

# St. Matthew's Newsletter

"We show our love for God by welcoming all to grow in faith, community and service."

Pastor Mindelle K. Bartholomew

December 2023

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St. Matthew's Lutheran  
Church  
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Shamokin Dam, PA 17876

*Pastor Mindelle K  
Bartholomew*

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570-742-7146 (Preferred)  
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Emergencies)  
Mindelle2@ptd.net

**Church Contact Info:**  
570-743-3052  
Saintmattslc@gmail.com

**Office Hours:**  
Monday  
9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Wednesday  
12 Noon- 4:00 pm

Thursday  
9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

**+WORSHIP+  
SUNDAY  
10:30 a.m.**

Greetings!

Keep awake our reading for the first Sunday in Advent reminds us. That is easier said than done when you didn't get home from the Penn State game until the wee hours of the morning and the Pastor happens to be long winded that day. It is not always easy to keep awake when we have been up half the night with worry or we are exhausted from our caregiving roll or just the business of life.

In Advent, God invites us to slow down and be alert. Be alert to the ways God comes to us in the everyday moments of our life. We take time and make space for what is, and what is to come, the inbreaking of God almighty in the form of a baby.

Slowing down and keeping alert for God seems out of place in our world, especially this time of year. It is all about preparing for the coming of what Christmas has become. It is all about our work.

In reality, preparing for the coming of the Christ Child, is God's work. When we are alert and pause, we recognize the amazing work God is doing in our life and in the world around us. We become aware of God's presence with us and how God prepares our hearts to receive anew God's love and presence in the form of a helpless child born in a barn.

As we enter into the season of Advent in preparation for the coming of the Christ Child, keep awake. Watch and listen for God breaking into your life. Bask in the warmth of God's boundless love given for you. Enjoy the love of God expressed through families and friends. And share that love with others and tell them about God so they too may see a glimmer of the love of God shown in Jesus Christ.

A blessed Advent and Christmas dear friends.

Pastor Mindy

## COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS & MEETING DATE

The Congregational Council will meet on Monday,  
December 11th at 6:30 p.m. in the church.

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### ~Members Serving in December~

#### GREETER:

December 3- Leann Fogel

December 10-Lisa Yeager

December 17- Barbara  
Christine

December 24- (morning) Vicki  
Troxell

December 31- Leann Fogel

#### LECTOR:

December 3-Jane Barnasconi

December 10- Melanie Derr

December 17- Sue Ryan

December 24- (morning) Vicki  
Troxell

December 31- Vicki Troxell

#### COMMUNION ASSISTANT:

December 3- Carol Smith

December 10- Mark Benner

December 17- Michele Mitchell

December 24- (morning)  
Susan Sidler

December 31- Melanie Derr

#### OFFERING COUNTERS

December 3-D. Wilhour/L  
Fogel

December 10-M. Derr/H. Derr

December 17- M. Benner/D.  
Wilhour

December 24- (morning) L.  
Lawrence/M. Mitchell

December 31- M. Derr/H. Derr

❖ If any member of our congregation has questions, comments, or suggestions; please feel free to bring them to the attention of any member of council

## Upcoming Events

- Annual Congregational meeting December 3<sup>rd</sup> following worship
- Tureen dinner December 10<sup>th</sup> after worship
- Wednesday evening Advent worship: Each Wednesday through December 20<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm
- Children and Youth gifts due December 10<sup>th</sup>
- Decorating the Church: Saturday, December 16<sup>th</sup> at 9 am
- Camp Mt Luther Advent Holy walk December 17<sup>th</sup> 3-6pm
- Christmas Eve worship 3 pm and 7 pm
- January: Share the Warmth



The Church Office will be closed December 25<sup>th</sup> in observance of Christmas and January 1<sup>st</sup> for New Year's

Office hours those weeks will be Wednesday and Thursday 9 am to 1 pm.

