

CHRIST THE SAVIOR IS BORN

Christmas Eve

December 24, 2025

Welcome to St. Matthew's!

We are delighted that you have joined us for worship today! It is our prayer that God would fill you with His grace and peace as we worship our Lord and Savior Jesus. If you have questions about St. Matthew's or would like to speak to one of the pastors, please feel free to reach out to us using the contact information on the back cover.

Rejoice! The Grace of God has Appeared!

How eagerly we have awaited this night! The planning, the effort, the coordination of everything from food to airline flights – so that we might come together to celebrate God's greatest Gift of Grace. Truly the birth of our Savior Jesus is an undeserved, unearned, unmerited blessing – but compelled by His love and His desire to save sinners – God sent Jesus into our world to redeem us.

And while his birth was announced by the heavenly hosts, it seems that not many took notice. Praise be to God that he has opened our eyes to believe the Good News of Great Joy. Praise be to God that he causes us to live our lives following our Savior. Praise be to God that he leads us to look forward to his gracious appearing again.

If this is your first time worshiping with us, we thank you for joining us. It is our hope and prayer that the message you hear tonight from God's Word will fill your heart with the peace that only God can offer and the joy we have in knowing that Jesus Christ is our Savior from sin. Please take a moment to complete a Connection Card in the seat back, you can place that in the offering plate at that time.

For Your Convenience

- ◊ Restrooms are located down the hallway on the left.
- ◊ A Parents' room is available in the back of the sanctuary for those with small children.
- ◊ A Mother's room, located in the parents' room, offers privacy for nursing mothers.
- ◊ Large Print Service Folders are available from an usher upon request.
- ◊ Please silence your cell phones before worship.
- ◊ View services on Charter 985 on Thursdays at 12PM and 7PM or Sundays at 10AM. You can also visit https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=st+matthews+oconomowoc
- ◊ St. Matthew's is on Instagram. You can follow us @St.MatthewsOconomowoc.

The Order of Worship for
Nativity of our Lord – Christmas Eve

December 24, 2025

Welcome

Invocation
In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy Spirit.
Amen.

Anthem — O Holy Night
Emily Knoelke

Responsive Verses
Almighty God, before whom angels veil their faces, and in whose presence they delight, we acknowledge your glory with reverence and joy and worship you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, eternal Trinity.
Praise be to you, O God, for your great glory and majesty.

Confessing our sin and our unworthiness, we beseech your mercy and forgiveness, for the sake of Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh to dwell among us, full of grace and truth.
Thanks be to you, O God, for your forgiving grace and mercy.

When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children.
Thanks be to you, O God, for adopting us as your children.

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; on those who live in a land of deep darkness, the light has shined. For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given. And his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Accept our praise and thanks, O Lord, as we meditate on the miracle of the birth of your Son, our Savior and our God.

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true light. Grant that as we have known on earth the wonder of that light, we may also behold him in all his glory in the life to come; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

The Christmas Gospel

Luke 2:1-7

This Christ child is born in Bethlehem.

1 And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus
that all the world should be taxed. 2 (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was
governor of Syria.) 3 And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.
4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto
the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of
David:) 5 To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. 6 And so it was,
that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.
7 And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid
him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

335 To Shepherds as They Watched

Luke 2:8-14

The Angels tell the Shepherds Good News of Great Joy!

8 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch
over their flock by night. 9 And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of
the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. 10 And the angel said unto
them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all
people. 11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the
Lord. 12 And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling
clothes, lying in a manger.

13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, **14** Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

Anthem — Joy to the World / Glory to God

Choir

Luke 2:15-20

The Shepherds spread abroad the Word of the Savior's birth, as Mary treasure all this in her heart.

15When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

16So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. 17When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, 18and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. 19But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. 20The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

Hymn 329 — All My Heart Again Rejoices

Choir verse 2, Soloist verse 5

Christmas Message — Titus 2:11-14

11For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. 12It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, 13while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, 14who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

A Christmas Letter from Crete

Pastor Steven Hillmer

Confession of Faith for Christmas Eve

I believe in God the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
who sent his Son as my Savior on Christmas Day.

