



St. Matthew United Methodist

A place to grow in Christ

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

December 2024

From the Pastor's Desk



The Hope of Christmas

It's that time of year! The kids are doing a great job of getting Jamie and I their Christmas lists. Then revising them. Then revising them again! Christmas music is on our radio presets and our digital music playlists. The tree is up; the nativity is sitting on the table. The weather has even finally gotten cool enough to start drinking hot cocoa! Tis' the season, right?

But if we're being honest, the Christmas season can be magical, but it can also feel overwhelming. My own calendar for December looks like some toddlers were given pens and highlighters and told to make sure every box had some scribbles in it. It's not just the holiday season, it's the busy season. Between the decorating, gift-buying, and endless to-do lists, it's easy to get lost in the hustle. But Christmas isn't just about doing—it's about remembering.

Two thousand years ago, hope was born in a manger. That same hope is alive today, breaking into our world with every act of love, every moment of grace, and every glimmer of peace. Christmas reminds us that no matter how heavy life feels, God is with us—Emmanuel.

This season, we invite you to remember and experience the hope of Christmas with your church family:

- **Sunday, December 22nd:** Our **Christmas Cantata** will fill the sanctuary with the joyous music of the season at the 11AM service. This fantastic collaboration between our choir, Spirit Singers, and youth is sure to be an uplifting and holy experience.
- **Tuesday, December 24th:**
 - ◇ At the first Christmas Eve service at **6 PM**, come witness the wonder of the **Christmas Pageant** as our wonderful children bring the nativity story to life.
 - ◇ At **11 PM**, join us for the quiet beauty of our **Candlelight Service**, a time to reflect and celebrate the holy night of Christ's birth.

In the busyness, don't forget the message of Christmas: that Jesus has come, and because of that hope is here. Hope for everyone. Let's carry that light into the world together.

Merry Christmas,
Rev. Jonathon Clinesmith

Worship Online 11am: www.facebook.com/StMatthewMWC or www.stmatthew.org/sermons
Give Online: www.stmatthew.org/giving



Words About Worship
From the Director of
Music Ministries



Can you believe that it's only 3 weeks until Christmas?! Yikes! Many thanks to the faithful helpers who decorated our church home for the season! There is a sense of expectation in the air. Company is coming! Our "house" is prepared, now we need to prepare our hearts for the coming of the Messiah. Please plan to worship with us in person if you are able. If not, online worship continues on Facebook live and on Youtube.

A quick refresher course — Advent is a form of the Latin word that means "arrival or to come." The colors of Advent are purple and blue. These colors denote royalty because in ancient times the dyes to make these colors were very rare and prohibitively expensive. Only the very rich could afford them. As we begin worship each Sunday, a St Matthew family will light the Advent candles. There is one candle for each of the four Sundays, Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. The Chrismon tree is decorated with gold balls and our Chrismons. The word Chrismon is a combination of Christ and monograms. They have symbols, or monograms of the Christian faith, cross stitched on them. The lights on the trees and Communion rail remind us that Jesus is the light of the world.

There are many opportunities for worship during Advent. Last Sunday, we celebrated Holy Communion in both services, and lit the Candle of Hope. December 8 is the Candle of Peace, scripture reading is Luke 3:1-6, December 15 is the Candle of Joy and, the scripture is Philippians 4:4-7, December 22 is the Candle of Love. The scripture in the 8:30 service is Luke 1:46b-55. December 22 during the 11am service, the Chancel Choir and Spirit Singers will present our Christmas Cantata, ***This Child, Immanuel***. The drama will feature members of our St. Matthew Youth, directed by Kalyn Roark.

December 24, Christmas Eve, we will have **two services**. The **6pm Christmas Eve Service** will feature our Children's Christmas Program, "Crazy, Busy, Peaceful Holy Night". The program will replace the sermon for this service. Special music will be provided by Chancel Choir, ***Great Is Our Joy!*** Jonathon will light the Christ Candle and Chelsea Luxen will end the service with ***O Holy Night***. This service is designed for children, so it will be informal. This is an excellent time to invite family and friends to join you!

