

The Community of St. Matthew

*... exists
in the world
as a visible
expression of
God's love.*

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For today in the
city of David
a savior has been
born for you
who is Messiah
and Lord.

LUKE 2:11



Dear Saint Matthew Community and Visitors:

As a deacon and young priest I often helped out at the Church of Saint Olaf in downtown Minneapolis. Msgr. Frank Fleming was pastor – and a remarkable man he was. His energy and spirit, to say nothing of his sense of humor and talents as a writer and speaker, made St Olaf one of a handful of thriving downtown churches in the United States.

Frank was rarely at a loss for words; yet he told me more than once that the closer we come to the center of the mystery of faith, the more difficult it is to find words to express the reality of God's love and presence. So, the feasts of Christmas and Easter provided an almost impossible challenge to him as a preacher and writer.

His predecessor, Bishop Len Cowley, who grew up on the West Side and Saint Matthew's, expressed the same truth. I remember receiving a Christmas card from him in which he wrote:

I sought a card that would
depict His immensity within his smallness,
His gentleness surrounded by His strength,
His power in the midst of His humility.

I failed in my search.
Christmas is for Christians.

So, I simply say to you,
Merry Christmas.

The Scriptures, in the evangelists attempt to portray the birth of the Savior, appeal to the imagination of readers – shepherds and angels, stars and kings, an evil king and the slaughter of children. These imagines found in the first two chapters of the Gospels of Matthew and Luke attract the imagination. These four chapters make up less than 5% of the total of the Gospels; yet they account for more than 40% of the art and literature inspired by the Jesus story.

The purpose of the beginning, the infancy narratives, of the Jesus story is simply to identify Jesus of Nazareth. And the message is direct: this Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of David and the Son of God – He is fully human and fully divine – He is the fulfillment of the hopes and fears of all the nations – He is the Savior of all people and the New Creation of God. All of this made visible in the flesh of an infant child!

I simply say to you: Merry Christmas!

Yours truly,



Stephen Adrian
Pastor

PARISH EVENTS

Christmas Season Schedule

Feast of Christmas

Vigil Mass, Sunday December 24th, 4:00 pm

Midnight Mass, 11:30 pm Carols
Mass, Midnight

Mass at Dawn,
Monday, December 25th, 8:00 am

Mass of Christmas Day,
Monday, December 25th, 10:30 am

Feast of the Holy Family

Saturday, December 30th, 5 pm

Sunday, December 31st, 8:00 and 10:30 am

New Year

Monday, January 1st, 10:00 am

Feast of Epiphany

Saturday, January 6th, 5:00 pm

Sunday, January 7th, 8:00 and 10:30

COFFEE HOUR THIS WEEKEND

Coffee Hour after both Sunday masses is being served by the Delvecchio Family – thanks. All are welcome to stop by for a hot cup of coffee, good things to eat and fellowship. Treats are welcome and helpers are needed to staff future coffee hours too. Contact John at 651-221-0871.

ALUMINUM CAN RECYCLING

Boy Scout Troop 107 will be collecting aluminum cans for recycling in January. Please save your cans from your holiday festivities and plan to bring them down on the weekend of January 6 and 7. Thanks for your continued support of our Boy Scouts.

ENVELOPES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Envelopes will be available next weekend. Please sign the list, take and use a box. There is a place to list your time in prayer, your methods of service, and your sharing.

HELP YOUR NEIGHBOR IN NEED

Every weekend food is collected at St. Matthew's to help those who are struggling to put food on their table. Some of the groceries are taken by, or to parish members on the weekend. The remaining food is taken to the Neighborhood House Food Shelf. We depend on contributions from YOU. Please help us by bringing a non-perishable food item with you as part of your weekly Eucharistic celebration, or make a monetary offering in the yellow envelopes provided in the back of church. St. Matthew's Food Ministry thanks you.

END OF THE YEAR GIVING

If you wish to make a gift for tax, or other reasons, John Riehle can give you the assistance needed. Gifts and donations will be received and credited for 2006 until noon on Tuesday, January 2. Unless especially marked, gifts will be credited for the year listed on the envelope. Thanks in advance for generous giving; thanks for observing these few "regulations."

2007 GIVING

Please remember that new pledges should begin this week. For electronic givers, changes in pledge amounts will be done by the parish at the bank this week.

CHRISTMAS GIVING TREE THANK YOU

Thank you to all the parishioners who contributed to the Christmas Giving Tree. Thanks to Elizabeth, Briana, Anna, Kayla, Melissa, Ben K., Thomas M., Ava, Marcus, Ben V., Sarah, Ricky, Thomas A., and Casey, all members of the confirmation class who helped sort and distribute the gifts. Thanks to Maureen, Kathy, Nicole and Dave, adults who helped coordinate the event. Thanks to the Men's Club Holiday Auction which enabled us to provide SCRIP to each family for gas and other incidentals. This year's program provided gifts to over 40 families and over 200 people. Thank you for generosity to this program for the past 25+ years.

DOES THIS PICTURE SEEM LIKE A GOOD FIT FOR YOU?

