

Nov. 7, 2020

What's New? Was gibt's Neues?

A Bi-Weekly Update about What's Going on at and around
St. Matthew's during the Pandemic

Dear Members and Friends of St. Matthew's,

By the time you read this, Election Day will have passed. I hope all of you who are eligible exercised your privilege to vote. The outcome of these elections will not please everyone. We have been dealing with a deepening rift in society and this rift will not magically be mended – on the contrary, it might just get deeper and wider. The votes may have been cast – but that doesn't excuse us from retreating now. No, as followers of Jesus Christ, we are called each and every day to live our faith in word and deed. We are called to bring healing where there is hurt, and to work for reconciliation whenever possible.



Let us remember and honor our veterans on Nov. 11th.

In this difficult and contentious political climate, I would like to remind us of two

key passages from the Holy Scriptures. In the Old Testament, the Prophet Micah says, 'God has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?' (Micah 6:8, NRSV).

And Jesus Christ himself reminds us of the greatest command: 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.' (Matthew 22: 37-40, NRSV). As we go into uncertain times, may we always live according to these words.

Just a reminder that you can always reach me via my cell phone number (925-330-2289) or via email (pastorweidmann@stmatthews-sf.org) with any questions or concerns – or if you just want to talk.

Stay well! May God bless us all until we meet again!

Pr. Kerstin Weidmann

Word of the Week (as chosen by the Moravian Brethren – Herrnhuter Brüder):

Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. *Romans 12:21, NRSV*

Lass dich nicht vom Bösen überwinden, sondern überwinde das Böse mit Gutem. *Römer 12, 21, Lutherbibel*

A Brief Reflection on the 'Word of the Week' by Pr. Weidmann:

I admit it: the current situation is grating on me. COVID, the continued brutal force used especially against people of color in this country, the spite and posturing before the elections (and the election process itself), the anxiety of people around me – all this has taken a toll. I'm mentally and spiritually exhausted. One consequence of this exhaustion is that my 'fuse' has gotten much shorter. I very easily lose my patience these days. Another consequence is that I try to protect myself through sarcasm.

It feels good for a moment to explode or be bitter – however, it is destructive in the long run. But I am realizing these days: it is so easy to be overcome by 'evil'. It is so easy to fall into the temptation of showing contempt for - even loathe - people I don't agree with (and who don't agree with me). And I know deep in my heart that this isn't good – not for the people around me, but also not good for myself. 'An eye for an eye leaves the whole world blind,' Mahatma Gandhi famously said. No healing can happen if we continue to hurt each other.

I am not saying it is easy to 'overcome evil with good'. There are days when I feel that my attempts at being 'good' don't lead anywhere – that I am mocked and sneered at for it. But I also know that eventually God's love and grace will have the last word. That people will be reconciled with each other. And that I need to do my part and put in the hard work of loving my neighbor if I want to see any change. May God give us all the strength to hold on to what is good, to work for justice for all of God's creation, and to not be deterred by the evil we experience around us (and in us as well).

Ewigkeitssonntag, November 22nd

On Sunday, November 22nd, we will observe 'Ewigkeitssonntag' (Eternity Sunday). In the German Protestant tradition, this is the day those who passed away over the course of the last year are remembered.



During our online worship service that day, we will remember the members of St. Matthew's who died in the last 12 months. If you lost someone close to you and would like them to be included in our service, please send a picture of them (with their name and the dates of their life) to the St. Matthew's office, either by email (office@stmatthews-sf.org) or regular mail (3281 16th St., San Francisco, CA 94103). Please make sure that these images get to us any later than Wednesday, November 18th.

Update: In-Person Worship Services and Events at St. Matthew's

The council set a tentative date for reopening later this year. We will inform you of this date after the next council meeting on 11/8. Be assured that we will conduct the reopening in accordance with guidelines and ordinances of the San Francisco Department of Public Health. Your safety is our main concern.

Baptism at St. Matthew's

On Sunday, November 1st, we welcomed Ethan into the family of God. He was baptized at St. Matthew's that day, physically surrounded by his closest family members – and by his sponsors via Zoom. Please pray for Ethan, his parents, family and sponsors as they embark on this journey of faith together.



Sunday Online Worship Services

St. Matthew's will continue to make recorded worship services available every Sunday by 10 a.m. on our website (www.stmatthews-sf.org) and our Facebook page ('Matthew Lutheran') until further notice.

If you'd like to receive a link to these worship services in your email inbox every Sunday, please let us know by sending a request to office@stmatthews-sf.org.

Visits on Your Front Porch or in Your Backyard

Since outdoor meetings in small groups (with masks and proper distance) are deemed to be safe by the CDC and other agencies, Pastor Weidmann would like to offer to visit you on your front porch or in your backyard. These would be strictly pastoral visits (check-in, prayer, Holy Communion, if so desired) – no hospitality is expected. If you would like to receive such a visit, please contact Pr. Weidmann at 925-330-2289 or pastorweidmann@stmatthews-sf.org.

Irregular Office Hours

We continue to offer irregular office hours during the ongoing pandemic. Our office administrator, Angie Holt, usually is in the office on Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. You can reach Pr. Weidmann at any time: 915-330-2289 or pastorweidmann@stmatthews-sf.org.

Continued Financial Support of St. Matthew's Ministries

We want to thank everyone who has supported St. Matthew's financially during the past several months. Please continue to send in your contributions!

St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

3281 - 16th Street,

San Francisco, CA 94103-3323

Tel.: 415 863 6371

office@stmatthews-sf.org

www.stmatthews-sf.org