The second Christmas Eve service is the **11pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion**. This service features Carols and Scripture, ***Tilt Your Candle*** by the Spirit Singers, ***O Holy Night*** sung by Stacey Ruston, and Holy Communion. The service ends with lighting our individual candles and singing Silent Night. If you have never attended this service, please make this a new part of your Christmas tradition, and bring someone with you. If you desire, pjs for kiddos are not only allowed, but encouraged.

December 29 is the official Christmas Sunday. The scripture is Colossians 3:12-17. We will still sing Christmas carols and the Spirit Singers will sing ***Gotta Whisper, Gotta Shout!*** End your 2024 the right way with your church family!

I'll see you Sunday morning as we continue our preparation for the coming of the Messiah!

Shalom,

Email gtatum@stmatthew.org
for questions about music ministry.

Gayle Tatum

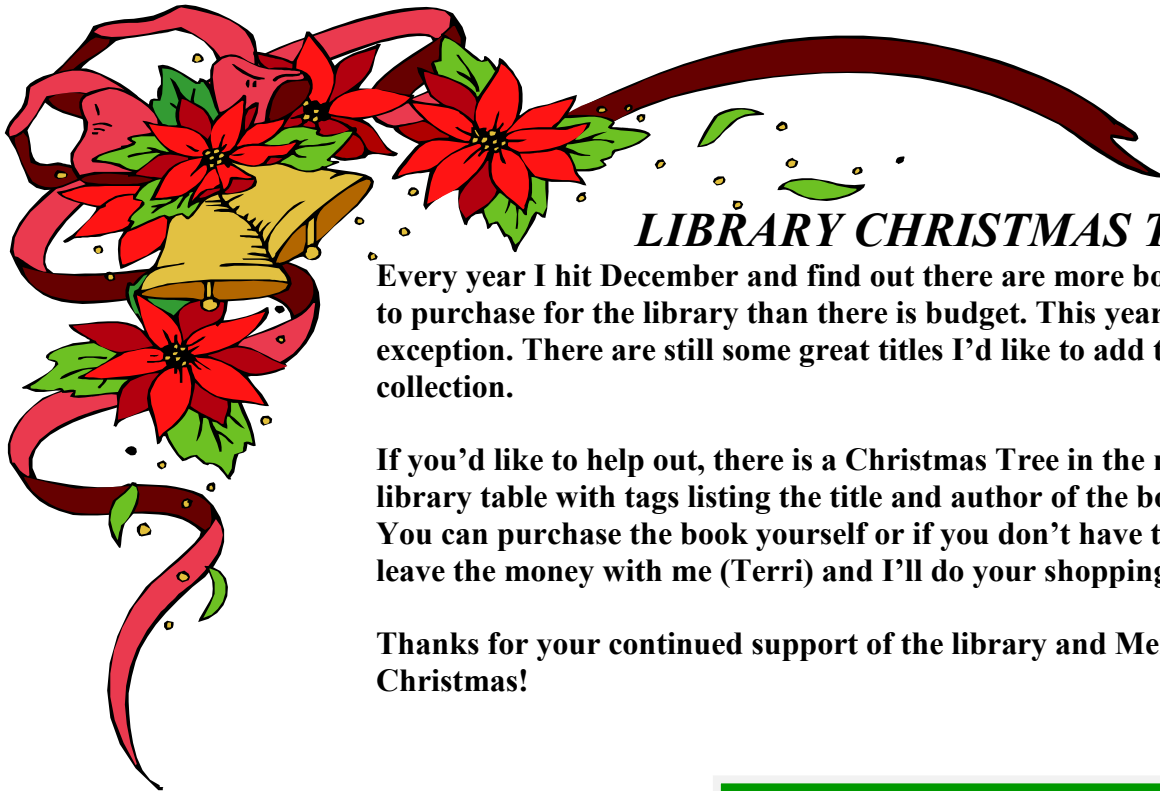


LIBRARY NEWS



December 24

from Terri



LIBRARY CHRISTMAS TREE

Every year I hit December and find out there are more books I'd like to purchase for the library than there is budget. This year is no exception. There are still some great titles I'd like to add to our collection.

If you'd like to help out, there is a Christmas Tree in the middle of the library table with tags listing the title and author of the book needed. You can purchase the book yourself or if you don't have time to shop, leave the money with me (Terri) and I'll do your shopping for you.

