

# St. Matthew's News

The Newsletter of

St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

[WWW.Sml-Lex.org](http://WWW.Sml-Lex.org)

**St. Matthew's Lutheran Church** is a community of Christians whose purpose is to worship, witness, educate, support, and serve in response to God's Word, to make Jesus Christ known to all people.



# CHURCH HOMECOMING

**October 7, 2018**

## From the Interim Pastor...

For a while now, husband Bob and I have been talking about where we'll make our home once I retire. We're not sure, and given that retirement for me is still some years in the future we don't have to make a decision right away. All we know for certain is that we won't be headed to Indiana (Bob's home) because it's too doggone cold and snowy in the winter. Bouncing back and forth the pros and the cons of remaining in Columbia, returning to Charleston, or going somewhere else is a frequent conversation topic for us.

The thing is – I'm not entirely sure what home is anymore. I've lived in the Columbia area for almost as long as I lived in Charleston. Yet, when anyone asks me where I'm from, I'll typically answer: *I'm from Columbia, but Charleston is home.* Since most pastors move from place to place during their careers so, I suppose it's not an unusual answer.

For some four years I spent part of each week in Charleston serving two parishes as an interim. It was a good homecoming – good to be close to family once again especially during my father's final illness and death. At the same time, it was disconcerting to see just how much the city had changed since I left. I tried to find the elementary school where I taught, but I couldn't because familiar Dorchester Road landmarks weren't there any longer.

Friends and acquaintances had changed too. Some had changed careers, jobs had been lost, new jobs acquired, and a few have already retired. Their children have graduated, married, and have had children themselves. Close friends are moving to Panama. I made new friends and realized I'd grown apart from others.

It was naïve to be surprised, but home is supposed to be the place that doesn't change, isn't it? But we know – at least we give lip service- to the truth that change is a constant. **Nothing** stays the same. The place you call home. Relationships. People. Nations. Land. Laws. Even the church. I am learning that to resist or refuse change everything – in fairly short order – will wither and die.

God's name is ***I AM WHAT I AM; I WILL BE WHAT I WILL BE***. God is change. Reforming. Moving. Creating. Teaching. Repairing. Forgiving. The stories of scripture are, at their core, stories of change – of God's intentional work to heal (change) the breach between creator and creation. God welcomes us just as we are, but God refuses to allow us to remain that way because God's authoritative word spoken through Jesus' ministry, death, and resurrection is ***LIFE!*** And to live is to change.

See you in church,

Pastor Karen



**Invite** your entire family, friends, neighbors, and former members of **St. Matthew's Church to our church Homecoming**  
October 7, 2018

The Rev. Eric Wolfe, Assistant to the Bishop, Preaching  
Service begins at 10:30 a.m.

Following the service we'll eat lunch in the Fellowship Hall. Bring a well-filled picnic basket and come for an afternoon of fun and fellowship. Entree and drink provided. Please sign up (email or call church office) no later than Wednesday, October 3, 2018, with your reservations..





## “A Spirit Led Time of Renewal”

Sunday October 21, 2018,

Congregational event and covered dish lunch in the Fellowship Hall. A discussion led by representatives from the Office of the Bishop. Its purpose is to gather around scripture, and to examine our sense of God’s presence and our mission. We will discover together how God is at work within St. Matthew’s by answering questions about our ministry – our hope for the future, what we need to let go, and something new in which we might want to engage. We will also discuss the call process. Please sign up (email or call church office) no later than Wednesday, October 10, 2018, with your reservations..



November 4 All Saints Sunday

November 20 Thanksgiving Service at St Paul’s Gilbert time TBA

December 2 Advent Begins

December 16 Children Christmas Program and Christmas Cantata

December 24 Christmas Eve Service at 6:00pm





## MONTH OF OCTOBER

### LAY ASSISTANT

7- Karen Smith  
14- Jason Roof  
21- Stefni Smith-King  
28- Stefni Smith-King

### NURSERY

7- Lisa and Tammy  
14- Sandra and Allison  
21- Kaye and Kristi  
28- Delores and McKayla

### ACOLYTE

7- Abby Whittle  
14- Kylie Steele  
21- McKayla Lowman  
28- Hailey Wicker

### CRUCIFER

7-McKayla Lowman

### ALTAR FLOWERS

7- Friends of Milton Singley  
14-Linda Singley  
21-  
28-Ruby Keisler

### GREETERS

7- Stefni Smith-King  
14- David Keisler  
21- Sam Grainger  
28- Meghan Whittle

### USHERS

Kevin Steele, Head Usher  
Travis Moorer  
Rusty Williams  
Ronald Norris

### ALTAR GUILD

Dorcus Dooley  
Tammy Smith

### OFFERING COUNTERS

7- Jeff and Delores Lowman  
14- Doug and Beth Whittle  
21- Jan and Jessie Lowman  
28- Lisa Buzhardt and Tammy Moorer





**We pray for our church disciples who are ill, recuperating, or homebound.**

Roy & Olivia Whittle, Lydia Lindler, Nettie Bell Alewine, Brice McCartha, Larry McCartha, Taylor Dorward, Russell Smith, Bobby Counts, Ann McCartha, Becky Rawson, Doug Whittle