I believe in Jesus Christ,
his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
announced by the angels,
worshiped by the shepherds,
adored by the Wise Men,
who lived to suffer, die, and rise again,
who has freed me from sin, death, and the power of the devil.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
who has brought me to faith in the Christ of Christmas,
who continues to work in my heart,
who leads me to lay before the feet of my Lord the treasures of my heart
and to live under him as my King, both now and forevermore. Amen.

Connection Cards and Offerings

We are delighted you have joined us for worship today and we would love to stay connected with you. To help us do so, please fill out the Connection Card in the seat back. You may place it in the offering plate as the offering is gathered or hand it to one of the ushers. You also have the ability to record your worship or give a gift using the appropriate QR code below. Those who have downloaded the St. Matthew's App can check-in and give offerings directly through the app. You may also text GIVE to 833-921-6451.

Guest Form



St. Matthew's App



Give Online



Candle Lighting

The ushers will light their candles from the Christ Candle on the Advent Wreath and then light the candles of worshipers seated on the center aisle. Lighted candles should not be tipped to avoid wax dripping. The unlit candle should be tipped when lighting it from a neighbor's candle. Extinguish candles after the final hymn.

Anthem — Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Choir

Christmas Prayer

Gracious and almighty Father, we praise you that you kept your ancient promises by sending your everlasting Son in human flesh.
On this holy night, receive our thanks and devotion, our songs and prayers.

You sent Jesus as a lowly child to demonstrate your concern for all, the weak and lonely, the troubled and frightened, the timid and helpless. Your ever-seeking eyes overlook no one. No one is excluded from your upholding arms. No one is denied the comfort and help of your outstretched hand.
Bless us with a childlike faith in the divine assurance that you love and care for us always.

You sent Jesus as the Savior of the world to deliver all from the curse of sin, the power of death, and the torment of hell. He was born under the law to set us free. He became the innocent lamb of sacrifice. He came to die and rise again in order that we might live eternally. Firmly implant this good news in our hearts, and fill us with an eager desire to spread the Word concerning what we have heard tonight.
May all who hear the message, in every nation under heaven, be amazed and believe what is told them about the child.

You sent Jesus as the Light of the world to drive out all darkness that would rob us of the full life that you intend for us. May the joy that will be for all people be our joy. May the peace on earth to all on whom his favor rests be our peace. May the treasure that Mary pondered in her heart be our treasure.
For today in the town of David, a Savior has been born to us. He is Christ, the Lord. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.
Amen.

Closing Hymn 337 — Silent Night, Holy Night

The Choir sings verse one.

Please extinguish your candle at this time.
Candles can be place on the tables in the Gathering Area.

Join us for these opportunities to worship our New-Born King!

Dec. 25 Tomorrow – Christmas Day 9:00am

This Weekend : *A Festival Service of Scripture and Song*

Dec. 27 Saturday Worship – Christmas 1 5:30pm

Dec. 28 Sunday Morning – Christmas 1 8:00 & 10:30am

No Bible classes this Sunday; No NY Eve service

Serving Our Savior Today in Worship
Pastor Steven Hillmer
Church Choir Director - Mrs. Joy Elowski
Organist - Mrs. Joy Elowski
Soloist – Emily Knoelke

On behalf of all the faculty and staff at St. Matthew's, we wish you all a most Blessed Christmas. May our God gracious gift of a Savior continue to fill you with all peace and joy today and in the New Year!



We are both humbled and honored by all the gracious gifts and cards that you have shared with us. Thank you so very much. It continues to be a joy to serve our Lord and you with Word and Sacrament and we look forward to each day our Lord gives us to continue sharing God's love!

Pastor Philip & Heather Bigelow
Isaiah, Elijah and Caleb

Pastor Steven and Jennifer Hillmer
Ben, Matthew, Silas and Jude

Pastor Mark and Anne Voss
Max, Simon and Henry

Acknowledgments
Setting One from Christian Worship
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Bible Study Opportunities

Sunday Adult Bible Study @ 9:15am – Resumes January 4
Our Adult Bible Class is on a historical journey generation by generation, seeing how God has blessed WELS over these past 175 years! For parents with young children, childcare is available for children ages 0-3 in the Pre-K2 room so that those parents can attend class.

