

St. Matthew's
CHURCH AND SCHOOL

Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

July 19, 2026

WELS
Christ's Love, Our Calling.

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.

WHAT MAKES CHRISTIANS DIFFERENT?

Christians Live as Wheat Among Weeds

The wheat that grows in the Middle East is a variety that looks much like wild grass or weeds. It is difficult to tell wheat and weeds apart until shortly before harvest time, when the wheat stalks develop a head containing the kernels of grain. Pulling the weeds out of a wheat field could lead to accidentally pulling up a fair amount of wheat. People need to wait for the harvest to separate wheat from weeds.

Jesus uses that image to illustrate life this side of heaven. What makes Christians different? They are wheat planted by the Lord. Unbelieving evildoers are pictured as weeds. We might want God to take care of evil now, pulling up all the weeds. But he tells us to wait for the harvest of judgment day. So we live as wheat among weeds, being faithful, fruitful, and mindful of the coming harvest.

For Your Convenience

- ◊ A Hearing Loop system is available; switch your device to the "T" (telecoil) program to connect. Further instructions are available in the Church Office.
- ◊ 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.

Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

July 19, 2026

Hymn 873 **Rise, My Soul, to Watch and Pray**

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

Confession

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.
If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just
and will forgive us our sins
and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.
Holy God, gracious Father,
I am sinful by nature
and have sinned against you in my thoughts, words, and actions.
I have not loved you with my whole heart;
I have not loved others as I should.
I deserve your punishment both now and forever.
But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins
with his innocent suffering and death.
Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

