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The MESSENGER

FEBRUARY 2018 Newsletter

Message from Pastor Lynn...



What are you giving up for Lent? Bet you've heard that question before. There is a tradition of sacrifice and self-denial associated with Lent. Our acts of sacrifice help us identify with Jesus who spent 40 days in the wilderness in prayer and fasting.

The period of Lent is 40 days, not counting Sundays - which are always feast days and not appropriate for fasting. Although even on the Sundays of Lent, we "fast" from singing or saying Alleluia, not breaking the fast until the glorious strains of Alleluia are sung as we celebrate Easter.

It is a little unfortunate that we associate Lent with giving something up, because the purpose of Lent is not subtraction or reduction, but increase and growth. Even the Old Saxon word that is at the root of the word Lent refers to the lengthening of the days in spring that presage the growth of new life in nature. The period of Lent was first used as a time to prepare candidates for baptism. (The candidates were called 'catechumens' which means learners). During Lent they were instructed in the Gospel and taught about the meaning of baptism and the Lord's Supper. They spent time in prayer and in study. The idea was to grow these baby Christians who had decided to follow Jesus into full-fledged baptized members of the Church.

As we observe Lent this year, I would invite you to think about how you might stretch and grow in your awareness of God's presence in your life. Set aside time to spend with God each day. This time can be as simple as quiet reflection at the close of the day recalling where we have embraced God's loving presence during that day and where we have failed to recognize it or where in haste or self-absorption we have pushed God away from us. If you've never done it, I would encourage you to meditate on the Psalms during Lent. You will discover that the Psalms will draw you into prayer. Sometimes the Psalms express the awesome majesty of God in nature and recall God's saving deeds in history. At other times, they express the emotions common to all of us who serve God, including our fear and anger, our envy and sin as well as our hope, our loneliness, our pain and joy. Praying the Psalms brings us into community with the faithful throughout the ages who have made those words their own.

We will have our traditional soup suppers, with a brief vesper service following, throughout the Wednesdays of Lent, beginning on Ash Wednesday (February 14). These opportunities for informal worship in the church parlor may also be a resource to employ as you seek to stretch and grow this Lent. Lest we imagine our spiritual growth only happens in the hidden recesses of our hearts, we might also think about ways to serve during Lent through the mission outreach of St. Matthew's or in direct aid to someone who could use a helping hand or our presence to cheer a lonely day.

If you absolutely must give something up for Lent, I suggest you give up your Sunday mornings and devote them to worship.

See you in church! -Pastor Lynn



February 14
 7:00 pm



Wednesdays,
 6:00 pm soup supper;
 vesper service to
 follow



February Worship Participants

Altar Guild

Pam Kaznica

Lay Readers

2/4 Alva Looze
2/11 Gail Vara
2/18 Emma Rich
2/25 Karen Cuddihy

Ushers: Team 2

Don McMillan—Leader
Perry Kaupa
Chris Goetz
Ryan Goetz
Bill Hamm
Ken Kruszka
Kenny Kruszka

Coffee Hosts & Greeters

2/4 Robin Federmann
2/11 Karen Cuddihy
2/18 Tammy Kruszka
2/25 Nancy Williams

Childcare Volunteers

2/4 Lauren Zdrojewski
2/11 Tammy Kruszka
2/18 Beth Stormer
2/25 Jillian Szfranski

Ash Wednesday Service

February 14, 7:00 pm
with Holy Communion



Lent Soup Suppers

Wednesdays at 6:00 pm
from February 21 through March 21

Committees of the church will take turns hosting the meal—setting and cleaning up; warming the rolls; providing butter and milk. (Schedule below.)

The soup can be brought by anyone. Please sign up on the landing on the Wednesday that works best for you.

2/21	Church Council	3/14	Ushers
2/28	Choir & Praise Band	3/21	Mission
3/7	BCE & Hospitality		

**A vespers service led by Pastor Lynn
will follow supper and take place in the Parlor.**



Looking for Coffee Hour Host/Greeters!

Please see LaDonna or call her at 715-7310 if you would like to host a coffee hour. We have many dates available.

Thank you,

LaDonna Painter
Hospitality Committee



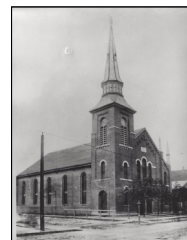
Would you like to purchase a lily in honor or memory of a loved one? The plants will adorn the altar/Sanctuary on Easter Sunday, and you may take them home following the service.

