

St. Matthew's Good News

Pastor's Message

Pastor Lori Pilatzke

Dear Beloveds,

As we head into these 40 days of Lent, I invite you to journey with me. In the sanctuary, you will find a bowl filled with stones. You are invited to pick a stone to carry with you for these Lenten days.

The stone you carry, or keep with you is your reminder that we are indeed making a pilgrimage. Together with Jesus, we reflect upon our lives, our purpose and the fact that we are dust, and to dust we shall return. What can this possibly mean for you?

This Lenten season, we will meet to share with Pastor Jenn and Grace United ~ "The Hardest Part ~ hurt we carry, hope we find." A study by Kate Bowler who states, "Life is this strange, tender mix, isn't it? Joy and sorrow, love and loss, heartbreak and hope, all tangled together. This year, we invite you to embrace Lent as it is—raw, honest, and tender. This is the season that asks us to stop pretending we're holding it all together. It's a time to pause, sit with what's fragile and unfinished, and let God meet us in the hardest parts of our lives."

Please visit: https://katebowler.com/seasonal_devotional/the-hardest-part/ to download your FREE Group guide and daily devotion guide. Or see attached file and download it. This small group is offered via Zoom only and the link is below.

Small Group Dates:

Tuesday March 11th, 2025 @7pm-8:30pm: Terrible and Beautiful! (Scripture: Luke 4:1-13)

Tuesday March 18th, 2025 @7pm-8:30pm: Wisdom! (Scripture: 2 Corinthians 5:16-21)

Tuesday March 25th, 2025 @7pm-8:30pm: Lament! (Scripture: Luke 13:31-35)

Tuesday April 1st, 2025 @7pm-8:30pm: Imagination! (Scripture: Isaiah 55 :1-9)

Tuesday April 8th, 2025 @7pm-8:30pm: Love! (Scripture: John 12 :1-8)

No need to RSVP, just show up for all, a few, one, however it works in your schedule. If you need assistance accessing the guide; please contact Pastor Lori.

Zoom Link: Pastor Jenn is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84813443082>

Meeting ID: 848 1344 3082

I pray you are able to join us!

In peace, in Christ,

Pastor Lori +

March 2025 v.8



Contact Us

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Lenten Journey

Dear Lenten Sojourners ...

Today we are 17 days into our Lenten journey ... do you know where your stone is?

The first stone I chose, is missing and so are all the stones I've scattered about this Lent. Every year I say, I'm going to pay attention, I'm going to keep track of my stone! And then it turns out, I cannot find my stone so, I start over and yet again, pick another one.

Then again ... this is the whole point of Lent. To remind us we can begin anew again. Anytime. There are so many things in our lives we cannot change ... the past, that bad haircut, wrong partner - its life. And while we cannot rewind our lives to the point where a different decision could bring forth a different outcome - in Christ, who makes all things new again, we can depend.

So don't worry if you lose your stone (insert your worry here), pick a new stone (a new way) and continue this wild and crazy journey together.
in peace ... with Christ

Pastor Lori+



Palm Sunday

Please join us following worship on Palm Sunday, April 13th for a continental breakfast.

Proceeds from the free will offering will support our youth attending confirmation camp this summer.

If anyone is willing to donate a jar of homemade jam, please let Sue Seifert or Nan Van Sickle know.



HOLY WEEK
WORSHIP
SCHEDULE

Palm Sunday - Sunday, April 13, 2025 @ 10 am

Maundy Thursday - Thursday, April 17, 2025 @ 7:30 pm (St. Paul's Normanby in the Neustadt Community Centre)

Good Friday - Friday, April 18, 2025 @ 10 am

Easter Sunday - Sunday, April 20, 2025 (one service) @10 am



*Holden Evening Prayer impacts the spiritual lives of participants. This is a description from a worship participant:
Somehow these words and music have been put together under special spiritual privilege to reach right into my soul and stop all my dithering and my to-ing and fro-ing and make me sit at God's feet and listen.
How simple the service is. How little needs to be present for understanding to reach out and touch us. Some singers, a piano and some readings and I am again transported to the breadth and depth and height of my God.*



Maundy Thursday service April 17

**St Paul's Lutheran Church Normanby
Neustadt Community Centre- 7:30pm**

*Rituals like Holden Evening Prayer can enrich one's spiritual journey and provide comfort in times of need.
A service of meditation, candles, communion and prayer.*

Join the co-op choir on March **17 & 31** to review the music
7:00PM at the Neustadt Community Centre. Come for fun!