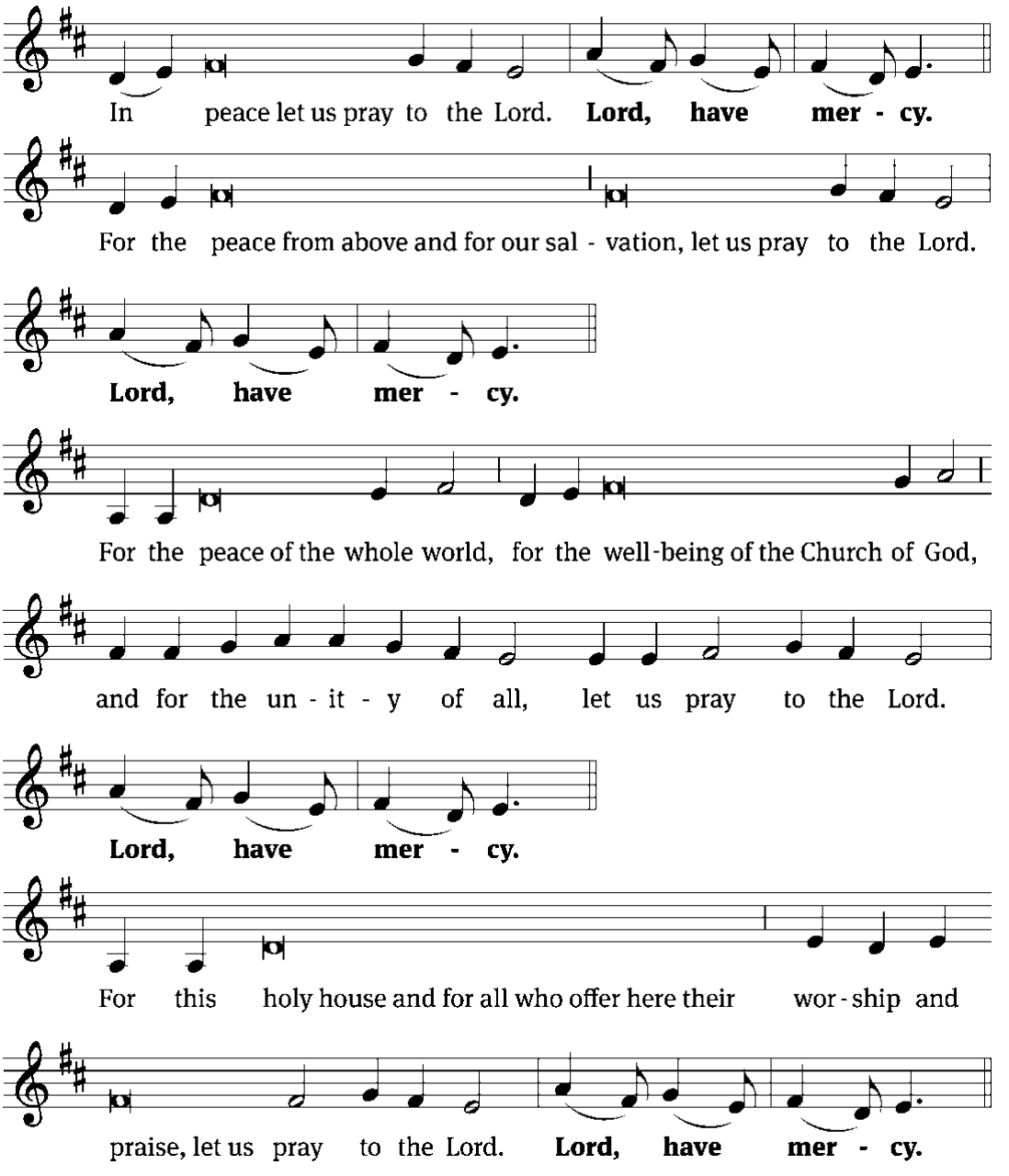
Silence for meditation and reflection

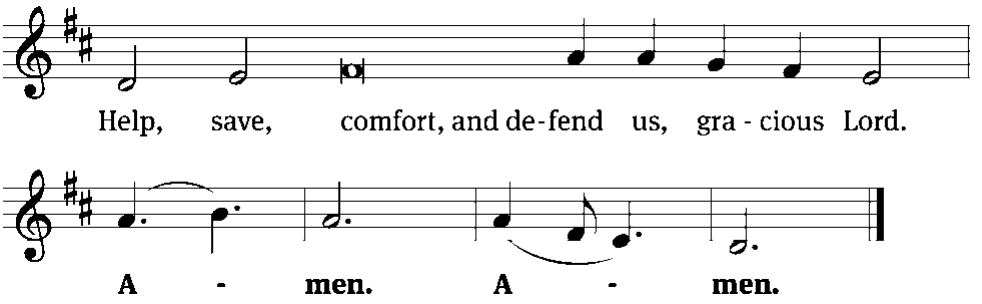
Absolution

