

# The Grapevine



## ST. MATTHEW'S REFORMED CHURCH

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P. O. Box 739  
Maiden, NC 28650

*"A Faithful and Welcoming Congregation"*

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## From our Pastor

This upcoming year, I am going to try something different with my newsletter articles. I am going to do a series for 2024 on *What We Believe as a Church*. I am going to reference things that are very important in the Reformed tradition - things such as Confirmation, Baptism and why we have Elders and Deacons. I also want to delve into the biblical reasons behind many of the beliefs.

This will be a marked change from my usual style of articles. You will find that these will be more doctrinal than they normally are. I am going to be referencing the book, "My Confirmation" from time to time, as well as another book, "The Faith We Proclaim" by Elmer J. F. Arndt.

Topics that will be discussed, but not limited to, will be the Holy Sacraments, the Bible, Jesus - the Revealer of God, and the Holy Spirit. It will be a time of growth for all of us, and I encourage you, if you have questions, to

let me know since your questions might influence the directions in which I can take these topics. I want this series to not only answer questions, but to explain our doctrines and how we can apply our faith in our lives.

-Rev. William M. Sowers

**JANUARY 7, 2024**

**10:30 A.M.**

**Morning Worship - Sacrament of Holy Communion**

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**JANUARY 14, 2024**

**10:30 A.M.**

**Morning Worship - Service of Installation and Ordination of Elders and Deacons**



### ST. MATTHEW'S CHURCH FAMILY

The Church Staff expresses appreciation to our church family for the Christmas gift each of us received. We feel humble and blessed to be a part of this special church family and extend Holiday blessings to each you.

Thanks again, be safe and Happy New Year!




### IN APPRECIATION . . .

We express appreciation to the following officers for their faithful service the last three years ...

Deacons: Jan Rice  
Frank Snider

Elders: Burl Shrum  
Lora Rice

THANK YOU !

They opened their  
 treasures  
 and presented  
 him  with gifts of  
 gold and of  
 incense  
 and of myrrh 

MATTHEW 2:11

**Consistory Meeting Minutes**  
November 12, 2023

**Consistory Members in attendance:** Charles Bumgarner, Robin Caskey, Candace Carpenter, Jean Funderburk, LaDonna Goodson, Sonya Leonard, Jane Lemmond, Lora Rice, Jan Rice, Frank Snider, Burl Shrum, Susan Stewart

**Guest in attendance:** Faye Painter

**Call to Order, Prayer & Devotion:** Jan Rice

**November 12, 2023 Agenda:** Add to 'New Business' CDs Maturity Date at Fifth Thirds, Facility Usage Agreement. Motion to accept **amended Agenda** made by Susan Stewart, seconded by Frank Snider. **Approved**

**Financial Report** given by Faye Painter. CDs at Peoples Bank still need to be explored, Frank Snider will go this week. Motion made to approve Financial Report made by Jean Funderburk, seconded by Robin Caskey. **Approved.**

**Consistory Minutes.** Update 'online website form' wording, feels misleading. Motion to approve October 2023 Consistory Minutes made by LaDonna Goodson, seconded by Susan Stewart. **Approved.**

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS

**Pastor's Report.** 21 visits, 6 meetings. Highly attended Veteran Day's service, planning for Thanksgiving, Advent, and Christmas. **Bible Study** will be held on the book of Romans, scheduled for 2024. Former Church members Darrell and Dot Hull would like to transfer their membership to St. Matthews. Motion made by Frank Snider to approve **Membership for Darrell and Dot Hull**, seconded by Sonya Leonard. **Approved.** Motion to approve Pastor's Report made

by Lora Rice, seconded by Burl Shrum. **Approved.**

#### OLD BUSINESS

**Action Items List.** External Audit contact has stopped communicating with our church with no explanation. **List of Accounts** with associated names for each account to be provided by January 1. The **Church Library** will be under the care of Judy Hooper. All needs for **Fire Inspection** have been corrected and passed. **BoCE** will have two members step down in January, keeping 6 total members.

Property to meet and find 2-3 companies to give their thoughts on our current **roof situation** and a cost involved on correcting/replacing. Quote was obtained by MBA Roofing in October 2023.

