

**February
2014**

St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Ithaca, OH

The Messenger

Worshiping God, Growing in Faith, Serving Neighbors--near and far



Oyster Supper

**Please join us
for our annual Oyster Supper / Carry-in
Sunday, February 9 at 5 pm**

Bring your friends, family and neighbors, along with a favorite potluck dish, and share in some fabulous freshly fried oyster, raw oysters, and oyster stew! A free-will offering will be accepted to defray the cost of the oysters.

"Soup"er Bowl Sunday

is February 2nd. Our confirmation students will collect a special offering on February 2, as part of an annual national effort among church youth. Please consider giving \$1 per family member for this great cause. Our donations will go to the Castine Food Bank!!! Look for the soup pot at the exit during church services that week.

Worship Planning

Please mark your calendars for February 19 at 7 p.m. We will be meeting at the church to pick hymns for the Lenten season.

All are welcome to join us!

Lawn Care Bids



Bids for lawn care of the church property are being accepted through March 2. If you would like to consider submitting a bid, please contact Shannon for a job description. Bids can be given to any council member.





OUR MONTHLY WELCA MEETING

will be held at the home of Earlene Morris on Wednesday, February 5 at 7 p.m. We will continue our studies in the Gather magazine with the February issue, "Woman of Endor, a seer and communicator", based on 1 Samuel 28:7.

During the months of January through March, we collect items for the Personal Care Kits for Lutheran World Relief. Each kit is to contain:

- One light-weight bath-sized towel (between 20" X 40" & 52" x 27", dark color recommended)
- bath-size bar (4 to 5 oz.) of soap, any brand, in its original wrapping (2 per kit)
- One adult-size toothbrush in its original packaging
- One sturdy comb, remove packaging
- Metal nail clippers (file optional)

Any donations you are able to make are greatly appreciated! A donation box is located at the back of the sanctuary. Monetary donations can be given to any WELCA officer: Anita, Jane, Rhonda or Mary Lou.

ONE Ministry— Castine Food Bank item of the month: Pasta

Sermon Series Planned

The Sermon on the Mount in the Gospel of Matthew is among the most recognized and quoted of Jesus' teachings. We are blessed that in the month of February, and the first Sunday of March, the gospel lessons are from the Sermon on the Mount.

Each Sunday's sermon will reflect on the gospel, diving into the text, the cultural context of Jesus' day and how the words speak to us today. Adult Sunday School will also focus each week on the Sunday's gospel. In Sunday School we will Dwell in the Text, discussing questions including how Jesus' teachings can form our church community. We might even do some sharing exercises. Resources are from "Contrast Community" by James L. Bailey.

Please plan on attending each Sunday in this series. If you would like to read ahead, the following is the series:

February 2nd "Who Are the Blessed?" Matthew 5:3-12

February 9th "Blessed Community – Called to Be Salt and Light" Matthew 5:13-16

February 16th "Blessed Community – Freed from Nursing Anger" Matthew 5:21-26
"Blessed Community – Challenged to Value Women" Matthew 5:27-30
"Blessed Community – Trusted Truth Tellers" Matthew 5:33-37

February 23rd "Blessed Community – Risking Non-Violent Power" Matthew 5:38-42
"Blessed Community – Open to Enemies" Matthew 5:43-48

March 2nd "Blessed Community – Replacing Worry with Trust" Matthew 6:24-34

Restroom Project



At the November Annual Meeting, the congregation voted to pray about the restroom project until the first of the year. The vote to build a new elevator and handicapped restrooms failed by only two votes, and the discussion afterward included that people want a chance for more input.

We have asked Pete Herr, who is trained in survey writing, to prepare a survey that will better make the desires of the congregation known. The survey will be reviewed by the Building Team, then sent to council for their vote of approval.

We are hoping the new survey will be sent out in the near future. Please take the time to share with us—your opinion is important.

REMEMBERED

in our thoughts & prayers

February Birthdays

7th Sharon Rismiller
17th Megan Daggett (Kress)
19th Kevin McCullough
25th Deb Taylor
Mary Lou Hofacker
27th Mickie Ary
28th Judy Stephan

February Anniversaries

None this month

January Prayer Concerns

Chris Stump & mission team
Larry Bemis
Tom Rice
Annette North
Dan Fitzpatrick
Steve Knick
Ken Bailey
Jill, Dan & Becky Fitzpatrick
Bonnie Rogers
Viola Wogoman
Ron Fasick

Devon Eley
Hannah Eley
Jerry Thacker

Prayers of sympathy and healing for the families of:

Pam Brown

**To reach us for the prayer chain, please call Rhonda Kress at 417-7412
or email rhonda.j.kress@gmail.com**

A note of thanks...