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Lord, Have Mercy

CW 190





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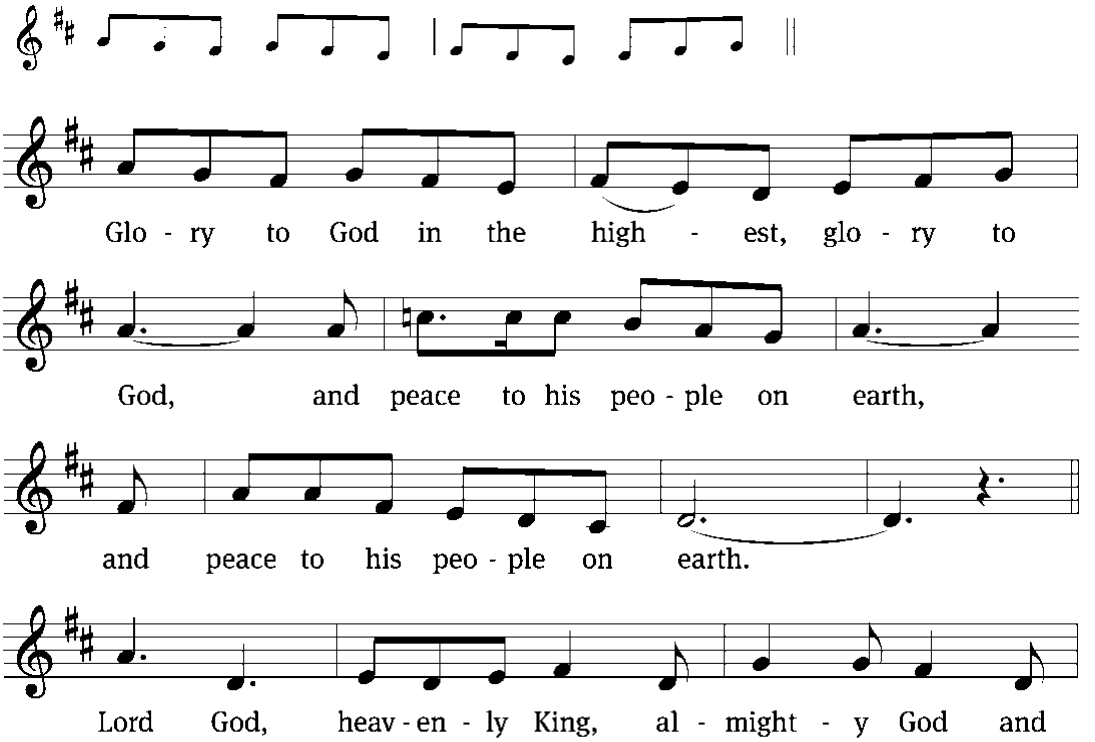
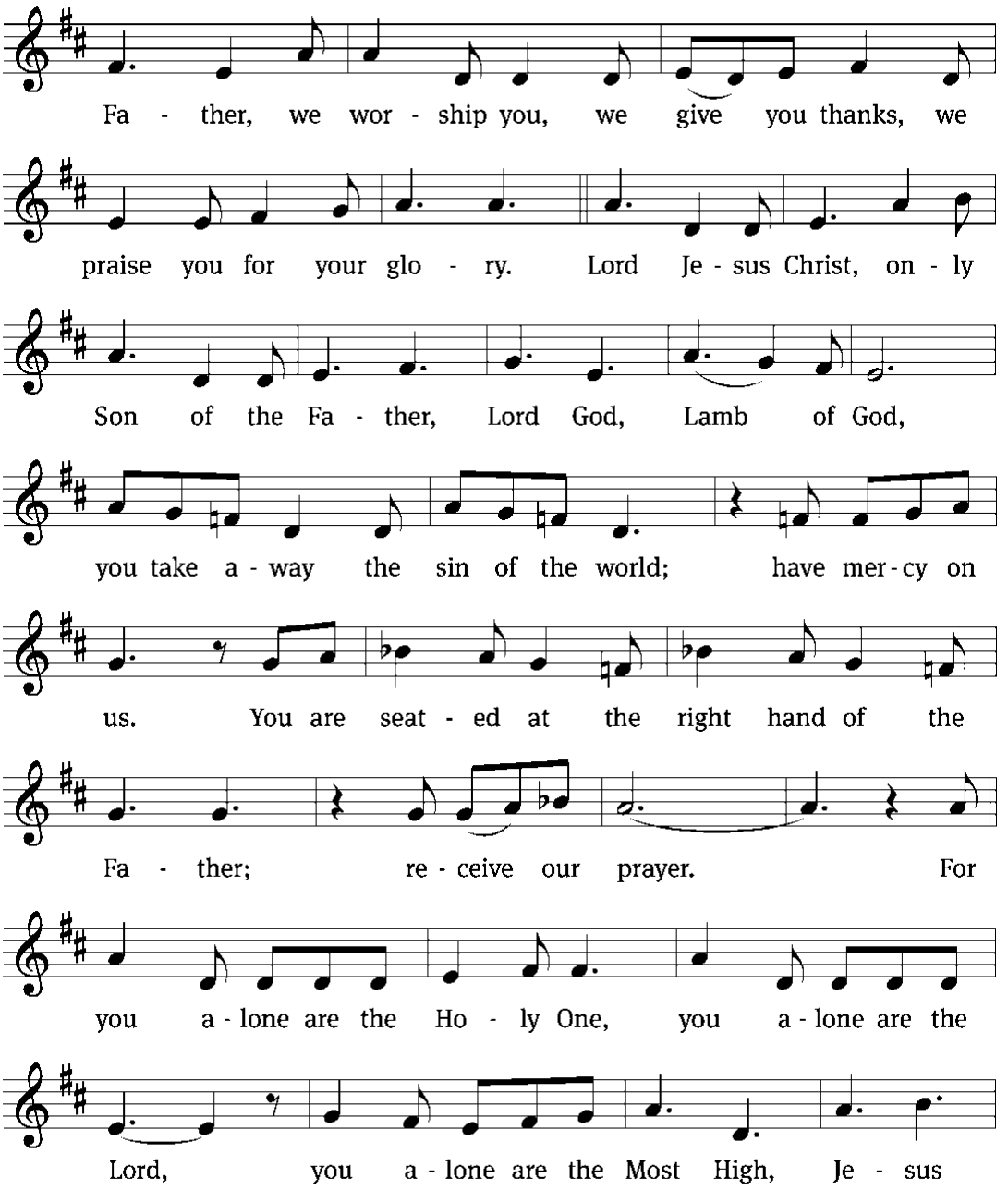
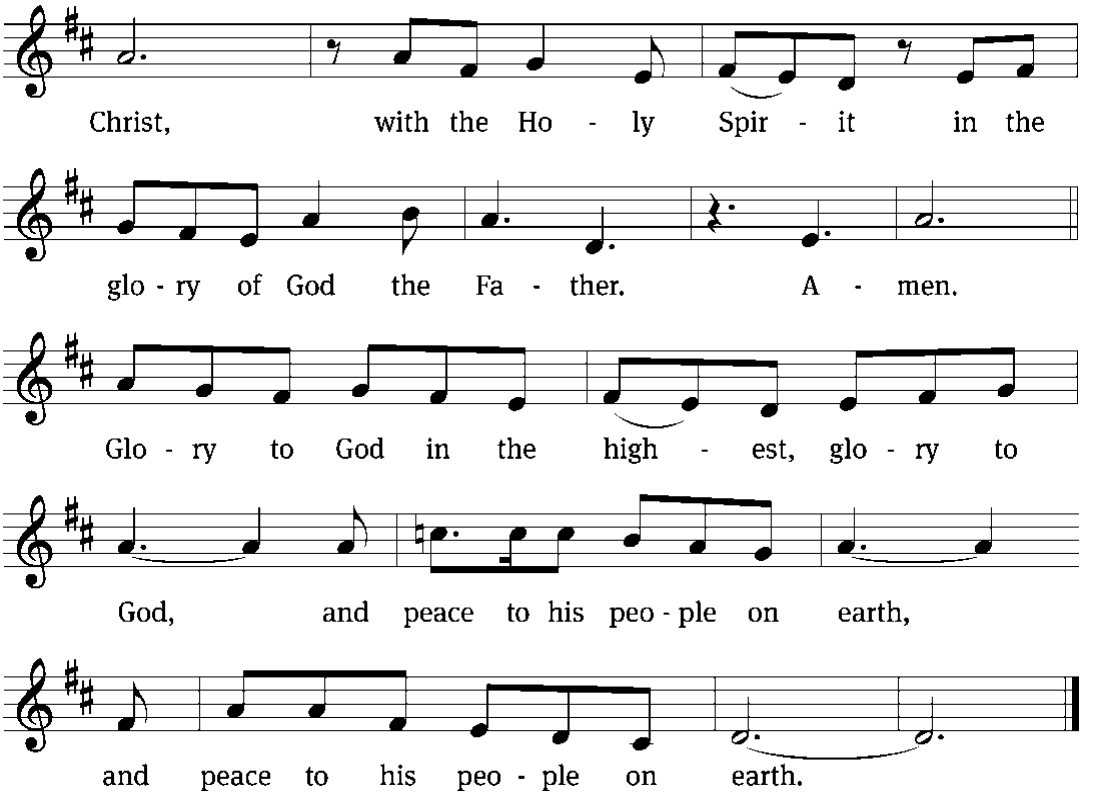
Glory to God in the Highest