#### Insurance Committee.

Request to add \$7,500 to our **Parsonage coverage** to cover appliances. Approval to add the \$7,500 additional coverage made by Sonya Leonard, seconded by Lora Rice. **Approved.** Any **property repairs that are completed at Church need to be documented and the Church office should be notified for recording.** Insurance Committee received a quote to have the entire **Church Property/Campus Appraisal** (replacement value) from Miles Hamrick at \$3,500. Motion made to have the appraisal completed made by Candace Carpenter, seconded by Frank Snider. **Approved.**

Motion to approve old business made by Lora Rice, seconded by Jean Funderburk. **Approved.**

#### NEW BUSINESS

**Shoe Box Shipping.** Funds are needed for 10 boxes, total \$100 for shipping cost. Motion

made to approve \$100 to cover shipping costs made by Lora Rice, seconded by Susan Stewart. **Approved.**

#### Helms Security.

Several cameras are not working properly. Cindy Shrum has made an appointment with Helms to come out and scope the repair/additions needed. Reminder that the cameras currently in use were not supplied by Helms originally.

#### Facility Usage Agreement.

Fellowship Hall facility usage Nov 23 for Sonya Leonard. Motion made to approve Facility Usage requests made by Susan Stewart, seconded by Jane Lemmond. **All three approved.**

**NC Forest Service.** At the Congregational Meeting a request was made to have experts to come assess the tress on Church Property. **NC Department of Agriculture Forest Service conducted a very thorough review of the 40+ trees on campus** and made recommendations. Copies of these recommendations will be made available at the November Congregational meeting. Action will be taken in the near future based on these recommendations.

**Staff Christmas Bonus.** Motion made to approve Staff Christmas Bonuses made by LaDonna Goodson, seconded by Lora Rice. **Approved.**

Motion to adjourn made by Lora Rice, seconded by Frank Snider. **Approved.** Closed with the Lord's Prayer.

**Next Consistory Meeting:** Monthly Meeting: Sunday December 10, 2023 at 6pm

Minutes respectively submitted by Candace Carpenter, Secretary

*Happy New Year!*

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
	<p><b>1 NEW YEAR'S DAY</b></p> 	<p><b>2</b></p> <p>6:30 p.m. Personnel Committee Meeting</p>
<p><b>7 BAPTISM OF CHRIST</b></p> <p>9:30 A.M. Sunday School 10:30 A.M. Morning Worship Sacrament of Holy Communion Servers: Buddy Funderburk, Marilyn McRee Ruth Haynes, Candace Carpenter</p> <p>11:35 A.M. Property Committee Meeting - All past, present, and interested / potential members 11:45 A.M. Board of Christian Ed. meeting</p> <p>Nursery: Annette Wray &amp; Katie Barnes Children's Church Leader: Autumn Arruza</p>	<p><b>8</b></p>	<p><b>9</b></p>
<p><b>14 SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY</b></p> <p>9:30 A.M. Sunday School 10:30 A.M. Morning Worship Installation and Ordination Service of Elders and Deacons 11:45 A.M. Board of Christian Education Meeting 6:00 P.M. Consistory Meeting</p> <p>Nursery: Brittany Minter &amp; Aubree McCrary Children's Church Leader: Kristal Shrum ◆ Amelia Duncan</p>	<p><b>15 MARTIN LUTHERAN KING, JR. Day</b></p> <p>◆ Louise Shrum</p>	<p><b>16</b></p> <p>10:30 A.M. Young at Heart Meeting</p> <p>◆ Doug Miller Jane Lemmond Wilson Sowers</p>
<p><b>21 THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY</b></p> <p>9:30 A.M. Sunday School 10:30 A.M. Morning Worship</p> <p>5:30 P.M. Youth Fellowship Meeting (5:30 to 7:00 P.M.)</p> <p>Nursery: Kristal &amp; Andrew Shrum Children's Church Leader: Brittany Cook ◆ Michael Stewart</p>	<p><b>22</b></p>	<p><b>23</b></p>
<p><b>28 FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY</b></p> <p>9:30 A.M. Sunday School Confirmation Class 10:30 A.M. Morning Worship</p> <p>3:00 P.M. His Kids Meeting (3:00 - 4:30 P.M.)</p> <p>Nursery: Carla Goodson &amp; Jessica Hawn Children's Church Leader: Katie Barnes</p>	<p><b>29</b></p> <p>◆ Roger Beard</p>	<p><b>30</b></p> <p>♥ Mr. &amp; Mrs. A. D. Shrum</p>

