

St. Matthew United Methodist Church



Advent 2025
Newsletter

PASTOR'S NOTES

I am very excited about Advent this year. We have a bunch of mission projects under way, decorations will be going up soon, and I really think this year's Sermon Series will be intriguing. Our Advent Theme will be "Keeping Time with God." One of the most precious commodities we have in Advent is *time*. For many of us, we just don't seem to have enough. Time can easily slip by, and before we know it, Christmas has come and gone...



Advent is about preparing for Christ's arrival, and I want us all to be ready. We will need to do the things that get us ready, we will also need to get our hearts and minds receptive to the Word of God. We will need to take time to ponder the magnitude of God's plan to send Jesus into the world, make room in our hearts for His birth.



God's plan to send Jesus "In the Fullness of Time" was in place from the Beginning, but took thousands of years to unfold. We are an impatient, independent people, pretty much the opposite of what it takes to be of the mind and in the mood to receive God's Gift of Salvation.

We will need to "Keep Time" in order to get there. In music, keeping time is keeping pace with the director, not rushing ahead or lagging behind. Its keeping in step, and listening to what's happening around us. God has been leading us, and sharing His word with us since the Beginning. The Advent Prophecies call to us from the distant past, and lead us to the Last Days. They tell us to be ready. That means completing our to-do lists, and more importantly preparing our hearts. Will you "Keep Time with God" this Advent? "Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord."



Grace & Peace,

Pastor Jeff Aiosa <'///>



SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR DECEMBER 2025

Nov 30	Dec 7	Dec 14	Dec 21	Dec 24
Advent 1	Advent 2	Advent 3	Advent 4	Christmas Eve
Isaiah 2:1-5 Walk in the Light	Isiah 11:1-10 A Root of Jesse	Isaiah 35:1-10 A Highway for God	Isaiah 7:10-16 A Sign from God	Isaiah 9:2-7 People ... Have Seen a Great Light
Matthew 24:36-44 The Day and Hour Unknown	Matthew 3:1-12 John the Baptist	Luke 1:39-56 Mary & Elizabeth	Matthew 1:18-25 Joseph	Luke 2:1-20 The Birth of Jesus

TRUNK-OR-TREAT

This year the United Methodist Women’s group decided to represent SMUMC in the Local Trunk-or-Treat event at the Robert L. Bland Middle School. Everyone had a wonderful time, and the kids had an absolute blast! We were blown away by how many kids and local family came out to participate and really enjoyed all the creative costumes. Thank you so much to the UMW for all your hard work and to everyone who donated and made this night possible.





GRATEFULNESS TREE

The Gratefulness Tree in the sanctuary is a glowing reminder to pause and reflect on what is most important, and how much God has truly blessed us. Preparation for the holidays is in full swing as we plan for annual family gatherings, and hurry to find the perfect gifts for friends and loved ones. Pause and remember that we were given the ultimate gift. Let all that we do this holiday season reflect our gratitude for the love God has for us.

POINSETTIA ORDERS

Christmas poinsettia order forms can be found in the Annex or church office. Poinsettias can be purchased in honor or memory of friends and love ones. Poinsettias can be picked up at the Candlelight Christmas Eve Service. **December 11th** is last day to place your order.



FAMILY CHRISTMAS DINNER

This years annual Church Family Christmas Dinner will be hosted by The United Methodist Women who will be providing salad, lasagna, bread, dessert and drinks. Family Christmas Dinner will take place in the fellowship hall **December 7th** at 4PM are welcome!

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

Our **Christmas Eve** Candlelight Service will be at **7PM**. This holy time of worship will include the Christmas story, Traditional Christmas Hymns, some special music, and the lighting of candles and singing of Silent Night at the end of the service. Please join us for this significant time. Your presence is an important part of our celebration.





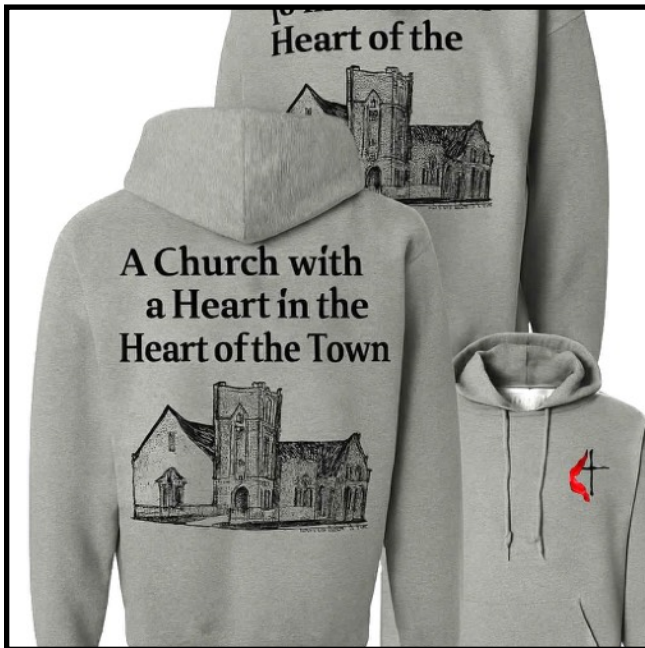
OUR NEIGHBOR ITEMS FOR DECEMBER

Our Neighbor Items of the month of December are... Canned Chicken, Boxes of Dressing, Instant Potatoes, Green Beans, Corn, Canned Milk, Jello, Cake Mix, Icing, Peaches, Fruit Cocktail, and Gravy Packets. Please leave items in the bin marked in the Annex hallway or deliver them directly to Our Neighbor Tue-Thur 9AM until 1:30PM.