Order envelopes will be on the windowsill in the Narthex. Orders will be taken throughout the month of February. The absolute last day to order is Sunday, February 25. (Interestingly, we need to order a month early because the wildfires out west have affected the supply.) \$7.50 each. Questions? Call Robin Federmann at 432-7962.

IT'S OFFICIAL!!

We are 150 years old!

St. Matthew's was formed by a group of German immigrants in Buffalo in 1868 as St. Mathias Evangelical Church. The immigrant church adopted the English name, St. Matthew's; and in 1961, moved to Hamburg. Even though our name has changed, we are the same congregation that was formed 150 years ago.



Swan & Hagerman Streets, Buffalo



A committee is being organized to update everyone on our heritage with write-ups, displays and possible events.

Any one having articles or pictures, etc., may leave them in the office. Thank you.

World Day of Prayer

Friday, March 2, 2018

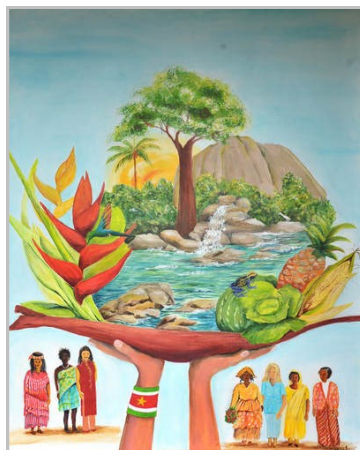
1:00pm Service at Orchard Park United Methodist

World Day of Prayer (WDP) takes place internationally on the first Friday of March every year. This year, the special worship service will be on Friday, March 2.

WDP is a global ecumenical movement led by Christian women who welcome you to join in prayer and action for peace and justice. This year, the "All God's Creation is Very Good!" Program was written by the women of Suriname.

The church hosting it in our neck of the woods is the Orchard Park United Methodist Church. All local churches are invited to be part of it.

St. Matthew's has participated in the past, and we are currently looking for women to attend any of the planning sessions for this year's service—scheduled for Wednesdays, Jan. 31, Feb. 7, Feb. 21 and Feb. 28 at 1pm, at OPUMC.



Please contact the church office if you are interested. For more information on WDP, go to wdp-usa.org.



Suriname
WDP
Committee



Friends of Night People

Sign up and be part of St. Matthew's monthly outreach on the first Wednesday of every month.

Volunteers from St. Matthew's prepare a meal at the church, then deliver and serve it to the visitors at the mission site.

Join us on February 7 and/or March 7. Sign up on the landing or call the church office.



As the first day in Lent falls on Valentine's Day this year, may we remember that Jesus' self-giving love is the greatest love of all.



There are behind-the-scenes volunteers — “Caregivers” — who give of their time to help friends in the congregation by making/delivering a meal; driving to a doctor’s appointment; cleaning house/yard and other ways. The Volunteer Form lists ways we support those in need. (Look for forms in the red folder posted on the bulletin board on landing.)

If you’d like to be one of those volunteers, please fill out the form and give to LaDonna Painter (or put in mailbox 67).

Also, if you or someone you know could use help by receiving a meal or ride, etc., please contact LaDonna, Pastor Lynn or the church office.

We are here to serve
one another in love.



“F.I.R.ST. Certificates”

are always available to purchase. These \$10.00 certificates never expire and are used at many Southtowns restaurants.

See Nancy Jankowski at church or call 826-0012 to purchase as a nice gift for others or yourself!

Proceeds go towards the church parking lot renovation.



We wish to thank Donn Mergenhagen, Andy Federmann and Larry Wightman for working on the hot water tank. A part needed a replacement which resulted in no hot water in the church for a week.

Pastor Lynn also went to the boiler room to see if he could assist in any way.

Thankfully, the tank was not leaking indicating it was repairable.

The water tank was installed in September of 1985 by Donn and another member.

Donn does a lot of maintenance on plumbing in the building keeping everything in tip top shape.

Again, thank you gentlemen for your service and expertise in this situation. It is good to know members have certain skills and talents who can step up when the need arises.

Custodians, Pamela & David Kaznica



UPC Soup Kitchen & Food Pantry
Union Presbyterian Church
67 Lake Avenue, Blasdell NY 142017

Dear St. Matthew's,

Thank you very much for your very generous food donation.

We appreciate your continued support of the food pantry.

May God Bless You,

Kathy Gwite, UPC Food Ministry





A few months ago, St. Pauly Textile sent us a letter identifying how well their clothing shed partners were taking care of their sheds between pickups. They identified our shed (located in back of our parking lot) as being particularly well taken care of and wanted to take the opportunity to tell us how much they appreciate our dedication to the project.