Teen Study @ 9:15am – Resumes January 4
Sunday School is on a two-week break and will resume on Sunday, January 4. Teen study will meet this week but will not meet Sunday, December 28.

Thursday "Women in the Word" Bible Class – Resumes January 8
Join us in January as we begin a new study of God's Word, specifically examining the book of Daniel. Most people recall that he was in the Lion's Den, but there so much more! Join us on Thursday mornings at 8:30 a.m. in the Gathering Space.

Men's Bible Breakfast – 2nd Saturdays of the Month
Calling all men to come for a great breakfast and a study of God's Word. Breakfast starts at 7:30am on the second Saturday of each month. Pastor Bigelow is leading the topic, "Connecting Sinai to Calvary."

Grounded in God – Resumes January 6
SHINE Women's Ministry would like to invite all St. Matthew's women and friends to join us for Coffee and Devotion, "Grounded in God". Join us in the Gathering Space at Church at 7:45 a.m., conveniently after school drop-off. Children are welcome!

Highlights and Announcements

2026 Marriage Retreat

Looking for a meaningful Christmas gift for your spouse? Register for St. Matthew's Marriage Retreat on **Saturday, February 14, 2026**. The church is covering the cost of the CliftonStrengths assessment, a $25 value per person. Upgrade options are available for those who want a deeper dive. Register today at https://bit.ly/SMmarriage

St. Matthew's Christmas Project

This year, St. Matthew's is partnering with **Make-A-Wish Wisconsin**! We're collecting **new, unwrapped toys** to help bring joy to children's wish journeys. Donation boxes are located at the church and school **now through January 5**. *Let's share the hope and excitement of the season with those who need it most!* Use the QR Code for the wish list or to donate online.

Save the Date: Women's Retreat – February 28, 2026

Join us for a day of fellowship and spiritual growth at our annual Women's Retreat! This year's theme, **"Renewed Minds, Transformed Lives"** (Romans 12:2), invites us to experience God's transformative power. **Early Bird Registration opens January 1, 2026.** More details coming soon!

Support Central Africa Medical Mission (CAMM)

Donate empty, clean pill bottles with labels removed. They will be sent by LWMS to CAMM in Malawi and Zambia. **Drop-off box:** Located on the table near the church office. *Learn more at www.camm.us*

Opportunity to Help Our Neighbors

Zachariah's Acres, located just north of our congregation, is looking for volunteers to help at their WINTERFEST Family Event on Saturday, January 31st. The volunteer shift is 12:15-4:30 and the event runs 1:00-4:00 p.m. Please visit https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B054BA8AF2CA31-59923312-winterfest/4302118#/ if you can help! Volunteering helps children with special needs and their families. Volunteers must be 16+ and are asked fill out the Zachariah's Acres volunteer application located on their website. Zachariah's Acres mission is to connect children with special needs, and their families, to the miracles of nature so they may know their Creator. Contact Karen Vasatko 262-422-7725 with any questions!

OUR MISSION *COMPELLED BY THE LOVE OF CHRIST,*

St. Matthew's Evangelical Lutheran Church and School seek to reach out to our families, community and world, using Law and Gospel to make disciples, growing and nurturing them in their Christian faith and life.

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St. Matthew's CHURCH AND SCHOOL

First Steps CHILD CARE CENTER

WORSHIP SERVICES SATURDAY: 5:30 PM | SUNDAY: 8:00 & 10:30 AM

Christian Education For All
SUNDAY 9:15 AM

Phone :

Church: 262.912.6060
School: 262.912.6364
First Steps: 262.912.6338

Welcome Visitors:
Please fill out the connection card in pew or scan

SCAN ME

Location :
1650 Brown St, Oconomowoc

Social Media:
@StMatthewsOconomowoc

Website : SMLS.ORG