Thanks for your continued support of the library and Merry Christmas!

2025 BIBLE IN A YEAR CHALLENGE!

Have you always wanted to read the entire Bible, but didn't know how to go about it? Sign up for the St. Matthew Bible in a Year and we will keep you on track. You can read your Bible with a daily reading plan or the library has copies of *A Bible In A Year* we loan out. Contact Terri at Westieplace@cox.net or stop by the library and sign up on the sheet on the bulletin board hanging outside the library door.

If you've read the Bible in the past don't let that stop you. There are different versions or Chronological readings to try. The Bible is one book that's new every time you read it!

CALLING ALL ANIMAL LOVERS

The library recently acquired a copy of *The Best Cat Ever* by Cleveland Amory. This wonderful nonfiction book tells the story of Polar Bear and his human – Cleveland Amory. Considered by some to be Amory's best work, it is definitely a book you won't want to miss.

TWO NEW AMISH NOVELS

Amish fiction is one of the most popular genres in Christian fiction. That's why we recently acquired two new books by Leslie Gould. They are *A Brighter Dawn*, book one in her *Amish Memories Trilogy* and *Amish Sweethearts*, which completes the *Neighbors of Lancaster County Trilogy*. Stop by the library and check one out today!

CHRISTMAS BOOKS!

Just a reminder that the library has a selection of Advent devotionals, children's Christmas storybooks, and adult fiction novels and novellas for you to checkout and read. We have a great selection from Adam Hamilton to the Pokey Little Puppy to Debbie Macomber, Shelley Shepard Gray and Teri Wilson. Stop by and check one out!

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6

Crazy, Busy, Peaceful, Holy Night! is the title of this year's Christmas program...isn't that fitting to how most of us feel this time of year! I know I do! I hope we all can take a minute to stop the crazy and busy and celebrate the peaceful and holy! One was to do that is to join us at the 6pm Christmas Eve service as the children bring the message. I can promise several laughs and lots of joy!

Kids participating a reminder we have dress rehearsal on the 22nd after the 11am service.

Thanks!
Ms. Katelynn

AT ST. MATTHEW, OUR MISSION IS TO SHOWER GOD'S LOVE UPON OUR CHILDREN

**SO THAT THEY WILL KNOW:
GOD LOVES THEM... UNCONDITIONALLY.
CHURCH IS A WONDERFUL, SAFE PLACE TO BE.
STORIES OF JESUS.**

WILL YOU ANSWER THE LORD'S CALL AND BE A PART OF THIS MINISTRY?
CHRIST HAS NO HANDS BUT YOURS.

**UPCOMING
EVENTS**

DECEMBER

- 18-Birthday Party for Jesus
Last WOW of the year
- 22-Noon Dress Rehearsal for
Program
- 24-6pm Christmas Program

**WANT TO HELP OUR
KIDS?**

**WE'RE LOOKING FOR
MORE CHILDREN'S
CHURCH TEACHERS!
VOLUNTEER FOR 1
SUNDAY EVERY OTHER
MONTH!**

Contact Information:
Katelynn Henderson
405.740.4379
children@stmatthew.org

**WEEKLY
ACTIVITIES**

SUNDAYS

Sunday School @ 9:40am
Children's Church during 11am Service
*No Children's Church 1st
Sunday of the Month

WEDNESDAYS

WOW @ 6:30pm

Alpha Omega News

Sunday School 9:40AM | Sunday Youth 5-7PM | Wednesday Youth 6:30-7:30PM

The purpose of Alpha Omega Student Ministries is to stand on the foundation, with a heart to worship, a mind to reach out, and hands to serve and love.

Want to Volunteer?

We have many opportunities to hang out with our youth and help shape the future leaders of our church! If you are interested in volunteering in the following areas, please let Kalyn know!

- Mystery Trips, Lock-ins, and other special events
- Wednesday Night Activities
- Sunday Night Activities
- Mission Trips and Volunteer/Service Activities

Christmas Baskets

Our baskets will look a little different this year. We will be helping make baskets for a group of elderly residents at the Riverside Community who don't typically receive anything or visitors during the Christmas season.

Check out our Amazon list using the QR code below to donate items, or get with Kalyn for some ideas.

