

**St. Matthew Lutheran Church
North Tonawanda, NY
June 22nd, 2025**



AS WE GATHER

The season of Pentecost has arrived! With the arrival of the Holy Spirit, this season of the Church Year is marked by growth. We see evidence of the growth the Spirit is seeking in this week's Readings. The Lord and giver of life seeks to see His people grow faithful hearts through faithful worship, resulting in faithful service. When the way ahead isn't as clear or as comfortable as we would like, we rely on the Lord's wisdom, leading us back to His faithful servant, Jesus Christ, who clears the obstacles of our sinfulness and comforts us with His Word and sacramental gifts.

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.

**Hymn TLH 245 God Loved the World So That He Gave
INVOCATION**

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

OPENING SENTENCES

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of the faithful,
and kindle in them the fire of Your love.

The LORD has bared His holy arm before the eyes of all the nations,
and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel:

**“I am the LORD your God, who teaches you to profit, who leads you in
the way you should go.”**

Seek the LORD while He may be found;
call upon Him while He is near.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Seeking our Lord, His wisdom, and His grace, we confess:

**Almighty and all-merciful God, in wisdom You have created all things,
and in grace, You seek the lost and erring. Yet, through our selfish
choices and sinful nature, we ignore Your wisdom and refuse Your
grace. We prefer our own way, resisting the Holy Spirit and His work of
bringing forth the fruits of faithfulness. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus
Christ, console and correct us, that we might forsake our wicked ways
and unrighteous thoughts and turn to You, the God who has
compassion and abundant pardon.**

The Lord is gracious, for He declares, “Listen to Me, you stubborn of heart,
you who are far from righteousness: I bring near My righteousness; it is not
far off, and My salvation will not delay.” The Lord has brought His
righteousness in giving His Son, Jesus Christ, to die for you. Through Him,
and Him alone, you have forgiveness, life, and salvation. In the stead and by
the command of Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the
Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

INTROIT

Be to me a rock of refuge, to which I may continually come;
you have given the command to save me, for you are my rock and my
fortress.

You who have made me see many troubles and calamities will revive me
again;

from the depths of the earth you will bring me up again.

You will increase my greatness

and comfort me again.

I will also praise you with the harp for your faithfulness, O my God;

I will sing praises to you with the lyre, O Holy One of Israel.

My lips will shout for joy, when I sing praises to you;

my soul also, which you have redeemed.

And my tongue will talk of your righteous help all the day long,

for they have been put to shame and disappointed who sought to do
me hurt.

***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.***

SALUTATION

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

O God, You have prepared for those who love You such good things as
surpass our understanding. Cast out all sins and evil desires from us, and
pour into our hearts Your Holy Spirit to guide us into all blessedness;
through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You
and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Old Testament Reading Isaiah 65:1–9

¹I was ready to be sought by those who did not ask for me; I was ready to be found by those who did not seek me. I said, “Here am I, here am I,” to a nation that was not called by my name. ²I spread out my hands all the day to a rebellious people, who walk in a way that is not good, following their own devices; ³a people who provoke me to my face continually, sacrificing in gardens and making offerings on bricks; ⁴who sit in tombs, and spend the night in secret places; who eat pig’s flesh, and broth of tainted meat is in their vessels; ⁵who say, “Keep to yourself, do not come near me, for I am too holy for you.” These are a smoke in my nostrils, a fire that burns all the day. ⁶Behold, it is written before me: “I will not keep silent, but I will repay; I will indeed repay into their bosom ⁷both your iniquities and your fathers’ iniquities together, says the LORD; because they made offerings on the mountains and insulted me on the hills, I will measure into their bosom payment for their former deeds.” ⁸Thus says the LORD: “As the new wine is found in the cluster, and they say, ‘Do not destroy it, for there is a blessing in it,’ so I will do for my servants’ sake, and not destroy them all. ⁹I will bring forth offspring from Jacob, and from Judah possessors of my mountains; my chosen shall possess it, and my servants shall dwell there. This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Epistle Galatians 3:23—4:7

²³Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed. ²⁴So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, ²⁶for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. ²⁷For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. ²⁸There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to promise. ¹I mean that the heir, as long as he is a

child, is no different from a slave, though he is the owner of everything,² but he is under guardians and managers until the date set by his father.³ In the same way we also, when we were children, were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world.⁴ But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law,⁵ to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.⁶ And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!”⁷ So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Alleluia. Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you.
Alleluia.

Luke 8:26–39

The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the eighth chapter,

Glory be to Thee, O Lord.

²⁶Then they sailed to the country of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee.²⁷ When Jesus had stepped out on land, there met him a man from the city who had demons. For a long time he had worn no clothes, and he had not lived in a house but among the tombs.²⁸ When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him and said with a loud voice, “What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me.”²⁹ For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. (For many a time it had seized him. He was kept under guard and bound with chains and shackles, but he would break the bonds and be driven by the demon into the desert.)³⁰ Jesus then asked him, “What is your name?” And he said, “Legion,” for many demons had entered him.³¹ And they begged him not to command them to depart into the abyss.³² Now a large herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, and they begged him to let them enter these. So he gave them permission.³³ Then the demons came out of the man

and entered the pigs, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned. ³⁴When the herdsmen saw what had happened, they fled and told it in the city and in the country. ³⁵Then people went out to see what had happened, and they came to Jesus and found the man from whom the demons had gone, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid. ³⁶And those who had seen it told them how the demon-possessed man had been healed. ³⁷Then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gerasenes asked him to depart from them, for they were seized with great fear. So he got into the boat and returned. ³⁸The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with him, but Jesus sent him away, saying, ³⁹“Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you.” And he went away, proclaiming throughout the whole city how much Jesus had done for him.

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.

**TLH 422 Savior, I Follow On
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 the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs. For the souls of the faithful here at St. Matthew, For the faithful of every nation, that they be so called by the Gospel and equipped to declare to their communities how much God has done for them, For Your one holy Christian and apostolic church, that believers might be united in sound teaching and a clear confession of Christ. For those in the grip of darkness, ruled by the demons of grief, addiction, anxiety, and chronic disease, awaiting Your deliverance, and those hurting among us, [*including . . .*]. For those growing in their faith, especially those preparing for Baptism, Especially Jack Morrow who will be Baptized next week, that they be encouraged in the way and defended from evil. For our homes, that parents and caregivers be guided by Your wisdom to lovingly serve their neighbors and all in their care. For the fruit of the Spirit to blossom in the lives of all believers, to the glory of God the Father, and pointing hearts to Jesus Christ. For all this, and whatever more Your fatherly mercy would grant to us, we pray in the name of Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **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.

Hymn TLH 673 Let There Be Peace On Earth