CW 191




Fa - ther, we wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we
praise you for your glo - ry. Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly
Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on
us. You are seat - ed at the right hand of the
Fa - ther; re - ceive our prayer. For
you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the
Lord, you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus



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The Word

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

O God, so rule and govern our hearts and minds by your Holy Spirit that, ever mindful of your final judgment, we may be stirred up to holiness of living here and dwell with you in perfect joy hereafter; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

Baptism – *Sunday, 10:30am*

We rejoice with Isaiah and Maddy Schlomer as their daughter Sadie Rae Schlomer is baptized. Sadie's grandfather, Pastor Larry Schlomer, will administer the sacrament.

First Reading *(Sermon Text)* **Isaiah 44:6-11**

Like wheat among weeds, Christians live surrounded by evil in this world.

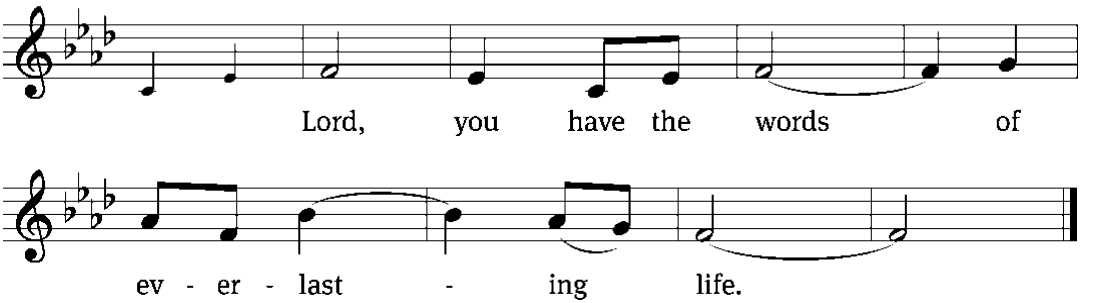
6 "This is what the LORD says—
Israel's King and Redeemer, the LORD Almighty:
I am the first and I am the last;
apart from me there is no God.
7 Who then is like me? Let him proclaim it.
Let him declare and lay out before me
what has happened since I established my ancient people,
and what is yet to come—
yes, let them foretell what will come.
8 Do not tremble, do not be afraid.
Did I not proclaim this and foretell it long ago?
You are my witnesses. Is there any God besides me?
No, there is no other Rock; I know not one."

9 All who make idols are nothing,
and the things they treasure are worthless.
Those who would speak up for them are blind;
they are ignorant, to their own shame.
10 Who shapes a god and casts an idol,
which can profit nothing?
11 People who do that will be put to shame;
such craftsmen are only human beings.
Let them all come together and take their stand;
they will be brought down to terror and shame.

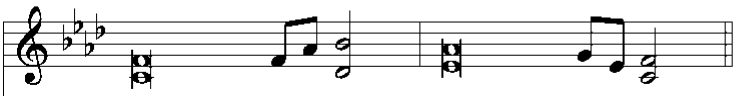
The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Psalm 19C Lord, You Have the Words of Everlasting Life

Refrain



Tone



The heavens declare the glo- / ry of God;
the skies proclaim the work / of his hands.
Their voice goes out into / all the earth,
their words to the ends / of the world. *Refrain*

The law of the LORD is / perfect,
refresh- / ing the soul.
The commands of the LORD are / radiant,
giving light / to the eyes.
They are more pre- / cious than gold;
they are sweeter than / honey. *Refrain*

May these words of my mouth and this meditation / of my heart
be pleasing in your sight, LORD, my rock and my Re- / deemer.
Glory be to the Father and / to the Son
and to the Holy / Spirit,
as it was in the be- / ginning,
is now, and will be forever. / Amen. *Refrain*

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Second Reading *Romans 1:18-25*

God is not ambivalent about evil in the world. But his wrath will be fully revealed only at judgment day.

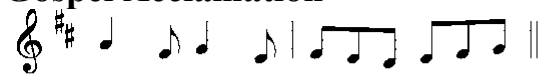
[18]The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and
wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, [19]since what may be
known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. [20]For since the
creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—
have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are
without excuse.

[21]For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to
him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. [22]Although
they claimed to be wise, they became fools [23]and exchanged the glory of the immortal
God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and
reptiles.

