

# November



## St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

### What's New? Was gibt's Neues? For the of Month of November, 2021

**Dear Members and Friends of St. Matthew's,**

After more than 7 years as your pastor, I will be leaving St. Matthew's at the end of this year. My husband, Fred, has accepted a new call as pastor of 'Church in the Gardens' (UCC) in Forest Hill, Queens, New York. I am currently also pursuing a call in a congregation in the Metropolitan New York Synod. This means we will be moving to the 'Big Apple'! Though I am sad to leave the San Francisco Area and St. Matthew's, at the same time I am also excited about what God has in store for us.



My last official day as pastor of St. Matthew's will be December 31<sup>st</sup>. I will celebrate my last worship service together with you on Sunday, December 26<sup>th</sup> (2<sup>nd</sup> Day of Christmas). at 11 a.m. There will be a farewell reception after the service. I hope you can come!

The Sierra Pacific Synod office is aware of the situation and will work with the St. Matthew's leadership to take appropriate steps as this congregation will be looking for a new pastor.

It has been an honor and a blessing for me to serve among you, and to serve with you over the last seven and a half years. Thank you for all your prayers, your love, and your support. I will always remember the amazing 'cloud of witnesses' I have encountered at St. Matthew's. May God continue to be with you, as God has been present in this community of faith over the last 126 years.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our council president, Dr. Bill Bremer, or any of the St. Matthew's council members.

God's peace be with you always!

Blessings,

*Pr. Kerstin Weidmann*

#### **Spiritual Reflection** by *Pr. Kerstin Weidmann*

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. *1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5: 16-18*

November is an interesting month in the cycle of the church year. We start counting the last Sundays of our church year as 'Sundays of End Time'. In North American Lutheran tradition, the first Sunday in November is observed as All Saints Day – a day to remember those who passed away during the course of the last year. German Lutherans don't observe All Saints Day, but instead remember those who passed away on the last Sunday before Advent on what is called 'Sunday of the Dead' or 'Eternity Sunday'.\* November is a month to reflect on our mortality – and on the reality that all things at some point come to an end.



Here in the U.S., we also celebrate the day of Thanksgiving during the month of November - and this year, there are plenty of reasons to be thankful now that the pandemic seems to be slowing down and we are able to more or less gather with family and friends 'as usual' for this holiday. But then, in general, there are many things we can be thankful for: people we love, the roof over our head, the abundance of food and goods, among many other things.

It is easy to be thankful and give thanks when life is good. It is much harder to feel thankful when there is want, pain, loss, or grief. And so at first, it may seem counterintuitive to celebrate Thanksgiving during a month when we as followers of Christ also focus on death and the end of things. However, the Apostle Paul encourages and even admonishes us to 'give thanks in *all* circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.' Thankfulness changes our focus and makes us look at what we have rather than what we lack (or think we lack).

As we mourn our dead, we should remember what they were to us – and give thanks that they walked with us for a while during our time here on earth. As we grieve the end of things, we should be thankful for all the good we have experienced – and also give thanks for new things to come.

I am aware that there are those among you who are sad and disappointed that I am leaving St. Matthew's at the end of the year. Seven and a half years of joint ministry will come to an end. Seven and a half years of sharing joy and sorrow and life stories. Seven and a half years of celebrations and challenges. It's hard for me to leave all this behind. But in all my grief, I feel deep thankfulness for you and what you shared with me during those last years. I feel truly blessed to have been your pastor.

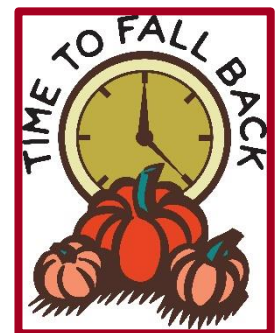
My hope for you is that, as you go into uncertain times, you will be able to embrace the new possibilities God has in store for you as the people of St. Matthew's – and beyond. My hope and prayer for you is that you feel surrounded by God in all circumstances – and never cease to rejoice, to pray, and to give thanks in all circumstances.

