper next on how this project went. If you haven’t had the chance, please let me know your thoughts!

This month I’d like to mention the last 7 Articles in the Augsburg Confession which concern themselves with “Abuses Corrected” in the Roman Catholic Church during the time of the Reformation. Several of these Articles really stand out to me because I was born and raised Catholic and I always questioned these traditions. I am using an “abbreviated” version of the Articles to conserve space here.

XXII Of Both Kinds Of The Sacrament (Eucharist)

It is proper to offer communicants the consecrated bread and wine, not just the bread.

XXIII Of The Marriage Of Priests

Lutherans permit their clergy to enter the institution of Marriage. God blesses marriage as an order of creation and marriage and procreation is the natural outlet for human sexual desire.

- I remember as a child thinking, “Wow, that Priest is really nice. He ought to have a wife, someone to keep him company.” As an adult, I often wondered how my Priest could counsel me when he didn’t have a clue what it takes to have a successful marital relationship or how to raise screaming children when you are exhausted. I knew several great Priests who left the order to get married. What a loss for everyone involved.

XXIV Of the Mass

Lutherans use Mass as a public gathering for the purposes of community worship and the receiving of the Eucharist. Lutherans reject the practice of using the Mass as a “work” for both salvation and worldly (monetary) gain.

- The general greeting one Catholic would give another, in my experience, always included the date of the last visit to Church, especially if it was midweek, and how they sat in the front pew. Funny what sticks out in your head.

XXV Of Confession

Lutherans uphold the need for confession and absolution, but reject the notion that Confession should induce guilt or anxiety to the Christian. Absolution is offered for all sin, not just sins that can be recounted in a confession, as it is impossible for a man to know all of his transgressions.

- I have had many paradigm shifts during my lessons. One of the greatest is that you don’t go to confession FOR the unveiling of your sinfulness...rather, you RUN to confession to receive forgiveness!

XXVI Of the Distinction of Meats

Human traditions that hold fasting and special observances with dietary restrictions as a means of gaining the favor of God are contrary to the Gospel. While fasting and other practices are useful spiritual practices, they do not justify man nor offer salvation.

- This is good news to my ears as I recall all the times I had a bite of pepperoni pizza in my mouth when I suddenly realized it was Friday and it was not allowed. My Mom would ask me if I loved Jesus. I'd say yes and she would tell me to go ahead and eat it.

XXVII Of Monastic Vows

Man cannot achieve purity in community or isolation from the rest of the world, and perfection cannot be attained by any vow taken or actions of man alone.

- Having read a biography on Martin Luther I have learned what a dedicated Monk he was. He once said something like, "If ever there were a Monk, it was I". Luther loved the Roman Catholic Church and the Orders but as he came to know Jesus he knew that it was best for Christians to be out amongst the people. Serving and helping each other side by side. He believed that prayers were more than reciting memorized psalms throughout the day. He eventually married seeing that, for Him, it was what God had intended and it had great value.

XXVIII Of Ecclesiastical Power

The only power given to priests or bishops is the power offered through Scripture to preach, teach and administer the Sacraments. The powers given to the clergy in issues of government or the military are granted and respected only through civil means; they are not civil rulers of governments and the military by divine right.

- From what I have read, Bishops had their noses into all kinds of political affairs back then.

In conclusion, I must say that I am totally impressed with Lutheran Theology. The more I learn about Martin Luther and the Lutheran faith, the more I am sure I have always been Lutheran and just didn't know it! The gift of the Small and Large Catechism and all the articles within the Book of Concord are well thought out and 100% based on Scripture – the way it ought to be!

I'd like to take this opportunity to remind everyone that ILT has many wonderful courses. You can earn a degree or simply audit some classes to increase your Bible knowledge. I would just love to log into a class and see one of you there! I guarantee you will just love it. ILT is offering an Old Testament class next semester for a \$25 donation. This course is usually \$350 to audit it. Please consider taking the course and get you going on your next journey!

Bernadine Anderson

The Book of Concord: The Confession of the Evangelical Lutheran Church
Kolb/Wengert 2000 Augsburg Fortress

KEEPING THEM IN OUR PRAYERS



Timothy Grass was deployed to Afghanistan last year. The good news, he is scheduled to be returning home at the end of summer.



Elliot Baltz has joined the U.S. Army and will be shipping out to Ft. Benning, GA on the 29th of May. He is entering the Special Forces.

An informal Open House for Elliot will be held Saturday, May 27, starting at 6:00 pm at 10818 Golfview Drive, Galena.

Special Focus Ministry:

The next Focus Ministry: May 14 -July 2

Lutheran Military Veterans and Families Ministry Inc. (LMVFM) Fort Wayne, Indiana

LMVFM is one of the few organizations providing free care, counseling and programs to the military and their families. For more information visit their website www.lmvfm.org.