[24]Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity
for the degrading of their bodies with one another. [25]They exchanged the truth about God
for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever
praised. Amen.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation **Romans 11:33**



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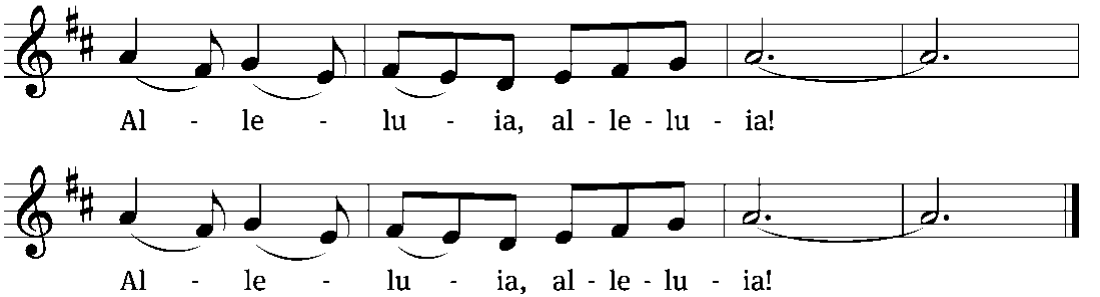

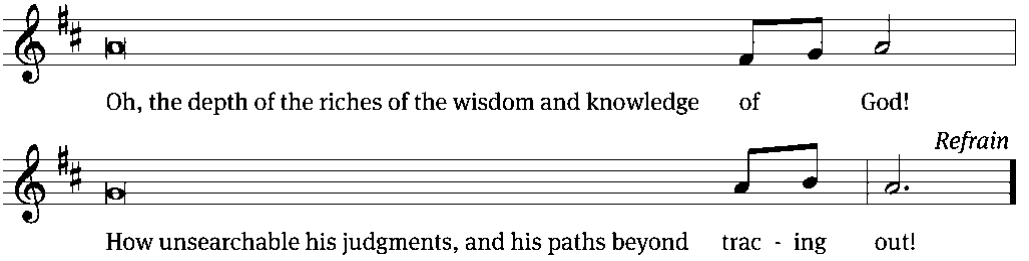

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Gospel *Matthew 13:24-30,36-43*

The Lord has a plan to separate wheat and weeds at the final harvest.

24 Jesus told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed
good seed in his field. 25 But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed
weeds among the wheat, and went away. 26 When the wheat sprouted and formed heads,
then the weeds also appeared.
27 "The owner's servants came to him and said, 'Sir, didn't you sow good seed in your
field? Where then did the weeds come from?' 28 " 'An enemy did this,' he replied.
"The servants asked him, 'Do you want us to go and pull them up?'
29 " 'No,' he answered, 'because while you are pulling the weeds, you may uproot the
wheat with them. 30 Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the
harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the
wheat and bring it into my barn.' "
36 Then he left the crowd and went into the house. His disciples came to him and said,
"Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field."
37 He answered, "The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. 38 The field is the
world, and the good seed stands for the people of the kingdom. The weeds are the people
of the evil one, 39 and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the
age, and the harvesters are angels.
40 "As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age.
41 The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom
everything that causes sin and all who do evil. 42 They will throw them into the blazing
furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. 43 Then the righteous will
shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Whoever has ears, let them hear.

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise be to you, O Christ!

Hymn 491 **Come, You Thankful People, Come**

Sermon **The True God Keeps You Growing**

Pastor Mark Voss

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. 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



Forward for the Next Generation Video

Please see page 19 for more information about today's video.

Prayer of the Church

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

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 704 Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus

In our Prayers: We rejoice with **Ken and Janice Watson** as they celebrate their 61st Wedding Anniversary. We ask for God's blessing upon our **VBS** this week.

Acknowledgments
Setting Three from Christian Worship
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Bible Study Opportunities

Sunday Adult Bible Study – *The Ten Commandments*
Join us Sundays at 9:15 a.m. between services as we study the Ten Commandments and their relevance for our faith and daily lives. Students entering 5th grade and older are welcome to join the class. All are welcome!

Summer Childcare Available During Adult Bible Study
Sunday School and Teen Study are on summer break. Childcare is available for infants through 4th grade and will meet in the 3K classroom, located in the farthest wing of the school building. Children in 5th grade and older are welcome to join the Adult Bible Study.

"Bible by the Fire"* - Bible Study on Friday evenings: July 31 and Aug. 21—at 6:00 PM.** We'll gather around bonfires for Scripture, fellowship, and conversation in a welcoming, relaxed setting. This summer, we'll be studying the book of Habakkuk. Please bring along a Bible. Whether you're new or have attended before, you are invited to come as you are. Feel free to bring a beverage and a snack to share. **For more details and the latest updates, *visit SMLS.org/Events.

