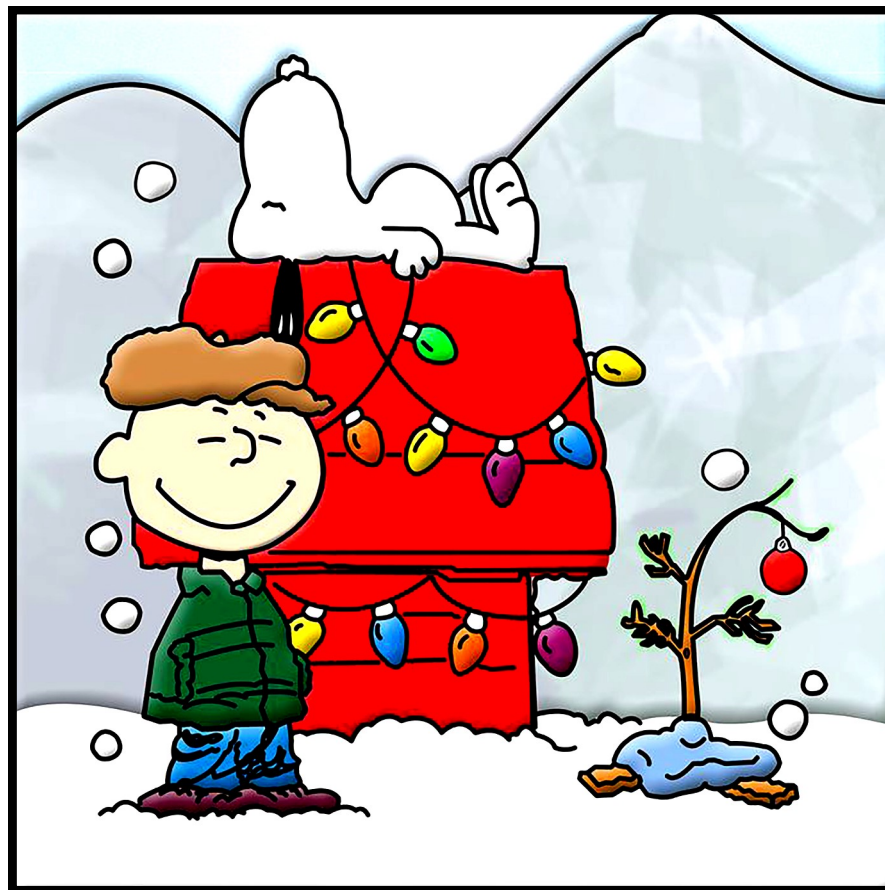




St. Matthew Lutheran Church  
Sundays at 9:00am  
WOW Wednesdays at  
5:30 pm (Sept—April)  
stmattthewmonticello@gmail.com  
Pastor Dave Raemisch  
Cell Phone (319) 975-0512  
Office Phone (319) 465-3262



**Merry Christmas!**

## **A message from Pastor Dave...**

### **Christmas... why it's the most wonderful time of the year!**

That's why, at this year's Christmas Eve worship service we're going to take a trip down memory lane with such all-time classics as Charlie Brown and Linus, Alvin and the Chipmunks, and even Andy Williams singing that Christmas classic, "It's The Most Wonderful Time of the Year." This year our Christmas Eve worship service will have something for everyone, no matter whether you're young in years or old in years but young at heart. If you happen to be both, old in years and old at heart, then you really need to be here on Christmas Eve!

Every year Christmas stirs up all sorts of emotions, taking us back in time to some of the best days of our lives. We remember spending time with family and friends, the beautiful Christmas lights and decorations, the mistletoe, going to church with grandma and grandpa, and all that great food. I can almost taste it now. I miss those days, I really do. And I miss those people, I really do. And I bet you do to.

But more than all that, I think it's the promise of peace and the hope for better days that calms our troubled souls and fills us with light and life at Christmas time. In these crazy days on planet earth, with so much senseless violence breaking out all around us, even locally, it leaves us wondering - How can God let this happen? and, Where is God now?