**BUDGET INFORMATION: JAN-NOV 2023**

Donations \$1840  
Envelopes \$101562  
Rec. Building \$5220  
TOTAL \$108,622

Amount needed to meet budget \$95,940

**December BIRTHDAYS!**

- 6 Timothy Grubbs
- 8 Cheryl Stumpf
- 10 Barbara Christine
- 10 LeaRae Lewis
- 15 Natalie Grubbs
- 16 Cassidy Stumpf
- 20 Brooklynn Herb
- 23 Charlotte Zartman



**PRAYER LIST**



Lisa Yeager oversees the prayer chain. If you have a prayer request, please call or text Lisa at 570-743-7158 or email her at [jmlvay@ptd.net](mailto:jmlvay@ptd.net). (Please leave a message if Lisa cannot make it to the phone.)

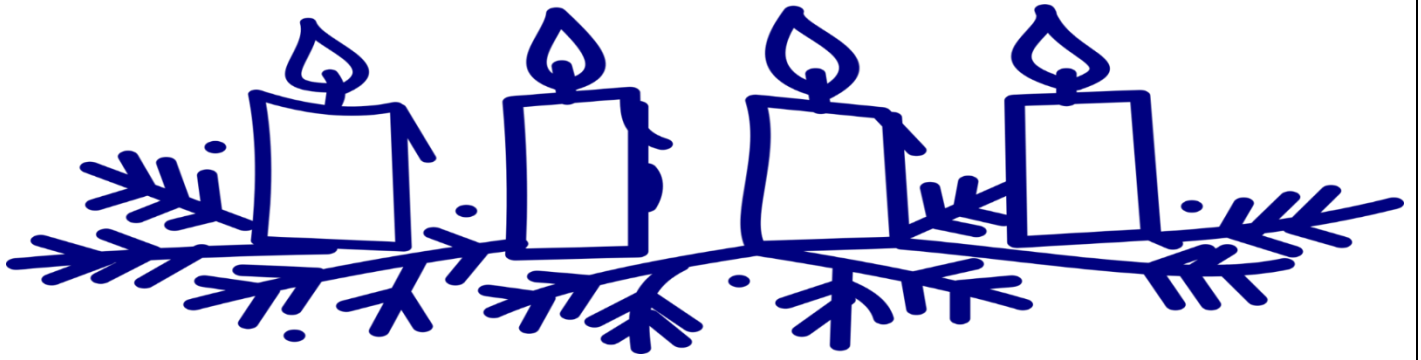
**Current Prayer List:**

Rita Adams; Family and friends of Donnie Mervine; Family and friends of Carl Scholl; Kira C.; Walt; Helle; Jim Walker; Mary Hackenburg; Mindi Aungst; Congregation Beth-El; Our Israeli and Palestinian siblings; Ellie Crane and her parents, Jamie and Dylan Crane; Briar Moll; Dave H.; George Wilhour; Edie Wilhour; Marianne and Bob Worth; Brenda Enfield; Rusty Kerstetter; Pearl B.; Anita; Jo Bailey; George; Alea; Anna and Don Fausey; Donna Marcinko; Councill family; Gene; Kay F.; LeaRae Lewis; The Lewis family; Jude S.; Carol H.; Charlotte Zartman; Marian Beaver; Lenus Haines; Frances; Scott Hummel; Gene Christine; Ethel Broschart; Dennis Fausey; People of Ukraine; Henry K.; Chris Becker; Russ Wynn; Brielle Caponera; Richard Saxton; Kay Fleming; Palmar Woodcock; Ben Keiser; Kenny Smith Jr.; Archer; All front-line workers and first responders and their families; St. Matthew's Church; America; and persecuted Christians around the world.

**Cupboard of Blessings:**

we are seeing an increasing need for food and other necessities of life related to this wonderful outreach program. We have a donation bin set up in the Fellowship area for anyone who may wish to contribute in order to help our friends in need.





## Advent

The first Sunday of Advent is December 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Midweek Advent worship will be on each Wednesday evening 7 pm in the fellowship area.

Our theme this year is *Waiting in Darkness*. It will continue for the four (4) Wednesdays of Advent – the last being December 20<sup>th</sup>. Come and find peace in the chaotic season!

Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup> is the last Sunday in Advent. Our 10:30 am worship will be the Fourth Sunday of Advent. Christmas Eve will be celebrated later that day.

### Advent Holy Hike at Mt Luther

December 17, 2023 at 3:00 pm - 6:00 pm  
Camp Mount Luther, 355 Mt Luther Ln,  
Mifflinburg, PA 17844, USA

Join us for a meditative hike reflecting on the promises of the coming Messiah and the Christmas story. Christmas refreshments to follow.



December 3<sup>rd</sup> immediately following worship.  
If you did not receive a copy of the proposed budget- there are some on the welcome table or Sherry can email it to you.  
Please contact the office

You are invited by your friends in the Buffalo Valley Conference:  
Christ Lutheran Church, Milton Lutheran Church and United in Christ  
Lutheran Church

To:



Children and Youth Christmas gifts  
We are providing gifts for 3 brothers aged 17, 6  
and 5. See the tree in the fellowship area for tags.  
Gifts must be returned to St Matthews by  
December 10<sup>th</sup>.

### Tureen dinner

Join in a time of fellowship and good  
food! December 10<sup>th</sup> after worship.  
Sign up to bring your favorite dish to  
share! Meats will be provided.  
Come Join the Fun!





Decorate the church for Christmas on  
December 16<sup>th</sup> at 9 am  
(we will un-decorate on January 6<sup>th</sup> at 9 am)

## CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

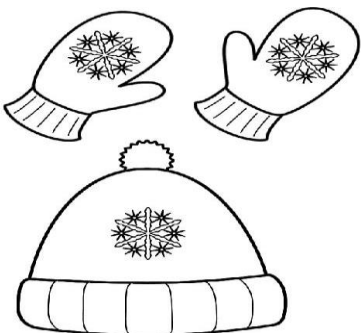
**Join us Sunday  
December 24<sup>th</sup>**

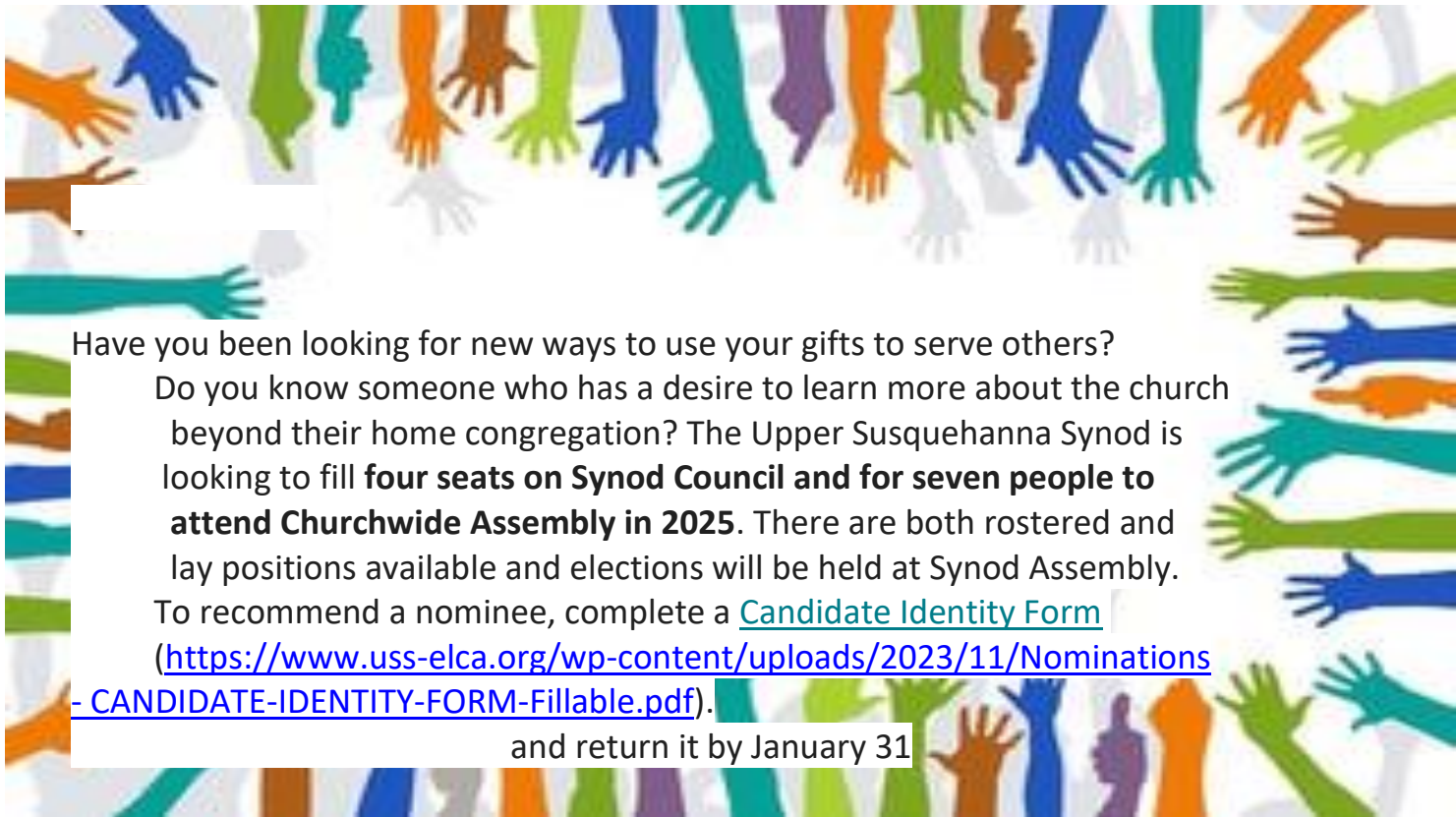
**3:00 pm – Candlelight and Communion – the regular Christmas Eve service without special music.**