Women's Wednesday Bible Study – in July
We invite all women to join our Bible Study in July entitled, ***"Rejoice in the Lord – a study of the Book of Philippians."*** We'll meet in the Gathering Space at 6pm.

Thank you for Serving our Savior and Us		
	This Weekend	**Next Weekend –** July 25 & 26
Ushers	**Saturday** – Andy Andress **Early –** Jason Cox **Late –** Todd Helwig	**Saturday** – Scott Heins **Early –** Joel Watson **Late –** Andy Rosenau
Greeters	**Early** – John & Jill Fields **Late** – Mike & Joy Lenz	**Early** – Tim & Carolyn Thiele **Late** – Brenda Broege-Nagel
Hospitality	**Saturday** – Jon & Kessia Boche **Early –** Tim & Sandy Torgerson **Late** – Rudy & Chris Dovnik	**Saturday** – Char Bouche **Early –** Ralph & Tracy Schmidt **Late –** Kyle & Robin Koltz
Organist	Diane Erdman	Pastor Jon Kehren
Special Music		
Flowers		
Projection	**Saturday** – Emily Stewart **Early –** Dan Metzger **Late –** Josh Charais	**Saturday** – Andrew Bessert **Early –** Dan Metzger **Late** – Toby Brandenstein
Sound	**Saturday** – John Stewart **Early –** Steve Vasatko **Late –** Jacob Kopplin	**Saturday** – Char Bouche **Early –** Julia Watson **Late –** Kathy Goggins
Livestream	Mike Bouche	John Schuh

This Week at St. Matthew's		
Saturday	5:30 pm	Worship Service
Sunday	8 & 10:30 am 9:15 am	Worship Service Adult Bible Study; Child Care
Monday	8:30 am	Vacation Bible School
Tuesday	8:30 am	Vacation Bible School
Wednesday	8:30 am 10:00 am 6:30 pm	Vacation Bible School Shorehaven Services Women's Bible Study
Thursday	8:00 am 8:30 am	SCRIP Orders Due Vacation Bible School
Friday	8:30 am	Vacation Bible School
Saturday	5:30 pm	Communion Service
Sunday	8 & 10:30 am 9:15 am	Communion Service Adult Bible Study; Child Care

Highlights and Announcements

HELP NEEDED!
Help serve behind the scenes! We are need of help across all three of our A/V teams—livestream, soundboard, and projection. Students in 7th grade and up are welcome to join the projection team! If interested, please contact the church office at jmanssen@smls.org. All volunteers will receive training and will serve alongside an experienced team member for their first two services.

Youth Confirmation Classes
Confirmation classes for our public school and homeschool students begin for those in 6th grade. Initial information was sent out to parents whom we know have children entering 6th-8th grade. If you didn't receive information and have a rising 6th-8th grader in public school or homeschool, please contact Pastor Voss at mvoss@smls.org with the name(s) or your child(ren) and with your contact info. Thanks! Tentatively, we're looking at having an informational meeting for parents and students on **Wednesday, August 26 at 5 pm** in the school commons.

OWLS
The Rock River Area OWLS will be meeting at Aero Park, 984 Boomer St., Watertown on Tuesday July 21 at 12 noon for our annual picnic. Please bring your own place settings, silverware, beverage, and a dish to pass. Coffee and meat for sandwiches will be provided. Everyone is invited and guests are always welcome. Aero Park is handicapped accessible. Also, the Vietnam Memorial Wall is available for viewing.

Teacher Installation – Sunday, August 16
Please join us on **Sunday, August 16**, during **both worship services** as we celebrate the installation of four teachers who have accepted a Call to serve in ministry at St. Matthew's: **Jon Ziesemer** – 8th Grade Teacher, **Jason Rupnow** – 6th Grade Teacher, **Alyssa Schroeder** – 4th Grade Teacher, and **Anna Prost** – Lead Toddler Teacher at First Steps. A reception will be held between services. Please join us as we welcome and encourage these teachers in their ministry.