"I have been bringing the Eucharist and visiting the homebound for about sixteen years. Recently when I went to Wilder, I visited a woman living alone and two men who were diagnosed with terminal illnesses. When I've visited with the men I noticed that their wives looked forward to the visits maybe more than the guys. One wife hoped that I would choose to continue visiting her. She also was unable to get to church for a couple of reasons, but really appreciated being connected to her parish, to get the bulletins, and hear the thoughts from the homilies. Most of the people I visit, read their missals either before I get there or follow along as I read. I am currently visiting a young man with physical problems. It's a continual decision on both sides to enter into and maintain this special relationship of being Christ to each other." (by Joanne Smith, volunteer minister). *Call the parish office if you would like to be one of these servants or if you would like a visit from a homebound minister.*

THIS WEEK AT
SAINT MATTHEW

Sunday	December 24
Monday	December 25 Parish Offices Closed
Tuesday	December 26 3:00 PM, SH Loaves and Fishes 7:00 PM, SC Boy Scout Committee Meeting
Wednesday	December 27 12:00-7:00 PM, PC St. Mary's Clinic 3:00 PM, SH Loaves and Fishes
Thursday	December 28 3:00 PM, SH Loaves and Fishes 6:30 PM, SC Cub Scout Committee Meeting
Friday	December 29
Saturday	December 30 9:00 AM, PC Centering Prayer
Sunday	December 31

Abbreviations:

MC – Main Church
CH – Chapel
PC – Parish Center
SH – Social Hall
SC – School
CC – Child Care
XC – Extended Day

STEWARDSHIP

The Gospel today tells of the Virgin Mary, pregnant herself, hurrying off to help her cousin Elizabeth. The model of good stewardship, she who had given herself to bear the Savior gave her time and love to others as well.

Prayer: [Remember that the chapel is open each weekday from 6AM to 6PM for visits and prayer. It is good to see it's being used.] As we celebrate Christmas and remember the Holy Family, this week would be a good one to concentrate on 'family:' thanks for our family, forgiveness from our family, forgiveness to our family, welcoming the stranger to our family; how many other ways?

Service: Thanks to all those who are laboring privately and publicly to ensure that our Christmas celebrations are wonderful acts of praise and thanksgiving...prayer planners, decorators, singers and musicians, liturgical ministers. Thanks to those who exercise the largest liturgical ministry: being a member of the assembly.

Sharing: Thanks to all stewards: envelope users, plate givers, electronic transferers and "end of the year" folks: \$18149 was added to the "Sunday" income line. That amount lowered our lag by more than \$7,000—almost \$300 per Sunday. As well, \$933 was given in holyday envelopes.

Beyond Stewardship giving, \$2754 was given following the Penance services; an additional \$180 for retired religious and \$100 to the CCHD. Thanks to all for these monies. They will be used or sent for the purposes given.

WEEKLY READINGS

Readings for the Week of December 24, 2006

Sunday: Mi 5:1-4a/Heb 10:5-10/Lk 1:39-45
 Monday: Vigil: Is 62:1-5/Acts 13:16-17, 22-25/
 Mt 1:1-25 or 1:18-25
 Midnight: Is 9:1-6/Ti 2:11-14/Lk 2:1-14
 Dawn: Is 62:11-12/Ti 3:4-7/Lk 2:15-20
 Day: Is 52:7-10/Heb 1:1-6/Jn 1:1-18
 or 1:1-5, 9-14
 Tuesday: Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59/Mt 10:17-22
 Wednesday: 1 Jn 1:1-4/Jn 20:1a, 2-8
 Thursday: 1 Jn 1:5-2:2/Mt 2:13-18
 Friday: 1 Jn 2:3-11/Lk 2:22-35
 Saturday: 1 Jn 2:12-17/Lk 2:36-40
 Next Sunday: Sir 3:2-7, 12-14 or 1 Sm 1:20-22, 24-28/
 Col 3:12-21 or 3:12-17 or
 1 Jn 3:1-2, 21-24/Lk 2:41-52

PARISH DIRECTORY

Saint Matthew Church Office 651-224-9793
 Hours: Monday-Friday, 8:00 AM –4:00 PM
 Web site: st-matts.org
 Bulletin Email: bulletin.editor@st-matts.org

Pastoral Staff

Pastor..... *Father Stephen Adrian*
 Deacon.....*Rev. John Murphy*
 Parish Pastoral Administrator.....*John Riehle*
 Dir. Education & Formation.....*Doug Lieser*
 Dir. Music & Liturgy *Dana McCarthy*
 Dir. Child Care..... *Dimary Rosado*
 Dir. Marketing & Development..... *Maureen Gitlin*
 Business Administrator..... *Cindy Hoffman*
 Administrative Assistant *Nicole Johnson*
 Dir. Food Service *Alice Schletty*
 Parish Engineer.....*David Rosas*

Phone Numbers

Fax..... 651-228-9448
 Parish School..... 651-224-6912
 KLT Kids 651-665-0786
 Liturgy and Music Voicemail651-310-0830

Schedule of Services

Weekend Liturgies Saturday: 5:00 PM
 Sunday: 8:00 & 10:30 AM
 Weekday Liturgies Monday-Friday: 6:45 AM
 1st Friday: 6:45 AM & 5:15 PM

Reconciliation

Tuesday..... 7:15 AM
 Saturday..... 4:00 PM

Sacrament of Baptism

Parents who are parishioners make arrangements with the Pastor or the Deacon one month prior to baptism.

Sacrament of Marriage

Couples make arrangements with the Pastor or the Deacon six months prior to wedding. Must be a member of the parish.

Parish Council Members

Parish Council email: parishcouncil@st-matts.org

Becky Montgomery	Larry Sachi
Nicole Johnson	John Sekevitch
Connie Aligada	Sister Joanna Illg
Lucus Ecker	Mark Thomford
Sheila Brunelle	Stephen Adrian

Committee Chairs

Finance.....
 Education Advisory Richard Dunn