


# Easter Festival

**April 5, 2026**

St. Matthew's
CHURCH AND SCHOOL

# *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.

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## Easter Festival Service

### Resurrection Reality

The film director Woody Allen once said, "I'm not afraid to die, I just don't want to be there when it happens." Studies show that most people fear death in varying degrees. One of the biggest reasons people fear death is the perception of permanency. In the normal realm of human existence, dead is dead. It seems final. Someone dies, and all you can hold onto are pictures and memories. That is the way many think, but it is far from reality. Today, Christ proves that death is *not* final!

Easter teaches us that Christ lives! He is the first fruits of those that have died. Just as Christ rose, "so in Christ all will be made alive". That changes everything! It changes the way we grieve death, the way we feel when our health fails, the way we look at the purpose of life. It changes the way we look at eternity and our life right now. Let us rejoice in this resurrection reality! Christ Is Risen! He Is Risen Indeed! Alleluia!

### 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*
# *Easter Festival*

*April 5, 2026*

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**Hymn 445** **He's Risen, He's Risen**

*Please stand*

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
**Amen.**

Christ is risen!
**He is risen, indeed!**

"As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us."
Christ is risen! *Psalm 103:12*
**He is risen, indeed!**

"For I am the Lord, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior." Christ is risen!
**He is risen, indeed!** *Isaiah 43:3*

"Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said." Christ is risen! *Matthew 28:5,6*
**He is risen, indeed!**

"Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death is your sting?" Christ is risen!
**He is risen, indeed! "Thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."** *1 Corinthians 15:55,57*

## Confession of Sins

Dear friends, let us approach God with a true heart and confess our sins, asking him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to forgive us.

**Lord of life, I confess that I am by nature dead in sin.**
**For faithless worrying and selfish pride,**
**For sins of habit and sins of choice,**
**For the evil I have done and the good I have failed to do,**
**You should cast me away from your presence forever.**
**O Lord, I am sorry for my sins. Forgive me, for Jesus' sake.**

## Absolution

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again. In his great mercy, God made us alive in Christ even when we were dead in our sins. Hear the word of Christ through his called servant:
I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
**Amen.**

*Be seated*

**Response of Praise 938** **This Is the Feast**

# The Word

## Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, by the glorious resurrection of your Son, Jesus Christ, you conquered death and opened the gate to eternal life. Grant that we, who have been raised with him through Baptism, may walk in newness of life and ever rejoice in the hope of sharing his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be dominion and praise now and forever.
**Amen.**

## First Reading *Jonah 2:2-9*

*Jesus compared himself to the Old Testament prophet who escaped certain death after three days in the belly of a fish.*

[2]He said:

"In my distress I called to the LORD,
and he answered me.
From deep in the realm of the dead I called for help,
and you listened to my cry.
[3]You hurled me into the depths,
into the very heart of the seas,
and the currents swirled about me;
all your waves and breakers
swept over me.
[4]I said, 'I have been banished
from your sight;
yet I will look again
toward your holy temple.'
[5]The engulfing waters threatened me,
the deep surrounded me;
seaweed was wrapped around my head.
[6]To the roots of the mountains I sank down;
the earth beneath barred me in forever.
But you, LORD my God,
brought my life up from the pit.

[7]"When my life was ebbing away,
I remembered you, LORD,
and my prayer rose to you,
to your holy temple.

[8]"Those who cling to worthless idols
turn away from God's love for them.
[9]But I, with shouts of grateful praise,
will sacrifice to you.
What I have vowed I will make good.
I will say, 'Salvation comes from the LORD.' "

The Word of the Lord.
**Thanks be to God.**

## Anthem — Easter Anthem

Choir

## Second Reading — *1 Corinthians 15:1-11*

*Christ has indeed been raised from the dead.*

[1]Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which
you received and on which you have taken your stand. [2]By this gospel you are saved, if
you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.
[3]For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our
sins according to the Scriptures, [4]that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day
according to the Scriptures, [5]and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve.
[6]After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same
time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. [7]Then he appeared to
James, then to all the apostles, [8]and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one
abnormally born.
[9]For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle,
because I persecuted the church of God. [10]But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his
grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but
the grace of God that was with me. [11]Whether, then, it is I or they, this is what we preach,
and this is what you believed.