They appreciate and notice everything our volunteers have done and continue to do. Our volunteers are Chris Goetz, David Kaznica and Steve Jankowski.

Thank You!
from the Team at
St. Pauly Textile Inc.

Note: St. Pauly purchases the clothing that people in the community drop off at our shed. In 2017, we received \$830.

WAYS TO SUPPORT OTHER MINISTRIES

(Blasdell Food Pantry, Matthew 25: Ministry, Shriner’s Children’s Hospital, ministry to local senior care facilities)



Your empty bottles go to *Matthew 25: Ministries*. They meet the dual needs of improving medical care in developing countries and caring for our environment.



CANNED/NONPERISHABLE FOOD ITEMS for *Blasdell Food Pantry*. Food items can be brought to the church on the first Sunday of the month (to be delivered that week). Volunteers are needed once a month. Please sign up on the bulletin board to take a turn delivering the food to the pantry in 2018. More information is on

Collection baskets are located in the classroom near the Fellowship Hall.



CAN TABS

Your can tabs help with the transportation costs of getting sick children to Shriner’s Children’s Hospital in Erie, PA for treatments.



2018 calendars, current magazines or Guidepost magazines for shut-ins and senior care facilities.



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Transitional Pastor:
 Rev. Lynn R. Morgan
 716-866-3085
 lrmorgan@live.com

Director of Music:
 Norman D. Wahl
 716-440-5176
 normwahl@gmail.com

Administrative Assistant:
 Michelle Kemp
 716-245-1692
 Office Hours: Mon. & Wed. 9am-2pm,
 Thurs. 9-12, & Fri. 12:30-3:30pm

Custodians:
 David & Pamela Kaznica
 716-913-6927 (David)
 716-913-7504 (Pamela)

Don Ruff
 Shirley Haberman
 Clayton Errington
 Family of Phil Painter (LaDonna's
 brother-in-law)
 Those in the Military & Veterans
 St. Matthew's Church
 Those Residing in Assisted Living:
 Jane Duewiger
 Maxine Helm



If you would like prayers publicized here, and/or prayers communicated through the text/ phone chain, please contact the church office or text Michelle Kemp at 245-1692 to begin the chain.

Happy Birthday!

2/2	Don McMillan	2/20	Rebecca Wightman
2/9	Dan Barrett	2/22	Bill Hamm
2/9	Sabrina Hoffrtiz	2/23	Kait'Lynn Burger
2/10	Lauren Zdrojewski	2/27	Jacob Getter
2/20	Becky Lesch	2/27	Robynn Rich

♥ Anniversary Blessings ♥

February 1, 1969	Steve & Nancy Jankowski
February 15, 1955	Clayton & Dolly Errington
February 18, 1965	Ken & Sharon Mooney
February 18, 2017	Brian & Jillian Szafranski



Every year, we encourage individuals and families to take a Thank Offering Box and collect coins throughout the year as a sign of gratitude for all our blessings.

In November—Thanksgiving Sunday—we collect the boxes and give the money to needy ministries.

Last year, we supported the First Baptist Church of Sutherland Springs, Texas after they experienced the tragic massacre of so many members of their congregation.

Boxes are on the table in the Narthex.

WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

January

7	70
14	60
21	73
28	

2017 Church Directory

There are more copies of the 2017 directory on the table in the Narthex. This is also a one-page document of updates.

Recent update: Dick & Shirley Jones can be reached in FL at 716-310-6439.






Winter Closings & Delays

Check Channels 2 or 7 for the latest news of closings or delays.

February 2018



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Praise Band 6:15pm Choir 7:00pm OA 7:30pm	2 Men's Bible Study 7:30am	3
4 Sunday School 9:30am WORSHIP 10:30am	5	6	7 AA 10:30am	8 Praise Band 6:15pm Choir 7:00pm OA 7:30pm	9 Men's Bible Study 7:30am	10
11  Sunday School 9:30am WORSHIP 10:30am	12	13	14 AA 10:30am  7:00pm Service	15 OA 7:30pm	16 Men's Bible Study 7:30am	17
18  Sunday School 9:30am WORSHIP 10:30am	19	20	21 AA 10:30am Praise 5:15pm Lent Soup Supper 6pm Service 7pm Choir 8:00pm	22 OA 7:30pm	23 Men's Bible Study 7:30am	24
25  Sunday School 9:30am WORSHIP 10:30am	26	27 Quilter's Group 7:00pm	28 AA 10:30am Praise 5:15pm Lent Soup Supper 6pm Service 7pm Choir 8:00pm			

St. Matthew's United Church of Christ
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Our church building is fully accessible.

No matter where you are in your life's journey, you are welcome here!