Youth need to plan to be at the church at 10:30am to make baskets, then we will deliver and have lunch!



Interactive Bulletin Board

Check out our Christmas themed interactive bulletin across from the youth room!

This month's theme is Joy! Take a few minutes to write What Brings You Joy in the letters!

Christmas Cantata

Rehearsals will continue for the Cantata on Wednesday nights. Our last rehearsal will be on the 11th and it will be the Dress Rehearsal - Everyone needs to be here that night and plan to stay until 8:30 or 9pm.

The Cantata will be on Sunday, December 15th during the 11am service. Youth need to plan to be in the sanctuary getting costumes on at 9:00am.



Christmas Party

Plan to join us on Saturday, December 21st for our Christmas Party!
FAMILIES ARE WELCOME!

We need a head count on how many people we will have AS SOON AS POSSIBLE! Please bring a wrapped gift under \$15 for a gift exchange.

More details will be coming soon!

Upcoming Events:

- Dec. 15th Christmas Cantata
- Dec. 18th: Ding-Dong Prayer Dash
- Dec. 21st: Christmas Party
- Dec. 24th: Baskets
- Dec. 25th-Jan. 4th: Christmas Break

St. Matthew Young Adults



Wednesday Night Young Adults

Join us on Wednesday at 6:30pm for our Midweek Programming! Olivia has some excellent lessons prepared for us, we would love to have you!



Young Adult Christmas Party

Join us Friday, December 20th at 6pm for our Young Adult Christmas Party! Come hang out, be merry, and eat great food!

Bring a gift under \$20 for White Elephant!

Let Kalyn or Stephanie know ASAP if you are able to come!



Christmas Caroling

Join us on Wednesday December 18th at 6:30pm as we go Christmas Caroling! We would love to have you!

Join our GroupMe to keep up-to-date with all our upcoming events

Director of Student Ministries: Kalyn Rourke



ST. MATTHEW GIVING OPPORTUNITIES



Monetary Donations via Check or Online Greatly Appreciated:

(Please note which ministry in check memo)

Mail to: St. Matthew United Methodist, 300 N Air Depot Blvd.. Midwest City, OK 73110

Or Donate at www.stmatthew.org

Angel Tree-December 15

OUR TREE IN THE NARTHEX HAS ANGELS ON IT. EACH ANGEL REPRESENTS A LOCAL CHILD AND HAS SOME GIFT IDEAS. PLEASE TAKE AN ANGEL AND SIGN THE CLIPBOARD. ALL GIFTS NEED TO BE RETURNED BY DEC. 15TH

Katelynn Henderson 405.740.4379

UWF Canned Food Drive-December 15

BRING CANNED AND NON-PERISHABLE FOOD ITEMS TO ST. MATTHEW FOR THE MID-DEL FOOD PANTRY.

Joyce Perkins-405.306.1569

Ice Angels Mitten Tree-December 15

ICE ANGELS IS A MINISTRY TO HOMELESS PERSONS. THEY ARE IN NEED OF HATS, SCARVES, MITTENS, COATS, BLANKETS, JEANS, UNDERGARMENTS, SOCKS, TOOTHBRUSHES, HAND SANITIZER, AND TRAVEL SIZED TOILETRIES. PLACE THE ITEMS ON OR UNDER THE MITTEN TREE IN THE NARTHEX.

Kay Ross-405.740.7837

Mobile Meals Surprises-December 15

MOBILE MEALS IS ASKING FOR SMALL GIFTS OR MONETARY/GIFT CARD DONATIONS FOR GIFTS TO PROVIDE GOODIE BAGS FOR THEIR RECIPIENTS.

Jennifer Cameron-405.795.4530

Christmas Goodie Sale-December 15

CALLING ALL BAKERS AND DESSERT MAKERS! THE CHRISTMAS GOODIE SALE IS SUNDAY, DEC. 15 AND ALL MONEY WILL GO TO FUND THE UTILITY ASSISTANCE FUND TO HELP OUR COMMUNITY.

Susie Larsen-405.826.0782

Senior Citizen Christmas Baskets-December 22

THE ALPHA OMEGA YOUTH PROGRAM WILL PUT TOGETHER CHRISTMAS BASKETS FOR RIVERSIDE COMMUNITY! THIS YEAR THEY REQUEST BOARD GAMES, PUZZLES, BOOKS ECT.