Dear St. Matthew's Family and Council, Thank you so much for your Christmas gift. It is always a joy to share Sunday mornings with you in worship. May God Bless You All, Deb Taylor

To my St. Matthew family members: As I end my 9th year of service as your secretary, I would like to thank council and Pastor Herr for the year-end gifts, along with all of my church family for your constant kind words and encouragement. It is an honor to be a part of this loving family. —Shannon McCullough

Thank you for thinking of us with the generous Christmas bonus. - Terry & Neva Birt

Thanks to all St. Matthew family for the cards and support while Annette (mom) is recuperating. —Jane Buschur

Thanks for the thoughts, calls, cards, prayers and concerns this past month—Ron Fasick

From the Pastor

February is a good time to take stock of our blessings. It is a short, relatively quiet month. SMLC celebrates the dead of winter with our Annual Oyster Supper. If you've managed never to attend, make this year your first! Even if you don't like fried, raw or oyster stew, there are plenty of potluck dishes, and desserts brought in by capable cooks. In addition to abundant food, there is plenty of time for fellowship, a welcome treat in a month where snow and ice can keep us homebound.

Other than the Annual Oyster Supper, February's calendar is pretty empty this year. Ash Wednesday doesn't occur until March; we will celebrate Easter late in April this year. So, an empty calendar gives us time to think, to reflect, to give thanks.

Give thanks for the blessing of community. SMLC is a small but vibrant and vital community. We pray for each other, we care for each other, we share with each other. From the lending library – take a look if you haven't in a while, to prayer quilts, to Coffee Break, we have ways of sharing and caring for each other. Consider giving thanks by helping out – we are always looking for new hands to help with Altar Guild. Maybe something as simple as putting up the Hymn Board numbers after worship each week.

Give thanks for our abundant material blessings...even if you feel you don't have a lot, your material goods are equal to a kings to over two billion people in the world. Consider giving thanks by giving to others, this month by buying items for the LWR Health Kits. Towels, nail clippers, toothbrushes – items we take for granted – can make a significant difference to refugees from war and natural disasters. Given out of thanks and love of Jesus Christ, our faith is shared around the world.

Give thanks by spending time in God's Word. Dwell with us this month, in the Sermon on the Mount texts during Adult Sunday School. We spend time reflecting and discussing how God's Word makes a difference in our world, so that we learn to share God's Grace with others. God's Loving Grace isn't meant to be kept, but to be shared as the blessing it is.

Give thanks for the gift of life you have been given. Consider a financial gift, in thanksgiving, to the ELCA Malaria Campaign. Though we don't have to deal with mosquitoes in February, around the world, in hot damp places, mosquitoes are carrying the deadly malaria virus from infected human to another. The ELCA is over 2/3rd of our way to raising the \$15 million we committed to by 2015, to help our Brothers and Sisters in Christ in Africa. Make a gift, knowing that even \$10 or less than .36 cents a day in February can provide a net to protect an entire family and save lives.

I'm sure you have many, many other blessings in your life to give thanks for. Spend some time in February in prayer, giving thanks and praying to discover a way to bless others.

In Christ's Peace,

Pastor Joene

FEBRUARY

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 4th Sunday after Epiphany Communion "Soup-er" Bowl Sunday 6-7:30 Confirmation Lector: Donna Miller Acolyte: Joel Hoke Bread: Donna Miller	3 7 pm—Council Meeting	4	5 7 pm WELCA	6 9-11 am—Clergy Meeting/W. Milton	7	8
9 5th Sunday after Epiphany 5 pm—Oyster Supper Lector: Anita Schneider Acolyte: Julia McCullough	10 Pastor Herr will	11	12	13 9-11 am—Clergy Meeting/W. Milton	14	15
16 6th Sunday after Epiphany Guest Pastor Lector: Ron Fasick Acolyte: Alysson Pahl	17 Newsletter entries due	18	19 7 pm—Worship Planning Meeting	20 9-11 am—Clergy Meeting/W. Milton	21	22
23 7th Sunday after Epiphany 6-7:30 Confirmation Lector: Rhonda Kress Acolyte: Karr Stump	24	25	26	27 9-11 am—Clergy Meeting/W. Milton	28	

Church Address

6825 St. Route 722
Ithaca, OH 45304
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E-mail: skmccullough@earthlink.net



Pastor Joene Herr
Phone: 937-564-5802
E-mail: joeneherr@yahoo.com

*Wheelchair accessible + Elevator on premises +
Holy Communion celebrated - 1st Sunday of every month- major church festivals*

We're on the web!!
www.smlc-ithaca.com
Facebook: St. Matthew

Sunday Worship services:
9 am —Traditional worship
10 am— Coffee Break (food & fellowship)
10:15 am—Sunday School for all ages



St. Matthew Lutheran Church – Ithaca
7820 State Route 722
Arcanum, Ohio 45304

Dated Material