The Word of the Lord.
**Thanks be to God.**

## 452:1 — The Strife Is O'er, the Battle Done

## Gospel *(Sermon Text)* — *Matthew 28:1-10*

*The account of Christ's Easter victory.*

[1]After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other
Mary went to look at the tomb.

[2]There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. [3]His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. [4]The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

[5]The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. [6]He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. [7]Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you."

[8]So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. [9]Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. [10]Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

The Gospel of the Lord.
**Thanks be to God.**

*Be seated.*

## Hymn 441 — I Know That My Redeemer Lives

*1 – Choir, 2 – All, 3 – Men, 4 – Women, 5 – Choir, 6 – All, 7 – Choir, 8 - All*

## Sermon — What Difference Does Easter Make?

*Pastor Philip Bigelow*

## Response Hymn 451 — See, What a Morning

## Connection Cards & 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

## Prayer of the Church

O Lord God, our strength, our song, and our salvation, you fulfilled your promises by the resurrection of your Son, Jesus Christ, from the dead.
**Thanks be to God! You give us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.**

In your compassion you sent Christ, the Good Shepherd, who laid down his life to rescue the lost.
**Drive out all doubt and gloom that we may delight in your glorious triumph.**

Lift our eyes heavenward to see him who lives to make intercession for the saints, and grant us confidence in the greatness of his power. Keep before us the vision of your redeemed people standing before your throne and singing the song of victory:
**Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive wisdom and power and honor and glory and praise.**

Make us instruments of your peace as we bring the good news of hope and new life to those around us. Guide us in the use of all that you have entrusted to us: our time, our talents, and our treasures.
**Risen Lord, live in us that we may live for you.**

*Special Prayers of Intercession*

Gracious Father, you have restored to us the joy of your salvation through Jesus Christ, our Savior. With joy-filled hearts, we come before you and pray as you have taught:

## The 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

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever!

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 442 Christ the Lord Is Risen Today; Alleluia

**Serving us today**

**Preaching:** Pastor Philip Bigelow
**Organist:** Joy Elowski
**Special Music:** Choir
**Instrumentalist:** Jon Kehren, Tim Torgerson, Tim Anderson, Ethan Schuh, Jenny Hillmer, Silas Hillmer

| This Week at St. Matthew's | | |
|---|---|---|
| Sunday | 6:00 am<br>8 & 10:30 am | Son-Rise Service<br>Festival Service |
| Monday | 5:30 pm | Childcare Committee |
| Tuesday | 7:45 am<br>6:30 pm | Grounded in God Bible Study<br>Board of Outreach |
| Wednesday | 9:00 am<br>10:00 am<br>5:00 pm<br>6:30 pm | Preschool Power Hour<br>Shorehaven Service<br>Public School Catechism<br>Board of Stewardship |
| Thursday | 8:00 am<br>8:30 am<br>6:00 pm<br>6:00 pm<br>6:30 pm<br>7:00 pm<br>8:00 pm | SCRIP Orders Due<br>Women in the Word<br>Rejoice!<br>Board of Trustees<br>Budget Committee<br>Handbell Choir<br>Men's Chorus |
| Saturday | 7:30 am<br>5:30 pm | Men's Bible Breakfast<br>Communion Service |
| Sunday | 8 & 10:30 am<br>9:15 am<br>6:30 pm | Communion Service<br>Adult Bible Study; Bible Adventures; Teen Bible Study<br>Laudate Dominum Rehearsal |

# Highlights and Announcements

**Church & School Office**
The church & school office will be closed on Monday.

**Special Voter's Meeting – April 12**
All voting members are encouraged to attend a Special Voters' Meeting on Sunday, April 12, immediately following the late service. Please plan to stay and be part of this important discussion.