**We pray for extended church family and friends:**

Martin & Nina Watts, Annie Wannamaker, Billy and Danny Mayse, Pam McCracken, Emit Taylor, Jerry and Betty Steele, Shannon Brinton, James Jumper, Pastor Russ Anderson, Danny and Sandi Moore and Bonnie Harmon, Anthony Clamp

**We pray for all who serve in our armed forces**

Gus Monaco, Jacob Robertson, Dallas Moses, Douglas Vance, Amy Storrs, Megan Asbill, DJ Hoover and Matt Livingston, Clarke Stocker

*To add names to the prayer list, contact the church office at 803-957-9345. Names will remain on the list for one month. If you desire a name to remain on the list for another month or if a name needs to be removed, please contact the office.*

**Our member of the month** looks forward to receiving your cards and letters, drop a note to *Brice McCartha C/o Pruitt Health 830 Laurens Street, Aiken, SC 29801*





We extend our heartfelt sympathy to Harold Williams with the death of his brother, Doug Williams.

We extend our heartfelt sympathy to the family of Allen Leaphart. Our thoughts and prayers are with you at this time



**A copy of the Directory has been placed in the Narthex. Please update** your contact information. We would also like your email address. Church Secretary Office Hours: Tuesday through Thursday 8:30 am - 12:30 pm. Please let Jan Lowman know if she can be of service to you. [jan@sml-lex.org](mailto:jan@sml-lex.org)

thank  
you!

Thank You for your generous donation of supplies to our school. We greatly appreciate it. Gilbert Primary School.



October 21, 2018 - LMM Meeting at 7:45 am



The WELCA meeting for this month is on October 22, 2018, at 7:00. Bring a friend!

## BUDGET REPORT

Year to date revenue as of 9/23/2018

Need to date - \$124765.91  
Received to date - \$113529.74  
Shortage \$111236.17 short  
Children in Need - \$845.00  
Cemetery - \$945.00  
LICS - \$240.00  
Family in Need \$400.00  
Check book balance - \$57972.26



**Mission Lexington needs our help!** Please bring the items below each Sunday in October.

7- Boxed Mac and Cheese  
14- Ravioli/Spaghetti O's  
21- Can Meat  
28- Canned/Dry Soup



Deadline for newsletters information has **changed** to the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month. Thank You for your help.



- |                       |                         |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 2- Kristi Steele      | 19- Amanda H. Baldwin   |
| 2- Jean Keisler       | 20- Charles G. Smith    |
| 3- Debra McCartha     | 20- Donald Hayes        |
| 3- Kameron Richmond   | 20- Dana P. Smith       |
| 7- Tessa Jones        | 20- Cooper Simmons      |
| 8- Michael Hicks      | 21- Carolyn Whittle     |
| 9- Julia Ann Derrick  | 21- Jo Ann Kaminer      |
| 9- Chip Smith         | 21- McKayla Lowman      |
| 10- Richard Norris    | 22- Ronnie Dawkins      |
| 12- Jennifer Hayes    | 24- Catherine Gable     |
| 12- Daylan Mitchum    | 24- Larry McCartha      |
| 13- Jason Arehart     | 24- Jerusha Keisler     |
| 14- Michael McCarthy  | 25- Raymond Steele, Jr. |
| 16- Orvis Keisler     | 26- Meghan Richardson   |
| 16- Michael Miller    | 26- Angie Jumper        |
| 16- Beth Whittle      | 29- Bennet James King   |
| 17- Wilbert Smith     | 30- Juanita Clarke      |
| 17- Janice Counts     | 30- Michelle Langdon    |
| 17- Gina Jeffcoat     | 30- Karen Richardson    |
| 17- Jonathan McCartha | 30- Cameron Ellis       |
| 17- Tiffany Shealy    | 31- Joey Gates          |
| 19- Brady Hicks       | 31- Fallon Roof         |

Please let Jan know if there are changes to birthday list



- 6- Shawn & Jennifer Dorward
- 12- John & Lisa Norman
- 16- Richard & Carol Langdon
- 21- Brian & Tammy Kyzer

**Please let Jan know if there are changes to anniversary list.**

## **September Council Highlights**

The Congregational Council met Sunday, 9 September. Meeting highlights included:

- ❖ Heard a report from Pastor Hawkins that the bulletin cover subscription will be discontinued at the end of 2018. The cost of the covers is approximately \$600/year and the Augsburg Fortress worship planning software makes it possible for congregations to design their own bulletins that more accurately meet the needs of worshippers.
- ❖ Learned that the Constitution and By-laws needs to be updated into include amendments passed by the ELCA Church wide Assembly in 2013 and 2016.
- ❖ Approved appointing a Constitution and By-law Committee to study the constitution and make recommendations for changes if needed.
- ❖ Agreed to research the purchase of a fireproof safe/filing cabinet in order to store important and irreplaceable documents.
- ❖ Approved the Interim Pastor contract and housing allowance.
- ❖ Heard plans for homecoming that include a covered-dish dinner and a hymn sing after dinner. Plans are underway to secure a guest preacher for the day.



