

**Season's Greetings:**

Advent is my favorite season of the year. It might be partly because blue is my favorite color, but it's more because I'm an anticipation person: I like planning, designing, organizing, inviting, and imagining how events will turn out. Advent is the perfect season for that, what with all the preparations we are encouraged to make for Christmas, both in the spiritual realm and in more secular practices like decorating, gift-wrapping, and preparing seasonal foods. Whether it's just for a season or we're looking toward the future in general, anticipation can be a dangerous way to move through life; reality doesn't always live up to our lofty expectations.

The beauty of Christmas is that it doesn't depend on us, no matter how hard we have (or haven't) worked through Advent to create a happy holiday for family, friends, or coworkers; all that is only icing on the cookies. The hope that we celebrate during Advent is of God breaking into our world to do what we would never be able to do ourselves. Instead of merely looking down on us from heaven, waiting for us to get our preparations done right, God shows up in person—Emmanuel, God With Us.

So indulge in all the Advent preparations and Christmas rituals that help you to feel immersed in the magic of the season; we will certainly help with concerts, meals, and carols to get you in the mood. But when we light candles and sing Silent Night on Christmas Eve, it will not be what we have done that will have brought us there, but the celebration of what *God* has done—gifting God's very self to us.

*Peace & Joy in this season of Hope,  
Pastor Traci*



*Celebrate with Us*

**2025 CHRISTMAS SEASON**  
AT  
**ST. MATTHEW LUTHERAN**

**Adam Smith's Holiday Piano Concert**  
Friday, December 19<sup>th</sup> at 7PM

**Longest Night Lasagna Lunch**  
Sunday, December 21<sup>st</sup> after 10:30 Worship

**Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion**  
Wednesday, December 24<sup>th</sup> at 7PM

**Service of Lessons & Carols**  
Sunday, December 28<sup>th</sup> at 10:30AM

*All are Welcome*  
*115 E. Penn Street Martinsburg*





### Mitten Tree

Coming soon will be the first Sunday in Advent, November 30th, when you will see our annual "Mitten Tree" in our church narthex. Please be thinking as you shop, or make, children's mittens, gloves, hats, scarves, earmuffs, or socks to be hung on our "Mitten Tree" during Advent until December 21st. These will be distributed by the school nurses at Spring Cove Elementary Schools for children in need. Let's help children have a warmer Winter!

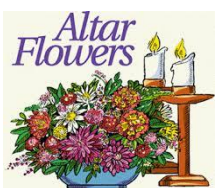


May you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the magi, and the peace of the Christ child this Christmas Season.

*From the staff of*

*St. Matthew Lutheran Church:*

*Pastor Traci, Jen, Laura, Phil, Camden, Mary, De, Adam and Jay*



The 2026 Altar Flower chart is posted on the Narthex bulletin board. Altar Flowers are a perfect way to remember loved ones or to honor loved ones. There are plenty of dates available. Please sign up now for the Sunday you wish to place flowers on the Altar.



My parents wanted me to tell everyone thank you for the Thanksgiving meal delivered by Pastor Traci and for the prayers as my dad is experiencing health issues.

*Thank You,  
Jen Ripka*

### 2026 Offering Envelopes



The Offering Envelopes are mailed directly to your homes monthly. Please let

the office know if you would like added to the mailing list.

Please **do not use** the "**Initial Offering Envelope**" until 2026.

The other options for offering or tithing are below:

#### Ways to Support St. Matthew

**Offering Envelopes:** These are mailed to our contributors at their homes monthly.

**Giving Online:** St. Matthew is excited to announce that you can now manage your giving online! Giving online is easy and allows you to set up automatic recurring contributions from anywhere you have access to the Internet. Simply follow these easy steps:

- 1) Visit the church website at "www.stmatthewlc.com"
- 2) Click on the "Giving" button, (at the left side of the main screen)
- 3) Follow the onscreen instructions to create an online profile and to schedule your recurring contributions.

QRCode Offerings:



- 1) Hold your mobile phone in the camera position over the "QR Code"
- 2) A link will pop up on your phone and tap the link
- 3) Follow the instructions on your phone.



## A Stewardship Minute DECEMBER 2025

What is Christmas all about? It is about God's special gift to the whole earth: our Lord, Jesus Christ ... and about our response to that gift!

The Christmas issue *Stewardship* reminds us of how we ought to respond to God's love, as shown in the person and actions of Christ on our behalf. Our response to God's gift of Jesus should be showing our love for God by being committed stewards of our entire lives. Here is a statement from *Stewardship* that deserves thinking about seriously: "I'm just managing what God has entrusted to me, but I'm doing it in his best interest."

The prophet Isaiah had a challenge while worshipping in the temple one day. The whole account of his experience is found in the Isaiah 6. Here is what Isaiah describes happened to him: "I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I; send me!" It is interesting to notice that right after the words, "send me!" there is an exclamation symbol. "Send me!" Isaiah was willing to give his all. And right then and there.

Christmas offers us the challenge to decide what we might do in response to God's loving gift to us. Shouldn't each of us think seriously about our commitment to Christ!