It is not necessary to know the music to participate in the service

“Clean Water for Myanmar”

Submitted by Elaine Dippel Baetz

Beginning this past season of Advent, our Sunday School kids began a global fundraiser. This initiative was to support the people of Myanmar in accessing clean water through Canadian Lutheran World Relief.

Special thanks to Lisa and Abby Davis for designing an information board, and for creating an online platform for donations. Our Sunday School kids set a goal of raising \$500.00, however that was easily surpassed due to the generosity of the congregation and our online friends. Additionally, an application to the Stewardship Committee allowed us to access funds as well.

The final total collected for Myanmar was an AMAZING \$2020.00.

Thank you so very much to everyone who made this fundraiser such a success!

We have made a difference in the world!



From United Nations Myanmar

As 2025 begins, Myanmar enters its fourth year of intensifying conflict, with little sign of respite ahead. A staggering 19.9 million people—approximately 35 per cent of the country’s total population—are in dire need of humanitarian assistance. This includes 6.4 million children, representing one-third of Myanmar’s child population. This immense scale of need underscores the devastating toll on children and civilians and signals a grave threat to Myanmar’s future stability and development, as an entire generation faces the risk of being left behind.

For an in depth look at what is happening in Myanmar please use the following link.

<https://myanmar.un.org/en/288866-six-things-watch-myanmar-2025>



The Visioning Team

Submitted by Ed Fyfe

Imagining tomorrow for the successful continuation of the future church.

During the last months, the visioning committee has been actively gathering information from other churches faced with the same difficulties as we are. Regardless of where the churches are located they face the challenges of diminishing members, older congregations, aging buildings and much higher maintenance costs.

In doing so we have also found a common purpose and a common dilemma. How do we marry the idea of change (perhaps even radical change) with a centuries old institution where tradition may not have the same look and feel as it previously did?

These are questions we have difficulty in answering and look to our community and other congregations for what is needed in our area, what has been successfully implemented and what has not worked.

We have visited Annesley United Church and spoken with several of their members and representatives from their secular partner Middle Grey Arts & Heritage Group. Their purpose was to create a community hub which is open and accessible in Grey Highlands and southern Grey County. Providing secular performances, educational presentations, and community services which strive to place Annesley Markdale on the cultural map regionally and provide an increasing quality of performance and engagement.

We will continue to meet with the Community and Angela Yenssen to continue to investigate the possibilities and challenges moving forward.

Please continue to pray for our congregation and all its volunteers and staff.



Church Council

Submitted by Kathy McBride



St. Matthew's Church Council continues to meet monthly to review committee reports, advise on questions they may have and support their initiatives. Council has made decisions on many activities/rentals regarding the use of church property by outside community groups. We work closely with the Finance Committee to ensure St. Matthew's financial stability and in January reviewed all committee budgets to plan St. Matthew's budget for 2025 to be presented at our Annual Meeting on March 16. We support Pastor Lori who has a very busy schedule, and are excited about her plans for a very different Annual Meeting this year.

In 2025 we will need new members on council to replace those who are retiring. Please look into your hearts and consider taking a position on Council this year. It will be an exciting time to help guide St. Matthew's on the next step of our journey. Our next council year will begin with our meeting on March 18. If you have any questions please contact Kathy McBride for more information.

St. Matthew's Choir

Submitted by Linda Bender (Director of Music)

Alleluia!! Praise the Lord!!! We are starting a choir again.

The choir will be called "The Heavenly Sounds Choir" It consists of 8 ladies who love to sing.

Our Choir singing dates:

March 9th and March 30th

April 20th (Easter Sunday)

May 11th (Mother's Day)

May 25th

If you love to sing, please join us! Practice days are Thursdays from 5:30 to 6:30.

Contact Linda at 519 374 4561 or email at mervbender@hotmail.com

May the Lord bless this choir as we lift our voices to praise the Lord.



"A New Thing"

Submitted by the Mutual Ministry Committee



We keep hearing about "A New Thing" for St. Matthew's. What does that look like? We are all working together to figure out exactly what "A New Thing" will be. We do know that we cannot continue in the same way we have for years. This is both an exciting and a scary time for our church. We look for where we can find opportunity and how we move forward.