For many women, negative emotions after abortion can linger, and remain unresolved. For some, problems related to their abortion emerge months or years later.

Symptoms include:

- Clinical depression and anxiety
- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Suicidal thoughts and behavior
- Symptoms consistent with post-traumatic stress disorder including:
  - Anger or rage
  - Self-destructive tendencies

**At LaVie Pregnancy Care Center of Lexington,** we offer a powerful abortion recovery assistance program that facilitates the healing process. It's called "Set Free" because through it, Jesus can set her free from anxiety, shame, anger, depression, addiction, guilt, and bitterness.

Like all of our services "Set Free" is Christ centered, free and confidential

**If you know a woman who is seeking help about a past abortion, we are available to help.**



## FROM THE BISHOP: FAITH HABITS

*This column originally appeared in the Sept/Oct 2018 edition of The South Carolina Lutheran. It is printed with permission.*

Recently, in *The State* newspaper, there was a series of articles exploring why churches in South Carolina were declining. It was a thoughtful series that basically focused on the difference between churches that meet and worship in traditional ways and those that worship in untraditional ways and places. What was missing for me in the articles was not so much the how or the where of worship but the why of worship. Why are people today drawn to worship and what difference does it make in their daily lives?

In his book, *The Patient Ferment of the Early Church*, Alan Krieder explores the question of how and why the Christian faith spread so rapidly in the first two centuries. His research showed that there were no major evangelism strategies embraced by church leaders. Instead he writes, *The early Christians had a perspective they called patience. They believed God was in charge of events; they knew they were not. Christian leaders didn't think or write about how to systematize the spread of Christianity... Instead the Christians concentrated on developing practices that contributed to a habitus that characterized both individual Christians and Christian communities. They believed that when the habitus was healthy, the churches would grow.* (p.74)

“Habitus” was a new word to me. It refers to deeply ingrained Christian character, bearing, and behavior that comes from practicing one’s faith in community and in one’s daily life. Kreider writes, *Above all, habitus is formed by stories, by example, and by repetition; by doing things over and over until they become habitual, a part of our identity.* (p.39)

In his section on habitus, he mentioned faith practices like:

- Meeting and eating frequently together both in worship and outside of worship
- Praying with confidence that God was working through prayer

- Praising and thanking God in all circumstances
- Memorizing scripture, especially Jesus' Sermon on the Mount
- Giving generously for the needs of the poor.
- Serving the poor ([early church leader] Tertullian noted that it was the Christian communities' response to the poor that inspired outsiders to say, "Look how they love each other.")
- Passing the peace, because as Christians, it demonstrated a oneness in Jesus that overcame rigid class, race, and social distinctions of the Roman Empire.
- Extreme hospitality – caring for strangers, outsiders, and even one's enemies.
- Discerning carefully what in one's culture to say yes to and what to say no to
- Being truthful – Christians do not swear oaths to Caesar nor cheat others in business to get ahead.
- Faithfulness in marriage and family relationships
- Facing death without fear

In reading this book, I can't help but wonder what our "habitus" as Lutheran Christians in South Carolina looks like? What would happen if we began to put greater emphasis on how we live our faith in Jesus Christ in our daily lives, rather than how we worship one hour a week? Are there some communal practices we are cultivating together that might deepen our lives of prayer and attention to God and help draw others to Jesus?

One last insight grabbed my attention. *In the early church*, Kreider writes, *it was anonymous Christians, not the officially constituted leaders of the Christian communities, who were primarily responsible for Christianity's spread. Ordinary Christians – they were the key.* He goes on to say, *Scholars have seen the church's growth as coming through something modest: 'casual contact.'* There were no mass evangelism events, no "Billy Graham"-like crusades that account for the spread of Christianity in the first 300 years. Instead it happened through neighbors talking with neighbors as work or in the market place where non-Christians could observe the character and habits of Christians up close.

What this suggests is that these same opportunities are just as available to us today as in the early church. Perhaps it's not how or where one worships on Sundays that draws others to Jesus Christ, but rather how one lives one's faith the other six days of the week. Perhaps we should become more focused on teaching "faith practices" like prayer, generosity, concern for the poor, and extreme hospitality because people are paying attention not just to our words but to our actions, to our *habitus*. This is a hopeful word that suggests the decline in the church attendance that we are going through can be reversed by ordinary Christians through casual conversations that touch, bless, and impact those who do not know the significance of God's grace. Remember the 60s hymn, *They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love?*" Those words may be more true today than we think.

In peace, Bishop Herman Yoos





## **How can we help the victims of Hurricane Florence?**

1. Pray for them every day.
2. Write a check to the ELCA and write “hurricane relief” on the check. Mail it to ELCA, POB 1809, Merrifield, VA, 22116
3. Call the ELCA at 800.638.3522 to donate using a credit card.
4. Write a check to St. Matthew’s Lutheran Church and write “hurricane relief” on the check. Put it in the offering plate next week.

***Any size donation is welcome and 100% of each offering goes directly to relief efforts.***



# St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

Church: 957-9345; Fax: 359-0328

Pastor Karen Hawkins— 252-1327

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