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, you gave us the gift of our Savior. Help us to give you the gift of ourselves and our sincere stewardship. **Amen**

A **Stewardship Minute** is available to subscribers of *Stewardship* at [www.parishpublishing.org](http://www.parishpublishing.org).



## Social Ministry Committee Corner

The birth of Christ reminds us of the boundless love and grace of God.

May your Christmas be filled with His peace and joy.

Packages for college students and military will be packed Saturday November 29 by the Social Ministry Committee members.

Christmas Boxes for our homebound and nursing home residents will be assembled at the convenience of the committee.

The 2025 Social Ministry Committee year is almost complete. December is dedicated to family and preparing for the birth of Christ.

Next meeting January 5 at 6:30 pm via zoom to prepare for 2026

MERRY CHRISTMAS to ALL St Matthew members from: Pastor Traci, Kaye Burket, Linda Smith, Tina Harclerode, Sarah Detwiler, Peggy Fryer, Peggy Steinfurth and Lottie Ebersole, committee chairman.

May your New Year be filled with sharing the love of Christ with others.

## Martinsburg Food Pantry

We will be open for Food distributions on Thursdays, December 4 and December 18 from 9:00 am until 11:00 am. Volunteers from Redefined Community Church will be assisting along



with the regular helpers. There are 12 churches, one for each month, that help at the pantry.

**Items most needed for December:**  
Beverages, Cereal, Fruit, Tuna/Hamburger Helper and Personal Supplies.

We thank St. Matthew Women for a donation in memory of Rev. Shaffer. Many thanks to those who generously have given all year to the Food Pantry!

*Linda Smith.*

## Cove Christmas Love



The Martinsburg Ministerium is, again, helping to provide presents for Spring Cove School Children in need. We have a tree in the church narthex with tags identifying the Christmas wishes of the recipients. Our congregation's goal for this year is to provide gifts for about 15 children through Cove Christmas Love. Shop for the item(s) listed on tag and return the unwrapped gift(s), WITH THE TAG, no later than Sunday, DECEMBER 7<sup>th</sup>

You can direct any questions to Peggy Steinfurth or Linda Smith. Thank you for sharing with the community as we help families in need at this time of Christmas cheer!



Advent Devotionals provided by On Eagle's Wings missionaries are available at the Usher Station.



This year's Annual Congregational Meeting will be held at the end of the 10:30 a.m. worship service on Sunday, December 14<sup>th</sup>. Copies of the 2026 Proposed Congregational Budget, 2026 recommendations for Ventures In Faith and Special Envelopes, and Giving Report are available at the usher station or the church office. The congregation will be asked to approve these proposals for 2026 at the 2025 Annual Congregational Meeting. If you have questions about the budget in advance of the meeting, please see Finance Committee Chair Jim Barley.

Help Our Area  
Students Stay

# Healthy for the Holidays

Now Through December 15<sup>th</sup>

We'll be collecting for the Middle & High School:

- \*Toothbrushes & Toothpaste
- \*Shampoo & Conditioner
- \*Body Wash & Bath Poufs
- \*Deodorant
- \*Period Products
- \*Men's & Women's Socks
- \*Women's Underwear (All Sizes)



*Let's help meet these needs for young folks in our community.*

## Talk-O Tuesday



Fellowship, Food, & Faith Conversation  
Tuesday, December 16<sup>th</sup> at 6PM  
La Fiesta at the Airport  
RSVP to the office by Noon



Dr. Adam Smith, Piano

# HOLIDAY CONCERT

7PM - Friday, December 19th

*St. Matthew Lutheran Church*

115 East Penn Street, Martinsburg

Free Admission

Free Will Offering to Benefit

Our Partner Ministry

*Camp Sequanota*



It's not unusual to feel  
a little blue at Christmas.  
St. Matthew Youth  
invite you to find  
winter solstice solace  
at our

# LONGEST NIGHT LASAGNA LUNCH

Sunday, December 21<sup>st</sup>  
Following 10:30 Worship  
in the Fellowship Hall



## Birthdays for December

02	Chris Cronrath	10	Andrea McGraw	19	Tonya F. Walter
	Alexis Hicks	11	Mace Baker	21	Tyson Rodgers
	Kyla Paul		Leah Park	27	Beth N. Snyder
03	Cathy Henzler	14	Jennifer Metzler	28	Noah Metzler
	Norah Kuster	15	Emily Gunnett	30	Carlos A. Lamborn
05	G. Devin Baker		John Russell	31	Ivy Haffling
06	Katherine Orzeck		Rev. Anamae Storbeck		
08	Elizabeth Bithell	17	Russell G. Dickson		
	Beth Garner		Ed C. Kreider		
	Joshua W. Gilbert				

## Anniversaries for December

13	Mark & Debra Guyer	24	Dennis R. & Barbara A. Brown
19	Glenn & Elaine L. Diehl	26	James A. & Janet F. Stewart
		30	Adam & Ashley Zanfino