The real reason we gather for worship on Christmas Eve is to encounter the living Lord. Sure, we enjoy the sacred and holy atmosphere at the end of the service when we light candles and sing Silent Night. And of course, we love the classic Christmas music such as Away In A Manger, O Holy Night, It Came Upon A Midnight Clear, and Grandma Got Run Over By A Reindeer; but even more than that, worship is that sacred place in time where the Spirit of God touches our hearts and minds, meeting us where we're at.

We also know that Christmas can be an especially hard time of year for those who are alone; missing loved ones, be it due to distance, divorce, or death. It's hard to feel the joy of Christmas when our hearts are broken for missing the ones we love. In life, I've learned the hard way that being alone at Christmas is not a good place to be. So, please, if the Christmas season is a hard one for you to handle, come join us on Christmas Eve for worship, fellowship, and friendship. Your Father—who art in heaven—wants you to come visit Him at His house on Christmas Eve.

Faith, Hope, Love...  
Pastor Dave



***"Christmas... why it's the most wonderful time of the year!"***

You can help make our sanctuary beautiful for Christmas by donating a poinsettia.

Plants will be displayed for the Christmas season, including our 3:30 & 6:00 pm Christmas Eve worship services.

**This Christmas... Remember Your Loved One  
With a Poinsettia Donation**

Please fill out the form below and return it to the church office with your payment by December 12th. Names will be listed in the Christmas worship bulletin and Echoes Newsletter.

Cost is \$10.00

Number of Plants \_\_\_\_\_

Given by \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory/Honor of \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this form with payment to St. Matthew Lutheran Church, 226 N. Cedar St., Monticello, IA 52310 or drop it off at the church office by Dec. 12th.

**Thank You!**

 <p><b>Christmas Eve Service</b></p>	<p><b>Join Us for Christmas Eve Worship</b></p> <p><b>Candle Light Worship Service</b></p> <p><b>3:30 pm &amp; 6:00 pm</b></p> <p>(No Sunday morning service on Dec. 24th)</p>
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**St Matthew Lutheran Church  
Council Meeting October 8, 2023**

**Call to Order**

The October meeting of St Matthew was called to order by Jeff Hinrichs. Those present were Jeff Hinrichs, Stu Gerdes, Nancy Gerdes, Pastor Dave, Carolyn Dirks, Tim Lambert, Tricia Lambert, DaLana Rigby, Diane Tuetken, Dave Titman, Pam Kray and Nanci Paulsen.

**Devotions** were given by DaLana Rigby. **Minutes** were previously reviewed.

**Pastor's Report:** Pastor highlighted things that have been happening here at St. Matthew. So far in 2023 year there have been 9 funerals and 7 baptisms. A new computer was purchased for Pastor Dave to use in the church office. The computer was bought by the Memorial Fund.

**Treasurer's Report:** The financial report was reviewed. Thanks to the generosity of our members, we are blessed to be financially secure and stable as a church. Thank you - so very much - for your generous and on-going support of ministry here at St. Matthew!

**Youth and Family Ministry:** Tricia and Tim said WOW is going well. The meal attendance is down. They gave a big shout out and thank you to Pam Kray, for all the work she does to prepare and have the meals ready.

**Trustees Report:** The new carpeting on the front steps and the entry steps in the back has been installed. We are waiting for plumbers to provide more information on bathroom repairs.

**Deacon's Report:** Carolyn Tonn and DaLana Rigby provided information on Benevolence giving. See Old Business section of this report. Stu Gerdes made a motion to accept the above reports as presented and DaLana Rigby 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion carried.