*\*At St. Matthew's this year, we will remember the dead on November 14<sup>th</sup> during our online worship service, and on November 21<sup>st</sup> as we gather in person.*

*Pr. Kerstin Weidmann*

### **Daylight Saving Time ENDS Sunday, November 7<sup>th</sup> ('Fall Back')**

On Sunday, November 7<sup>th</sup>, the clocks will be set BACK one hour – that means, we gain an hour on that day. Don't be early for worship!



## In-Person Worship Services at St. Matthew's

Bilingual Worship Services are offered **every Sunday at 11 a.m.**, followed by coffee hour. Please note that current guidelines mandate that everyone who would like to come to coffee hour needs to be fully vaccinated or needs to show a negative COVID-19 test result that cannot be older than 72 hours. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact Pr. Kerstin Weidmann.

## Special Upcoming Worship Services

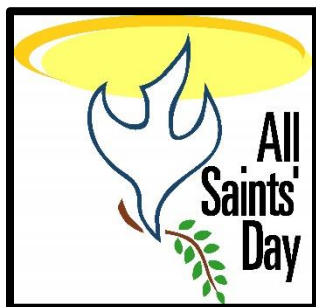
**Sunday, November 21<sup>st</sup>: Ewigkeitssonntag (Eternity Sunday)**; we will remember those who died over the course of the last year

**Sunday, November 28<sup>th</sup>: 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Advent**

All worship services are bilingual English/German and start at 11 a.m.



## Sunday Online Worship Services in November



In November, St. Matthew's will offer only **(2)** two online worship services: the first one will be on **November 14<sup>th</sup>**, All Saints Day (American tradition) / 'Eternity Sunday' (German tradition) will be observed. During this service, we will remember those who passed away over the course of the last year. If you'd like a family member or a friend to be remembered during that service, please send us a picture of the deceased, including their name, year of birth and year of death by **Monday, November 8<sup>th</sup>**, either as an email attachment ([office@stmatthews-sf.org](mailto:office@stmatthews-sf.org)) or by regular mail. The second online service will be on **November 28<sup>th</sup>** when we celebrate the 1<sup>st</sup>

Sunday in Advent and a new church year.

These online worship services will be made available on aforementioned days by 2 p.m. on St. Matthew's website ([www.stmatthews-sf.org](http://www.stmatthews-sf.org)) and Facebook page ('Matthew Lutheran').

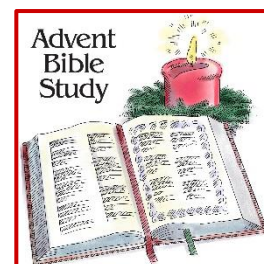
If you'd like to receive a link to St. Matthew's worship services in your email inbox, please let us know by sending a request to [office@stmatthews-sf.org](mailto:office@stmatthews-sf.org).

## Memorial Service for Elisabeth Kehl

**On Saturday, November 27<sup>th</sup>, at 2 p.m.** there will be memorial service for Elisabeth Kehl at St. Matthew's, followed by coffee in the fellowship hall. Elisabeth passed away in May 2020. Her family wants to celebrate her life now that it is relatively safe to meet in person again.

## Mark Your Calendars: Advent Bible Study

St. Matthew's will offer an Advent Bible study (theme to be announced at the later time), tentatively scheduled for the following Tuesdays in December: 11/30, 12/7, and 12/14. The time will be 2:30 – 4 p.m. On 12/14, we will also have a celebration of the season with songs, stories, and poems. If you have any questions, please contact Pr. Kerstin.



## Visitation

If you'd like to receive a visit from Pr. Kerstin Weidmann, please contact her at (925) 330-2289 or [pastorweidmann@stmatthews-sf.org](mailto:pastorweidmann@stmatthews-sf.org).

## Office Hours

We are offering regular office hours again (Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.).

## Continued Financial Support of St. Matthew's Ministries

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

## Pr. Kerstin Weidmann's Contact Information

You can reach Pr. Weidmann via her cell phone (925-330-2289) or via email ([pastorweidmann@stmatthews-sf.org](mailto:pastorweidmann@stmatthews-sf.org)).



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