20/30s Bonfire & Bible Study — Next Gathering July 31!
Mark your calendars! Our next 20/30s Bonfire & Bible Study is coming up **Friday, July 31, at 6:00 PM.** Join us this summer for a time of Bible study, fellowship around the bonfire, and connection with other young adults as we continue our study of Habakkuk. *Newcomers are always welcome!*
More details and updates: smls.org/events

Shaped to Serve – September Sessions
Have you ever wondered how God has uniquely gifted you to serve? Join our **Shaped to Serve Workshops** to discover your spiritual gifts, connect with meaningful opportunities to serve at St. Matthew's, and enjoy fellowship, coffee, and a free Go, Serve, Love T-shirt.
SEPT 13, 20 & 27: Three 1-hour sessions between worship services in the Small Chapel.
Can't make September? A second workshop series will be offered **NOV 8, 15 & 22**.
Sign up today at smls.org/events!
Questions? Contact Eric Ziel or click **SHAPED Workshops** to learn more.

Men's Retreat
Our 18th annual Men's Retreat, organized by men from Twin Cities area WELS churches, will take place at Camp Croix on **September 18-20, 2026.** This year's theme is "Here I Stand: Lutherans find their voice in Christian apologetics" There are reasons that Lutherans have been quiet in the area of Christian apologetics. But there are even bigger reasons for us to break the silence, given what we uniquely see and understand about arguing for Christ in this skeptical world. Together, we will explore the What and the How of Christian apologetics so as to grow in confidence for our own sake, for the sake of those who do not know Jesus, and for the sake of the most vulnerable among us. This presentation will be led by Martin Luther College Prof. Mark Paustian. Sign up now, while there's still room, at mensretreat.org!
Questions regarding Camp Croix? Call Keith at 218-341-2119.
Questions regarding the retreat? Call Clay at 651-231-3237.

Save the Date – Church Picnic, Aug 30TH!
Join us at Okauchee Fireman's Park on Sunday, August 30th for our Annual Church Picnic! Worship begins at **10:00 a.m.**with music led by the St. Matthew's Brass Band, followed by lunch and fellowship.
Please RSVP by AUGUST 21 to help us prepare for food**.** Sign up at smls.org/events.
Please note: There will be a Saturday worship service, but **only one Sunday service at 10:00 a.m.** at the park.



FORWARD

FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

July
2026 Edition

Spotlight: First Steps & Our 3K WELSSA Accreditation

This month's *Forward for the Next Generation* video highlights an exciting milestone for St. Matthew's as First Steps Child Care Center and our 3K program have received WELSSA accreditation. This achievement shows our commitment to providing Christ-centered excellence in education from a child's very first steps and our dedication to nurturing and preparing the next generation from infancy through eighth grade.

Growing in Faith

Learning Begins Early
At St. Matthew's, we believe education starts long before kindergarten. From infancy through 3K, children are nurtured in faith, learning, and development through caring relationships and intentional, Christ-centered instruction.

Building Confidence

Going Beyond the Standard
WELSSA accreditation recognizes ministries that pursue excellence in curriculum, communication, staff development, policies, and early childhood best practices. Receiving this accreditation shows the dedication of our teachers and staff to continually grow and provide the very best for our children and families.

"We don't want to just meet best practices—we want to take that next step."
— Amber Terry, First Steps Director

Lasting Tradition

One Ministry, One Mission
WELSSA only recently expanded accreditation opportunities to include childcare centers and 3K programs, making this achievement especially meaningful. Through God's blessings and the support of our congregation, St. Matthew's now celebrates a fully accredited ministry serving children from infancy through eighth grade, equipping them for a lifelong walk of faith.

Thank you for your prayers and support as we continue moving FORWARD...for the Next Generation.

Watch Here

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.

PHILIP BIGELOW
Pastor
pbigelow@smls.org

STEVEN HILLMER
Pastor
shillmer@smls.org

MARK VOSS
Pastor
mvoss@smls.org

St. Matthew's
CHURCH AND SCHOOL

First Steps
CHILD CARE CENTER

SCHOOL OFFICE
schooloffice@smls.org

CHURCH OFFICE
churchoffice@smls.org

FIRST STEPS
firststepsoffice@smls.org

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