Kalyn Roark-405.919.9621

December at St. Matthew

Upcoming Events

Dec. 3	6:00pm	Trustees
Dec. 5	8am	TEFAP
Dec. 18	5:30pm	Birthday Party for Jesus and Last MidWeek until January
Dec. 24	6pm 11pm	Christmas Eve Services
Dec. 25		Church Office Closed
Dec. 26-31	9am-Noon	Church Office Open

HAPPY
BIRTHDAY

For a more
complete list of
events and activities
visit [stmatthew.org/
calendar](http://stmatthew.org/calendar)

Week at a glance

Sunday		Wednesday	
8:30am	Worship	5:30pm	MidWeek Meal
9:40am	Sunday School	6:15pm	Spirit Singers
11am	Worship (w/ LiveStream)	6:30pm	MidWeek Programs
5pm	AO Youth Group	7:15pm	Choir
Monday		Thursday	
9am	Mobile Meals Prep	10am	Mobile Meals
Tuesday		1pm	Moving for Balance
7am	Mobile Meals	6pm	OK Scottish Pipes & Drums
10am	Quilters Sew&Go	Friday	
1pm	Moving For Balance	7am	Mobile Meals Prep
6:15pm	Toastmasters Meeting	Saturday	
7pm	Okie Dokie Banjo Band	9:30am	Girl Scouts

Dec. 2	Melissa Neidhardt
	Wendi Ramsey
Dec. 3	Reeanna Dixon
Dec. 5	Kayla Allen
Dec. 8	Ryan Ruston
Dec. 9	Olivia Mitchell
	Betty Quartey
Dec. 10	Bill Case
Dec. 14	Paulina Covington
Dec. 15	DesiRae Keenum
Dec. 16	Pam Brown
	Chris Elbah
	Barbara Wallace
Dec. 17	Janet Fryer
Dec. 18	Lucas Menser
Dec. 19	Chase Dealy
Dec. 20	Tom Miller
	Josh Pray
Dec. 21	Creed Elbah
	Lilith Pray
Dec. 23	LaRue Alexander
Dec. 25	Joeann Gately
Dec. 26	Daniel Ruston
Dec. 27	Phillip Clemence
Dec. 28	Evangeline Bediako
Dec. 29	Maddie Ellis
Dec. 30	Travis Barnett
	Gracelyn Evans
Dec. 31	Paul Smith

Dear St. Matthew Family-

We want to say a huge thank you to Pastor Jonathon, Darlene, Gayle, Emily and the ladies who arranged the luncheon and all who cooked. It was wonderful! Thank you to all who called, texted or sent cares. We love our church family.

Happy Anniversary!

Dec. 4	Mark & Robin Murphy
Dec. 11	Joshua & Rebecca Arkoh
	Ryan & Katelynn Henderson
Dec. 23	Joe & Ella McDonald
Dec. 27	Max & Susan Wilson
Dec. 31	Jonathon & Jamie Clinesmith



St. Matthew United Methodist

A place to grow in Christ

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

300 N Air Depot Blvd

Midwest City OK 73110

www.stmatthew.org

405-732-6831

*The Mission of The United Methodist Church
is to make disciples of Jesus Christ
for the transformation of the world.*

Christmas Post Office



Open December 3rd in the Narthex! Save your stamps and "mail" your church family's cards via our own post office! Don't forget to stop by and pick up your mail!

St. Matthew Staff

Rev. Jonathon Clinesmith	Pastor
e-mail: jonathon@stmatthew.org	
Stephanie Ballow	Business Manager & Nursery Director
e-mail : businessoffice@stmatthew.org	
Kalyn Roark	Director of Student Ministries
e-mail: youth@stmatthew.org	
Katelynn Henderson	Director of Children's Ministries & Program Director
e-mail: katelynn@stmatthew.org	
Gayle Tatum	Director of Music Ministries
e-mail: gtatum@stmatthew.org	
Susie Larsen	Spirit Singers Director
e-mail: spiritsingers@stmatthew.org	
Emily Robinson	Organist/Pianist
Drew Andrews	Custodian
Louise Barnett	Financial Secretary