**Old Business:** Benevolence Giving: Carolyn Tonn and DaLana Rigby recommended that we give \$300.00 to each of the following charities: Austin Strong Foundation, Friends of the Library, Avenue of Flags, Sleep in Heavenly Peace, Monticello Senior Dining, ELCA Disaster Relief, ELCA Global Mission, Monticello Shop with Cop, and Monticello Food Pantry. Also \$150.00 each going to Advancement Services of Monticello and Systems Unlimited of Monticello.

Marty Scharff will be following up on the organ repair issue.

**New Business:** NTR.

Next council meeting is Dec. 10<sup>th</sup> with Jeff Hinrichs giving devotions.

Respectfully submitted,  
Nanci Paulsen

**You're Invited!**



**WOW Christmas Program**

The Fumbly Bumbly Angels  
Wednesday

December 20th at 6:00 pm

(no meal that night)

**Luke 2:8-14**

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

**WORSHIP ATTENDANCE**

<b>WEEK OF:</b>	<b>SUNDAY</b>	<b>WOW</b>	<b>TOTAL for WEEK</b>
<b>October 15</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>October 22</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>October 29</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>November 5</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>125</b>

<b>October</b>	<b>St. Matthew Ministry</b>	<b>Building</b>
Income	\$ 13,295.50	\$ 1,492.00
Expenses	\$ 14,804.55	
January 1 Balance	\$ 34,648.39	
October 31 Balance	\$ 43,982.72	
Year-to-Date		
Income	\$124,284.94	\$12,180.00
Expenses	\$114,950.67	

**December & January Ushers & Communion Assistants**

**December Ushers:** Shelley Raemisch, DaLana Rigby, Nanci Paulsen

**December Communion Assistant:** Sheralyn Lahr

**December Altar Guild:** Pam Kray

**CHRISTMAS USHERS:**

**3:30 pm:** Jeff & Sandy Hinrichs, Stuart & Kathy Gerdes

**6:00 pm:** Grace Zimmerman, Steve & David Goode

**January Ushers:** Pam Kray, DaLana Rigby

**January Communion Assistant:** Greg Wink

**January Altar Guild:** Pam Kray

**Women's Bible Studies**

Second Tuesday of the month at  
9:00am.

**Women's Sewing Circle**

Will be meeting the 2nd Wed. of each  
month at 1:00 pm.

**Men's Bible Studies**

The 2nd and 4th Friday of each  
month at 6:30 am,  
and every Thursday at 10:00 am.

**Please remember our members with a prayer, a card, or a visit.**

**Monticello Care Center**

500 Pinehaven, Monticello, IA 52310

- ♦ Denny Joslyn 402
- ♦ Dorothy Norton 506
- ♦ Deb Johnson 503

**Pennington Square**

502 Pinehaven, Monticello, IA 52310

- ♦ Mary Tschantz 101

**Individual Addresses:**

Sycamore Gardens, 107 E. 9th St., Monticello, IA 52310:

John Boss	#102	Ann McNamara	#118
Jean Robison	#110	David Griffith	#122

- ♦ Darlene Gottleaber, 327 N. Gill, Monticello, IA 52310
- ♦ Irene Behrends, The Views of Marion, 720 Oakbrook Dr., D104, Marion, IA 52302
- ♦ Dan Ulferts, 1701 Meadow Ridge Dr., Apt. 37, Anamosa, IA 52205
- ♦ Bonnie Chappell 316 S. Sycamore, Monticello, IA 52310
- ♦ Kim Stadtmueller, 2005 49th St., Marion, IA 52302
- ♦ Donna Joslin, River Bend Retirement Community, 813 Tyler St., NE, Cascade, IA 52033

**2024 OFFERING  
ENVELOPES  
Are now available!**



**Please pick up your 2024 Offering Envelopes in the Narthex**



**In Memoriam**  
**We extend our deepest sympathy to the family**  
**and friends of Aaron McAtee who died on**  
**Tuesday November 7th.**



St. Matthew Lutheran Church  
226 N. Cedar  
Monticello, Iowa 52310

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
NON-PROFIT ORG. PERMIT  
NO. 111  
MONTICELLO, IOWA