**7:00 pm – Candlelight and Communion with special music.**

### Share the Warmth

In January, we will once again be offering hats, gloves, mittens, and scarves to the community on our front railings. There are plenty of hats, but donations of gloves, mittens and scarves would be appreciated!





Have you been looking for new ways to use your gifts to serve others? Do you know someone who has a desire to learn more about the church beyond their home congregation? The Upper Susquehanna Synod is looking to fill **four seats on Synod Council and for seven people to attend Churchwide Assembly in 2025**. There are both rostered and lay positions available and elections will be held at Synod Assembly. To recommend a nominee, complete a [Candidate Identity Form](https://www.uss-elca.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Nominations-CANDIDATE-IDENTITY-FORM-Fillable.pdf) (<https://www.uss-elca.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Nominations-CANDIDATE-IDENTITY-FORM-Fillable.pdf>) and return it by January 31



Lutheran  
Disaster Response

## Crisis in the Holy Land

As the conflict between Hamas and Israel continues, the humanitarian crisis in the Holy Land continues to worsen. Lutheran Disaster Response is supporting longstanding partners in the region, including Augusta Victoria Hospital and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, to provide humanitarian aid for those within and outside of Gaza.

Scan to learn more and make a gift to support the response







# Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

CHICAGO (Nov. 15, 2023) — The Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) appointed the Rev. Michael Burk as presiding bishop pro tempore after its Executive Committee approved Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton's request for a four- to six-month leave of absence, to begin Nov. 17. The council, which serves as the ELCA churchwide organization's board of directors and interim legislative authority between meetings of a churchwide assembly, gathered at the Lutheran Center in Chicago, Nov. 9-12.

**Looking for a gift for that hard to buy for person on your list? Check out ELCA Good Gifts.**



Give  
something  
**unexpected**  
this  
Christmas.

ELCA Good Gifts is your opportunity to provide critical support to the ministries and programs that mean the most to you and the people you love.

Check out the catalogue and order forms in the magazine rack or go to [elca.org/goodgifts](http://elca.org/goodgifts)

There's lots to choose from!