The Mutual Ministry Committee has been meeting to reflect on all of our committees, programs, staff and tasks, and to reimagine new ways to accomplish our work through a lens of doing a new thing. Their thoughts and recommendations have been shared with the current council. Our new council will continue to discuss and plan steps to move forward. More information will come as details are worked out.

Some new things have already been implemented...

1. We will be trying something new for our Annual General Meeting this year. We will not do what we've always done. We will gather in the auditorium and our meeting will be a blend of worship and business. There will be a time for questions and answers. And of course there will be food!! A potluck of finger foods (sandwiches, veggies & dip, cheese & crackers, sweets, etc.) will follow. *New location...new format...new opportunities...you'll definitely want to be there!!*
2. We are taking a look at our financial reporting. We have connected our own Treasurer with a treasurer in the wider church. Together, with the support of the Finance Committee, they are reviewing the reports currently being generated with the goal to make them easy to read while still being informative.
3. Given the value of St. Matthew's investments, the Finance Committee along with Council are investigating engaging an organization to manage the funds. The expertise of our own members will still be needed as the contact and go-between to ensure oversight.
4. With the work ahead of our congregation, Council will play a pivotal role. An orientation is planned for both new and ongoing council members to ensure everyone is clear about their role and responsibilities. This will ensure each member has the same understanding as they do the exciting and important work of guiding our congregation.



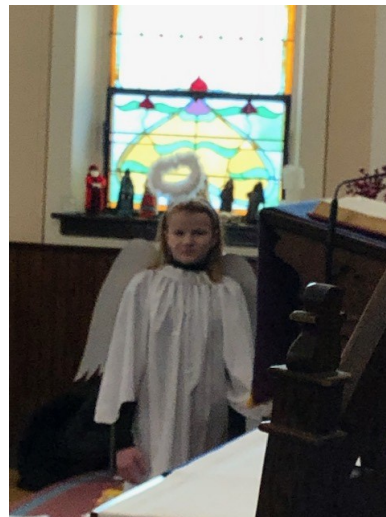
Sunday School Play

Submitted by Pastor Lori and the Sunday School Team

Our St. Matthew's Sunday School youth performed a Christmas skit for members of our congregation, and online viewers on December 15, 2024. The play combined narration, humorous drama, and singing in the retelling of the birth of Jesus.

Despite limited practice time, we were very proud of our kids and their efforts!

Thanks to everyone who made this production such a success!



Outreach Luncheon & Sunday School Cupcakes

Submitted by Elaine Dippel Baetz

On February 9, the Outreach Committee held a “Chicken on a Bun” luncheon with cupcakes decorated by our Sunday School kids. Everyone really seemed to enjoy the hot lunch and fancy cupcakes!

Many thanks to Barb Fleming for cooking the chickens in advance and for her general organization for this event. Thanks also to other members of Outreach who contributed additional baking for this event.

We raised \$388.00 for our local food bank. Thanks to St. Matthew’s for your generous donations in support of this cause!



Good Food Box

We have now accepted our 6th delivery of the fresh, carefully chosen produce to fill the boxes for people to enjoy. For the month of February our very much appreciated group of Volunteers sorted and filled 34 boxes as well as greeted and helped customers with the pickup. THANK YOU!



To date, they have helped our community by putting together a total of 186 boxes. Of the 186 boxes, 24 people received tokens to purchase their food boxes. Which means 24 families were able to feed their families fresh produce who otherwise may not have had that luxury that we often take for granted.

We can certainly handle more orders so please spread the word. It's such good value!

On February the 21 st I attended a Zoom meeting hosted by the Grey Bruce United Way in Owen Sound along with many of the Good Food Box Co-ordinators from across Ontario. The main topic again was the rising cost of food and whether the price can remain at \$22.00 a box. The first goal is to purchase the freshest produce for the best price possible. In the Grey Bruce area alone, there are 22 different locations accepting produce to fill 1800 boxes a month. On February 27 th , I was asked if changing the order and delivery dates would be a problem. Justin, the purchaser of the produce, would like to deliver to Chesley, Ayton and Hanover on the 3 rd Thursday of the month. If the change of dates is accepted the change will not happen until April. Stay tuned for further information.