## SERVING GOD AND US December 2025

Date	December 7	December 14 Congregational Mtg	December 21 Youth	December 24 Christmas Eve	December 28 Lessons & Carols
<b>Acolytes</b>	Gabby Decker	Gavin Kuster	Mace Baker	Gabby Decker Lily Lightner Lucy Lightner	Norah Kuster
<b>Lectors</b>	<b>TBD</b>	<b>TBD</b>	<b>TBD</b>	<b>TBD</b>	<b>TBD</b>
<b>Ushers</b>	Ed Kreider	Randy McGraw	Dennis Smith	Martie Gilbert	Stanley Smith
<b>Assist. Min.</b>	<b>Dawn Alexy</b>	<b>Shawn Orczeck</b>	<b>Youth</b>	<b>Jane Fagans</b>	<b>Elaine Smith</b>
<b>Altar Guild</b>	Jeannie Smith Cindy Snyder Jane Fagans	Jeannie Smith Cindy Snyder Jane Fagans	Jeannie Smith Cindy Snyder Jane Fagans	Jeannie Smith Cindy Snyder Jane Fagans	Jeannie Smith Cindy Snyder Jane Fagans
<b>Audio/Video</b>	Camden Kuster	Camden Kuster	Camden Kuster	Camden Kuster	Camden Kuster
<b>Offering Counters</b>	<b>Jim Barley Beth Garner</b>	<b>Jim Barley Beth Garner</b>	<b>Jim Barley Beth Garner</b>	<b>Jim Barley Beth Garner</b>	<b>Jim Barley Beth Garner</b>

### 2025 COUNCIL DIRECTORY AND MINISTRY STAFF

All phone numbers start with (814) unless otherwise noted.

Pastor	Rev. Traci Marriott	935-9267	Evangelism	Peggy Steinfurth	515-6205
Admin. Assistant	Jen Ripka	935-3801	Stewardship	Vacant	
Assistant Admin. Assist	Laura Orczeck	224-1208	Finance	Jim Barley	793-4623
President	Greg Haffling	793-9827	Social Ministry	Lottie Ebersole	232-6665
Vice President	Don Bulger	329-3412	Worship & Music	Tina Harclerode	317-5312
Secretary	Carla Brumbaugh	932-4082	Staff Support	Vacant	
Treasurer	Beth Garner	932-4156	Sexton	Phil Claar	215-0885
Property	Paul Decker	330-6345			
Christian Ed.	Amanda Decker	934-8798			



### HIGHLIGHTS BY COUNCIL IN NOVEMBER 2025

1. The Christmas program presented by the youth will be held on Sunday, December 21 followed by a "Blue Christmas" dinner after the service consisting of lasagna, salad, and dessert.
2. The Mending Ministry will be on hiatus until March 2026.
3. On November 29, the Social Ministry committee will be assembling care packages for college students and military members.
4. In early December, the Social Ministry committee will be assembling Christmas care packages for homebound and nursing home residents.
5. Copies of the budget will be available at the usher's station 2 weeks prior to the congregational meeting on December 14, as well the day of the meeting.
6. The Christmas Eve service will begin at 7:00 p.m. on Dec. 24.
7. The Service of Carols will be on Dec. 28.



**December 2025**  
**St. Matthew Lutheran Church**  
 115 E Penn St., Martinsburg, PA 16662-1127  
 Email: [stmatthewmartinsburg@gmail.com](mailto:stmatthewmartinsburg@gmail.com) 814-793-2413



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 2-5 pm Pastor in Office	3	4 9-11 am Food Pantry, Allegheny St.  Office Closed	5 Pastor's Sabbath	6
7 <b>2nd Sunday of Advent</b> 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship in Sanctuary  *Cove Christmas Love Deadline	8	9 2-6 pm Pastor in Office 6:30 pm Council Mtg., WR/Zoom	10	11	12 Pastor's Sabbath	13
14 <b>3rd Sunday of Advent</b> 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship in Sanctuary  Annual Congregational Meeting Following Worship	15 6:00 pm Worship & Music Meeting., Zoom  Deadline for toiletry collection	16 2-5 pm Pastor in Office 6:00 pm Talk-O Tuesday, La Fiesta, Airport  Kitchen/FH in Use 6-8pm	17	18 9-11 am Food Pantry, Allegheny St.	19 Adam Smith Holiday Concert, 7 pm in Sanctuary	20
21 <b>4th Sunday of Advent</b> 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship in Sanctuary Longest Night Lasagna Lunch Following Worship, FH	22 <b>Messenger Deadline</b>	23 12:30-3:00 pm Knotty La- dies, QR 2-5 pm Pastor in Office	24 Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 7 pm in Sanctuary	25  Office closed	26 Pastor's Sabbath	27
28 <b>10:30 am Service of Lessons &amp; Carols with Communion</b>	29 <div style="border: 2px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">Pastor Traci Available by appointment. Call 814-935-9267</div>	30 12:30-3:00 pm Knotty La- dies, QR	31	FH—Fellowship Hall CE-Christian Ed Office CL-Church Lounge QR-Quilt Room WR—Window Room K—Kitchen In case of emergency, Pastor Traci maybe reached at 814-935-9267		