

**St. Matthew Lutheran Church
North Tonawanda, NY
May 25th, 2025**



AS WE GATHER

It is almost the end of the Easter Season, and we would like it to continue. The non-festival half of the Church Year doesn't seem as, well, festive. But listen to the Readings! There are people, like Paul in the Reading from Acts, who need support today. And Lydia is an example of a new Christian, ready to help. The vision in Revelation showed John's readers the perfect city, ready to welcome all whose names are in the Book of Life (that's us)! We can hardly wait to get there.

In the meantime, there's no time to lose. "Ask," Jesus tells us in the Gospel, "and you will receive, that your joy may be full" (John 16:24). You see, even now He is with us. What would you like to ask Him?

Welcome to all our Members, Guests and Visitors today, if you're a visitor, please introduce yourself to the pastor after service in the Narthex. We here at St. Matthew pray that you enjoy your time worshiping with us today.

LSB 717 Eternal Father, Strong to Save
INVOCATION

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

OPENING SENTENCES

Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb.

He showed me the holy city Jerusalem.

The city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it,

for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb.

Ask, and you will receive,

that your joy may be full.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Let us ask God for forgiveness and guidance.

At times, O Lord, it feels like You have left us and gone into heaven,

leaving us to fend for ourselves. We confess that we fail to remember

Your word of promise about Your presence with us and Your love for

us. We fear what might happen, and we regularly face our own desires

and temptations. We forget that You “have overcome the world.”

Forgive us and renew in us strong faith in Your presence and

protection.

God has not left us alone. Christ is with us, and He has broken every barrier between us and the promised Jerusalem awaiting us. As a called and

ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all

your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

INTROIT

Cast your burden on the LORD, and he will sustain you;

he will never permit the righteous to be moved.

My heart is in anguish within me;

the terrors of death have fallen upon me.

But I call to God,
and the LORD will save me.
Evening and morning and at noon I utter my complaint and moan,
and he hears my voice.
He redeems my soul in safety from the battle that I wage,
for many are arrayed against me.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Kyrie

Lord, have mercy upon us. Christ, have mercy upon us. Lord, have mercy upon us.

Gloria in Excelsis

Glory be to God on high.
and on earth peace, goodwill toward men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee, we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee, for Thy great glory. O Lord God, heav'nly King, God the Father Almighty. O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ; O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sin of the world, receive our prayer. Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us. For Thou only art holy; Thou only art the Lord. Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

SALUTATION

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.
O God, the giver of all that is good, by Your holy inspiration grant that we may think those things that are right and by Your merciful guiding accomplish them; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and

reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

First READING Acts 16:9–15

⁹A vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedonia was standing there, urging him and saying, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.” ¹⁰And when Paul had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go on into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them. ¹¹So, setting sail from Troas, we made a direct voyage to Samothrace, and the following day to Neapolis, ¹²and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city some days. ¹³And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to the riverside, where we supposed there was a place of prayer, and we sat down and spoke to the women who had come together. ¹⁴One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul. ¹⁵And after she was baptized, and her household as well, she urged us, saying, “If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay.” And she prevailed upon us. This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Epistle Revelation 21:9–14, 21–27

⁹Then came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues and spoke to me, saying, “Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb.” ¹⁰And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, ¹¹having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. ¹²It had a great, high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel were inscribed— ¹³on the east three

gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates. ¹⁴And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. . . . ²¹And the twelve gates were twelve pearls, each of the gates made of a single pearl, and the street of the city was pure gold, transparent as glass. ²²And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. ²³And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. ²⁴By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, ²⁵and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. ²⁶They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. ²⁷But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

John 5:1-9

The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the fifth chapter,

Glory be to Thee, O Lord.

¹After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

²Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Aramaic called Bethesda, which has five roofed colonnades. ³In these lay a multitude of invalids—blind, lame, and paralyzed. ⁵One man was there who had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. ⁶When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had already been there a long time, he said to him, “Do you want to be healed?” ⁷The sick man answered him, “Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, and while I am going another steps down before me.” ⁸Jesus said to him, “Get up, take up your bed, and walk.” ⁹And at once the man was healed, and he took up his bed and walked.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

Apostle's Creed

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

**And 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 sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

From thence 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.**

LSB 676 Behold a Host, Arrayed in White

Sermon

*Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from
me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and uphold me with Thy free
spirit. Amen.*

Offering

Prayer of the Church

Let us pray for all people, for the church, and for ourselves.

Hear our prayer, heavenly Father, for we ask this in Jesus' name: Visit and relieve those many people who are denied what they need in food, clothing, or shelter. Grant relief to those languishing because of injustice or oppression. Surround the poor, sick, and dying with people to care for their

various needs. Open doors of opportunity for faith-filled brothers and sisters in Christ that they may care for the physical, social, and spiritual needs of people around them with Your protection and guidance, for we are as children, only asking for what You deem best. Listen to our deep longings, our unspoken yearning, and the circumstances of our own lives. In Your mercy and love, assure us of Your presence despite whatever ills we might have. Be with those near and dear to us who call out for healing, strength, and comfort, [*especially . . .*]. Assure them of Your presence even now. We give thanks, heavenly Father, for the faith Your Holy Spirit has placed within us. We know the promise of heaven and long for the new Jerusalem. We, like John, look forward to that new Jerusalem, and like Lydia, have heard the Good News of our Savior and rejoice. We are confident that Your ears are open to our requests for ourselves, our circle of friends and family, and all the faithful who gather with us. Answer our prayers as fits Your plans for us, the church around the world, and all people in their various circumstances. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father who art in heaven
hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven,
give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but
deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the
glory forever and ever.
Amen.**

BENEDICAMUS

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

BENEDICTION

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

LSB 965 God Bless Our Native Land