Your orders are appreciated and are keeping the program alive so hopefully this is not too great an imposition. Further updates will appear in the Church Bulletin. If there are any questions, please email me at hanovergfb@gmail.com or call 519-506-1088

Please note that the deadline and pick up dates have changed. The deadline for the Good Food Box collection fee is on the 2nd Thursday of the month and the pick up date will be the 3rd Thursday of the month beginning in April.

Hanover Food Bank

Submitted by Nan Van Sickle

St. Matthew's continues to collect donations for the Hanover Food Bank. Our donations will now be delivered to the Salvation Army Food Bank the last week of each month. The need is still great and the food bank staff and volunteers expect that need will continue to increase in 2025.

These are the donations delivered to the food bank on Tuesday, February 11, 2025 and Tuesday, March 25, 2025.



Annual General Meeting



Thank you ... to everyone who helped with and came to our AGM this past Sunday.

To our youth who were our meeting Stewards, helping to set up and clear away, serving their tables and run errands for our elders, brought forth the offerings of 'stickie' notes, assisted with Holy Communion, ate copious amounts of fruit gummies and chocolates—well done good and faithful ones - Damon, Scott, Nolan, Aiden, Abby, William, Madelyn

To Council members (and families), to our Mutual Ministry Team for coming together to make our meeting possible. No help = boring meeting. Our council and mutual ministry folks provided the morning breakfast, had the coffee on, the auditorium set up and decorated - it was all hands on deck and ... it was simply amazing!

... to all of you who attended, who participated, who added your presence and your voice to the discussion of where St Matthew's is headed. We do not get the opportunity to talk with one another in the one hour we're together on a Sunday morning.

Having so many of you beloveds, engaged in discussion, gives us all hope that Spirit is indeed leading us into places and spaces we've never used before. Come, Holy Spirit, come. (And of course, the food was delicious - thank you chefs!)



Coats for Families Project

This project continues at St. Matthew's. Spring is coming soon (we hope) and spring jackets and rainwear in all sizes are now needed.

Please continue to bring your donations to the elevator room at St. Matthew's.

Thanks to all of your donations this winter we took at least 75 or 80 winter coats to the Salvation Army Thrift shop.



Friday Cards

Submitted by Karen Farrow

FRIDAY CARDS – 1:30 until we're finished!

Our little group of cheery card players haven't missed a Friday all winter no matter what old man winter threw at them. They are a great group of solo and euchre players numbering up to 22 on any given Friday. Laughter is the best medicine and during the course of our Friday afternoons, laughter, jokes and just good plain fun along with some serious games fills the auditorium.

So spread the word, bring a friend or if you haven't attended as yet, we'd love to have you join us. Sometimes we even have snacks.



St. Matthew's Women's Group

Our ladies had two opportunities in October to enjoy a time of fellowship, discussion, prayer and of course, food. It was so good to be together!

Community Events

Hanover Community Players present



Friday, April 25,
May 1, 2, 2025 - 7:30
April 26, 27,
May 3, 4, 2025 - 2:00 p.m.

Hanover Civic Theatre
Adults \$20, Students 13-17 - \$16
Group rates 10 or more

MIX and MINGLE social time - Community Hall at 6:00 p.m.



Friday, April 25, 2025 with ticket



Tickets go on sale March 19, 2025

at www.hanovercommunityplayers.ca

Call Box Office 519-506-6902 for more information



Bare Bear Bones is produced by Special arrangement with Playwrights Guild of Canada

Community Events

Save the Date! Please support our Outreach Committee, the Food Bank and our local Art Group by attending.



Spring Fling

ART SHOW & SALE

Saturday April 26, 2025 | 10:00 am to 4:00 pm
St Matthew's Lutheran Church, 356 9th Street, Hanover

*Watercolours, acrylics, wall art, woodworking,
glass work, jewelry, textile art and more!*

The Outreach Committee of St. Matthew's
Bake sale with tea, coffee and water
Proceeds to the Food Bank Hanover
In place of admission, we are collecting
items for the Food Bank.

**A great place to pick up something
special for Mother's Day!**

 saugeenartists@gmail.com  @saugeenartists

 www.saugeenartistsguild.com  Saugeen Artists Guild