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p><b>3</b></p> <p>1:00 P.M. Women's Fellowship Canceled</p>	<p><b>4</b></p> <p>◆ Bud Michael</p>	<p><b>5</b></p>	<p><b>6</b> EPIPHANY</p> <p>Fellowship hall Reserved Katie Barnes</p> <p>◆ Tate Davis Trexler Andy Michael</p>
<p><b>10</b></p>	<p><b>11</b></p>	<p><b>12</b></p> <p>◆ Candace Carpenter Janet Rice</p>	<p><b>13</b></p>
<p><b>17</b></p>	<p><b>18</b></p>	<p><b>19</b></p> <p>◆ Amber Akins Ronnie Bumgarner</p>	<p><b>20</b></p> <p>◆ Sonya Leonard</p>
<p><b>24</b></p>	<p><b>25</b></p>	<p><b>26</b></p>	<p><b>27</b></p>
<p><b>31</b></p> <p>♥ Mr. &amp; Mrs. Walter Rice</p>	<p align="center"><b>VOLUNTEERS FOR JANUARY 2024</b></p> <p>Acolytes..... Charlotte Sowers, Annabel Barger, Meredith Lee Greeter.....Lora Rice</p> <p>Children's Church Leaders..... Please see designated Sunday</p> <p>Counters..... Pat Barkley &amp; Cathy Bumgarner, Mike &amp; Susan Stewart</p> <p>Nursery ..... Please see designated Sunday</p> <p>Security/Closer ..... Chris Carpenter</p> <p>Ushers ..... Robin &amp; Pam Caskey, James &amp; Brittany Cook</p> <p>◆ Birthdays     ♥ Wedding Anniversaries</p>		

**Cemetery Notes ...**

Did you know...our entire cemetery is mapped and indexed? Indeed, it is. That means that we know where every marked grave is located, and where some of the unmarked graves and all the vacant sites are located. The Cemetery Committee embarked on mapping and indexing the cemetery ten years ago to not only locate as many as possible available vacant sites but to help locate any unmarked graves.

Since 2013, we have located 17 previously unmarked graves. Some had nearly illegible stones, some had broken stones, and one had the headstone scattered in three places. Several graves went unmarked and the burials went unrecorded. In many of these instances, the cemetery fund paid for and the members of the cemetery committee installed footstones because no family survivors could be located or were unwilling or unable to provide a stone. How did we locate these unmarked graves? In one or two instances we were notified by distant relatives. In other cases, we looked at unmarked deeded plots and used internet data to search for death records of family members known to have been buried in our cemetery. Most recently we had an inquiry from a genealogist family member seeking the location of the grave of Elkana Hartzoge (1815-1880). Using cemetery documents, locating family graves and studying the specific area in the old section, we located what we confidently believe is Mr. Hartzoge's unmarked grave site. It's now a matter simply of acquiring a footstone to mark his grave. And yes, there are other unmarked graves, mostly in the old section. We continue to work

on that.

All church members have an opportunity to select a grave site or columbarium niche for themselves and their spouses, even if the spouse is not a church member. Church members can also purchase deeded sites for themselves and their spouses with certain restrictions. Selecting grave sites is simply a matter of selecting the specific vacant space and filling out an assignment form. Grave site assignments are free except for columbarium niches which require prepayment for engraving the niche plate. See any cemetery committee member for more information or request an assignment form from the committee secretary (Bud Michael). Members with assigned grave sites can exchange them for columbarium niches.

Bud Michael

**THANK YOU!**

A Note of Appreciation from the Lincoln County Coalition Against Domestic Violence (Amy's House)

The LCCADV appreciates your recent donation of \$125.00 and \$1,040.00 for the work we do. With your support, we are able together to make an important difference to people in our county.

.....

**Nazareth Child & Family Connection** acknowledges and appreciates the gift of \$500.00. "Thanks very much for your kind gift and for everything you do for Nazareth."

"Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser; teach a just man, and he will increase in learning."

Proverbs 9:9

**Sunday School Record**

Date	Att'd. 2023	Offg. 2023	Att'd. 2022	Offg. 2022
11/05	46	44.00	37	42.00
11/12	48	52.00	34	49.00
11/19	36	31.00	28	39.00
11/26	47	65.00	37	48.00

Jacquelyne Barger, Karlee Cook, Susan Stewart, Morgan Burgess, Sonya Leonard, Katie Painter, Roger Beard, Joan Campbell, Greg Barkley, LaDonna Goodson, Terrell Bumgarner, Chris Barger, Shirley McRee, Vick Lancaster, Libby Herman, Faye Painter, Burl Shrum, Leigan Hoffman, Pat Barkley, Jean Funderburk, and Lealta Smith.

**ALTAR FLOWERS**

The following Sundays are open for Altar Flower Sponsors: January 14, 21, & 28, 2024

If you wish to serve, please contact Lealta Smith, 828-428-8327 or Email: smithlea@charter.net.

If you have a standing date during the year and you wish to reserve again, please confirm the date.

**Thank You**

**EveryAge Foundation** ...Thank you for the gift of \$250.00.

**Carolina Caring Foundation** ... On behalf of our patients, their families, our staff, and volunteers; I thank you for your generous gift of \$250.00.

**Catawba College** ... On behalf of Catawba College, we are extremely grateful for your kind donation of \$100.00.

**CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY** is extended to the Chris Carpenter family at the recent death of his mother, Brenda Edwards of Washington, NC.

## Fifty Years Ago - Bud Michael

I was thinking recently about our extensive Sanctuary upgrade and how it visually transformed the interior of our 115 year-old brick Church. The restoration revealed the beautiful pine floor and the hand-crafted bricks long hidden behind the wainscoting for so many decades; the revised choir loft and the new curved pews which add so much to the classic appearance of the Sanctuary. And the theater quality sound and video system that add so much to our worship experience.

Thinking back, I'm reminded when fifty years ago in 1973, the Church completed a previous major Sanctuary renovation. Fittingly, Reverend Linn Finger was our pastor. He is a direct descendant of Michael Finger, one of the founders of St. Matthew's.

It was in 1973 that the floors were covered with new carpeting, new upholstered pews were installed and the choir loft was constructed. The early beaded board wainscoting was covered with "modern" paneling. New windows were installed (not the stained glass windows we see today—they were installed in 1984). New light fixtures were added and for comfort, air conditioning!

Reverend Finger conducted a rededication and thanksgiving service in May of 1973, commemorating the completion of the renovations.

Five years later the Education Department (the Sunday School wing) was similarly renovated using gifts, donations and volunteer labor.

Over the 185 year span of St. Matthew's existence, reconstruction, renovation and modernization have been hallmarks of a generous, dedicated and committed congregation.

(Source: hand written notes in our Church files, mostly by our Historian, Lealta Smith).

## WELCOME *New Members*

Dot and Darrell Hull united with St. Matthew's in full membership by Letter of Transfer from Lake Norman Lutheran Church, Denver, NC on December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023. They both were members in the 1970's to 1994. We are happy to have them return to our Church Family.

Dot is a retired employee of Lowes Home Improvement. She enjoys reading and cooking. She is the daughter of Hunter & Georgia Rhyne. She has 4 brothers and 5 sisters.

Darrell is a retired truck driver and his last employer was Ethan Allen. He worked for them for 35 years. He enjoys planting a large garden and watching his plants grow.

**VISION** ... To strengthen our ministry to youth, to provide fellowship opportunities, to grow in membership, to deepen in faith, and to expand the church's outreach to the community.

**VALUES** ... Strive to love and serve God, to love one another and keep relationships healthy, and to welcome and befriend newcomers.

**MISSION** ... To worship God, to provide training and support for discipleship growth, and to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ through word and deed.

"The best time to plant  
a tree was 20 years ago.  
The second best time is now."  
— Chinese Proverb

## The Beginning

Directions: Read Genesis 1:1-3 (NIV), below. Place the underlined words into the crossword. One letter has been provided to help you start.

*I*n the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.