OUTREACH AND EVANGELISM

The St. Matthew UMC Outreach Committee, originally founded several years ago, has started meeting again with renewed energy and purpose. Our mission is to spread the word of God while simultaneously strengthening our relationship with our community. We plan on achieving this goal through acts of kindness and community involvement. To support our efforts, we have designed a t-shirt and sweatshirt to allow church members to proudly represent our church wherever they go. An order form is available in the church office and in the annex. Through this effort, we hope to be able to share the word of God in future activities and build unity in both our congregation and our community.

- Kaelyn Williams



Upcoming plans for the Outreach Committee and ways you can get involved:

- Live Nativity on **Dec 21**, 2025 from 12-2pm in the church parking lot. Costumes and refreshments will be provided. A Sign up sheet will be available in the Annex. Again this is an event focused on outreach so all friends and family are welcome.
- January 2026 we will have a chili cook off. Date and more details to follow.
- February 2026 we will have a chocolate festival. Date and details to follow.

SOUP-A-PALOOZA

The Outreach and Evangelism Committee was so pleased with the wonderful turn out for their first event: "Soup-A-Palooza." This friendly competition encouraged people to try as many free soups as they would like, in exchange, they were asked to vote for their favorite. With nine delicious soup options to try, there was something for everyone. Some crowd favorites include: Italian wedding, deer stew, minestrone, ham and beans, and taco. The prize, "The Golden Ladle" went to the Williams sisters for their exceptional Loaded Bake Potato soup! We were so blessed to see several new faces as well as spending time with old friends. Being seen out in the community as a church and showing people that they are welcome at SMUMC feels like an important part of sharing Gods love for us with others. Big thanks to all the participants and everyone who pitched in to make Soup-A-Palooza possible!



SHOEBOX MINISTRY

The Shoebox Ministry for Operation Christmas Child is in full swing, and the congregation of St. Matthews' is once again working together to share the message of God through this amazing ministry. By filling ordinary shoeboxes full of toys and other fun items, you can be part of giving boys and girls what may be their first gift ever! Local churches in more than 100 nations hand out these Operation Christmas Child shoebox gifts at festive outreach events where the Gospel is presented in a child-friendly way. Each box becomes a tangible expression of God's love to the child, their family, and their community.



ROANKOE SHOE MISSION

The United Methodist Women's group is participating in the 12th Annual Roanoke Elementary School Shoe Donation. This impactful program provides 180 children with warm winter shoes and socks. Stonewall Resort will be hosting a special event where each student will get to meet Santa and receive their new shoes! Donations can be placed at the UMW Missions table in the Annex or given to Eunice Lattimer. Please make checks out to St. Matthew United Methodist Women. Donations due by **Dec 1st**



ANGEL TREE & SILVER TREE

The first Angel Tree program was started by the Salvation Army in 1979 and has since become a Christmas tradition. Each participant submits their child's wish-list in the hope of creating lasting Christmas memories. Supporting a child is one of the ways we can share the joy and excitement of the birth of Jesus.

The Silver Tree Angel program allows people to adopt a local senior citizen for Christmas. Each Silver Tree tag has a few items that they need, as well as a few special things they would be excited to receive. The Lewis County Senior Center provides lunches and other essential services to hundreds of local seniors every week. Participating in the Silver Tree program reminds seniors that people still care in this season of hope.



COMING EVENTS:

Sunday School 9:00 AM, Sunday Worship Service 10:00AM

<i>Christmas Parade</i>	<i>November 28</i>
<i>First Sunday in Advent</i>	<i>November 30</i>
<i>Second Sunday in Advent</i>	<i>December 7</i>
<i>Family Christmas Dinner</i>	<i>December 7 at 4PM</i>
<i>UMW Meeting</i>	<i>December 9 at 1PM</i>
<i>UMM Breakfast</i>	<i>December 14 at 8AM</i>
<i>Third Sunday in Advent</i>	<i>December 14</i>
<i>Fourth Sunday in Advent</i>	<i>December 21</i>
<i>Live Nativity</i>	<i>December 21 12:00-2:00PM</i>
<i>Christmas Eve Service</i>	<i>December 24 at 7PM</i>
<i>Community Dinner</i>	<i>December 27 at 4PM</i>

PRAYER LIST:

Ginger Bailey, Eleanor Kafer, Aidan Linger, Betsy Martin, Brad Montgomery, Carol Haan, Ginny Lamb, Mary Anne Lamb, Joan Hinzman, Julia Bragg, Pat Reckart, Ruth Macbeth, Jim Stutler, C.D. Cole, David Parks, Luke Roselli (Macbeth), Cierra Deploy, Sarah Dotson, J.B. Lambert, Catherine Ratliff, Esker Davis, Marvin & Marcia Murphy, Dick and Patty Smith

If you would like to add or remove someone from the prayer list, please call the office at: 304-269-2428