CELEBRATION CORNER FOR MAY

BIRTHDAYS

May 2 Ken Voigt
16 John Klinkner
18 Howard Klauer
20 Marion Muchow
25 Carolyn Stork
26 Laurelyn Vanderlinde
27 Elaine Fitch

ANNIVERSARIES

May 9 Jim & Marie Moser
17 Fred & Cindia Baltz
21 Dan & Connie Consedine
24 Howard & Nancy Klauer

USHERS: Please remain in the back of the church during the service to greet worshipers and provide assistance in case of an emergency.

READERS: An extra copy of each lesson will be located on the lector stand.

Church Communications Policy

In the event there is timely news about Church activities or our members that needs to be shared quickly, an email will be sent to you. For those members who do not have internet access, a calling committee has been set up to share this information. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Frederick W. Baltz at 563.580.7080.

Used Ink Cartridges

The Church will gladly accept any size, color, or make of used ink cartridges that you have. Used ink cartridges will be returned to Staples, who in turn will give a \$2 credit to the Church for each one, thereby helping to keep the cost of our office supplies at a minimum. Used ink cartridges may be left in the Office or in the Welcome Center.

Events This Month

<u>Every</u>	
Tuesday	10:00 am - Bible Study at The Nursing Home
2nd & 3rd Tuesday	12:30 pm – Quilters
Wednesday	8:30 am - Men's Bible Study (Except the week of May 7-11)
Wednesday	12:00 pm - Brown Bag Bible Study (Except the week of May 7-11)
Thursday	7:00 pm - Choir Practice (the 25th will be the last practice this season))
<u>Specific Dates</u>	
May 9	2:00 pm - With These Hands Ministry
May 13	No Communion
May 14	No Communion
May 15	Pentecost
May 16	6:00 pm - Strategic Planning Committee
May 17	6:00 pm - Church Council
May 23	2:00 pm - With These Hands Ministry
May 23	7:00 pm - "Trampling Out The Vintage" by Pastor Baltz
June 8	Twelfth Annual Golf Outing

Lending Library

We have a small lending library located in the Welcome Center. Such items as tapes, books (audio and written) are available for check out. Please remember to return what is checked out so the next person can enjoy them as well.

Lost and Found

This corner is increasing in volume. Please check "Our Lost and Found Corner" located in the Fellowship Hall on the coat rack.

With These Hands

Our Church is pleased with the number of items that this Ministry has been able to make: shawls, scarves, and lap blankets. We also have worked on some lovely Snow Bears and Little People for the "With These Hands" Christmas Tree. This year we delivered shawls to a total of 5 recipients. For Easter we created decorative eggs and offered them to the children and the young in heart.

We welcome you to join us the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month at 2:00 pm at the church. This activity is not limited to members of the Church; all are welcome to participate. Your **donations help us get supplies that we need. We also welcome donations of yarn and ¾ inch ribbon.**

For information please contact: Fabi Voigt

Ph: 713-447-6169 Email: kalivoigt@gmail.com

Note: If you know someone that needs a prayer shawl, please let us know.

SPECIAL REQUEST: If you have an article or a note for the newsletter, please submit it to: njahyman@gmail.com no later than the 20th of the month. Thank you.

Church Financial Summary through April 2017

	<u>April. 2017</u>	<u>Year-To-Date</u>
Total Income	\$12,664	\$46,835
Total Expenses	<u>(12,376)</u>	<u>(48,841)</u>
Total Net	\$288	\$(2,006)



St. Matthew Lutheran Church

127 South High Street, Galena

www.stmat.net

815 777-1134

Service times: Saturday at 5:30pm, and Sunday at 10:00am

Where God's work happens 7 days a week.

A First Century Church for the Twenty-first Century.

See our website for our full calendar of events.

From our Constitution



The mission of this congregation is to make disciples for Jesus Christ by going to people within and outside the Church with the message of the Gospel, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and teaching them by word and example to obey the Word of the Lord.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL FORM:

Retro-VBS

1:00-4:00 June 12 through June 16

FREE and open to all children through grade 6

St. Matthew Lutheran Church, 127 S. High St.

Vacation Bible School Registration

Child's name _____ One form per child, please.

Grade completed _____ Birthday _____ Age _____

Parents' names _____

Home address _____

Home phone _____ Alternate phone _____

Emergency contact person _____ Relationship to student _____

Home phone _____ Alternate phone _____

Food allergies Y N (List:) _____

Medical concerns Y N (Explain:) _____

Family doctor _____ Doctor's phone _____

Siblings attending VBS (names and ages) _____

Church affiliation _____ Church membership at _____

People who may pick up the child _____

Transportation needed? Y N Attendance 1 2 3 4 5

VBS leaders have permission to photograph/film the minor(s) designated above in any manner or form for any lawful purpose associated with this VBS program.

Parent's signature _____