**20/30S Group | 3 Minute Mingles**
Looking to connect with others in a similar stage of life? All 20/30s adults, join us for *3 Minute Mingles* on **Saturday, April 25 from 3:00–5:00 PM** in the Commons! You'll rotate through short, guided conversations—no awkward small talk required.
*Bring an appetizer or snack to share. Childcare may be available based on need.*
**RSVP to Emily Stewart** at estewart@smls.org **or** Marissa Krogmann. at marissakrogmann@gmail.com

**WELS Mission Festival – April 25 & 26 at St. Matthew's**
Join us at St. Matthew's for a special WELS Mission Festival on Saturday & Sunday, April 25–26, during all services. This year, we'll be focusing on the incredible mission work happening in the **Asia-Oceania region**—a powerful opportunity to see how the gospel is reaching people across cultures and continents.
We welcome **Pastor Leon Ehlert**, who serves part-time with the Asia-Oceania mission team and at Beautiful Savior in Green Bay, WI. **He will be presenting between services on Sunday** as our featured presenter. He will share insights and stories from the mission field and how God's Word is reaching people around the world.

**Save the Date: Laudate Dominum Concert: *Sinners and Saints***
You're invited to *Sinners and Saints*, a choral concert featuring 33 singers from 17 area congregations. Through music that challenges, comforts, and inspires, the program explores our identity as both sinners and saints—and the powerful truth of whose we are in Christ.
**Join us Sunday, April 19 at 7:00 PM** at St. Matthew's Lutheran Church. A freewill offering will be gathered.

**Campus Grounds Volunteers**
Warmer weather is a great opportunity to help care for our St. Matthew's grounds. Our gardens are divided into sections so anyone can help—even with a busy schedule. Each volunteer (or team) cares for one area from **May 1–September 30**, working on your own time as needed.
To sign up use the QR Code. You may sign up with a friend or group. Some areas are already filled by returning volunteers, so please choose an available area or a substitute option. Wisconsin Master Gardeners may count this site for volunteer hours.
Questions? Contact Debby Kuklinski at 414-520-6642.

**ACTS: Gourmet Girls Flourish Night**
As part of our ACTS teens ministry, Joy Lenz will be hosting two Gourmet Girls Flourish Nights this April—an evening of devotion, cooking, and connection. It's a great opportunity for girls to spend time together, grow in faith, and enjoy a fun night in the kitchen.
- April 17 – High School Girls (6–9 PM)
- April 25 – Grades 7–8 (6–9 PM)
Sign up at **smls.org/events**

**Crafting for Hope Day – April 26**
Join SHINE Women's Ministry for a **Craft Day on Sunday, April 26, from 1–3 PM in the Commons.** Women and girls age 10+ are invited to help cut and prepare felt pieces for a storyboard set for Hope Lutheran Church in Houston, TX. Bring fabric scissors and join us! Offerings collected during the Easter Breakfast helped purchase this storyboard set, making this a meaningful opportunity to support the project both financially and hands-on. These materials will be used by Emilee Nemmers, a former member and teacher, to launch an early childhood Sunday school program this August.

**Worker's for the Lord 2026 Application**
Applications for the 2026 Workers for the Lord program are now available for students attending Martin Luther College, Luther Prep and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. This program provides financial support and encouragement for students preparing for public ministry and training to serve the Lord in their future vocations. Eligible students are encouraged to apply for the 2026 cycle.
**Please complete your submission by May 1.** Use the QR Code to find the application and additional details.

**Forward in Christ Subscriptions**
Sign up for the congregation's *Forward in Christ* subscription (starting in June). Complete an envelope available on the table near the church office and submit it by mail or drop it off at the church office (mailing address required). All current subscribers must renew. Make checks payable to *St. Matthew's Lutheran Church.* **Sign up by May 1st**

**LWMS Mission Offering**
Twice a year, each LWMS Circuit Rally provides an opportunity for women from every church in the circuit to give an offering supporting two mission projects - **Home Mission:** *WELS Campus Ministry* | **World Mission:** *International Missionary Wives Conference.*
**Give:** ***Now - April 5th,*** offerings can be dropped at the church office or **given online.** (Checks should be made payable to *St. Matthew's with LWMS* in the memo line.)

**Acknowledgments**
Setting One from Christian Worship
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# 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**