



# THE ST. MATTHIAS MONITOR

Office: 108 O'Brannan Park Dr.

Phone #: 334-714-3420

Email: [stmatthiasdothan@gmail.com](mailto:stmatthiasdothan@gmail.com)

Website: [stmatthiasdothan.org](http://stmatthiasdothan.org)

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## *Special Final Edition - 2023*

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we have the space to do more services, we are going to take advantage of what God has given us!

We also have Morning and Evening Prayer Tuesday – Thursday every week (unless Wednesday night is Holy Communion). This gives everyone additional times to come before the Lord, ask for special prayers, talk to your priest, and reflect on your day or start it off on a positive first step!

### Announcements

There are several important dates coming up, so please take a look at the calendar page. We are having a Holy Communion service during the week *every week* barring any unforeseen circumstance. Now that

### A Word from the Vicar

For what are we actually seeking? There is a difference between looking with some effort and diligently seeking after something - or someone - with our whole heart. And the book of Job points out that when we seek after God, we need to “commit”

ourselves to the cause of the Almighty. We need to daily seek what God would desire of us and we need to devote ourselves to His purpose in our lives.

Now, this may take on quite a different look in our individual lives, but no matter what we are doing or what task is in front of us, we need to do it for the glory of God.

And Job tells us why. God does great things and His unsearchable Way yields "marvellous things without number."

I was recently talking with someone about the difference between happiness and joy... and they are very different ideas. Happiness is an emotion that is predicated on how one feels at any given time. Joy is a foundational choice involving living in God's Spirit and doing things His Way.

And Job is the perfect example of this. Trust me, Job was not happy with the physical and emotional torment... and it would have been very easy for him to curse God and die as his wife suggested in his unhappiness.

However, there was a foundation in the Lord that was much more than the torment Job faced. His emotions and body were compromised, but his faith was secure in the joy of the Lord.

No matter what comes our way, we know that the Lord is with us and will guide us through it all if we let Him. He gives us the choice to love and to follow because there is no ability to love and there is no option in following without a choice being presented.

This is what is going on in the Gospel according to St. Matthew. We have the choice to follow the Holy Ghost and do things God's Way... or we can reject the Truth of God that the Holy Ghost presents to every living person. And if we reject God - if we choose not to love - then we choose to be separated from God.

Ironically those who choose to be sinfully "happy" in the moment by rejecting God and being their own deity will spend eternity without the joy of the Lord. They have given up what is much greater for a mere shadowy reflection of what their souls actually coveted.

This is why we need to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ! We need to share the joy of the Lord with those who are not content with human happiness or even worse emotions. We need to praise God and share in His joy - whether we are feeling great or feeling miserable. (And a strong argument could be made that we need to lean into the joy of the Lord even more when we are miserable.)

So, as we go forth from this place, let us do so in prayer, getting into the Word, and rediscovering the joy of the Lord, as this is worthy of our attention and our dedication. Let us seek the Lord and rely on His virtues as we continue steadfastly as those called Christians - those who are to be Christ-like ones. Amen!

*Fr. Steve*

### **What We Believe**

In the last *What We Believe* article, we started going through the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed... or as we know it – the Nicene Creed.

If we are going to *profess* our faith in Christ Jesus, we need to be able to articulate what we declare. We need to be able to *explain* that which we claim.

So, as way of recapping, we have stated and explained our belief in One God as our first tenant, that we believe in God the Father as our second tenant, and we have examined that Jesus Christ is God.

Now, we look to the second part of the “God the Son” paragraph of the Creed:

Tenant #4a:

*Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, And was made man:*

The Nicene Creed has worked through *who* God the Son is... now we take a look at *what* the Son did for us. This tenant shows the outworking of God’s love for us. God did not have to come down and become *incarnate* [in-the-flesh], but He did so through the Holy Ghost *of the Virgin Mary*. He was already God, but *was made man* for us.

Tenant #4b:

*And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried:*

The belief in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour means that we have to believe in what He did for us on the Cross. We cannot say we follow Christ if we do not believe in what His shed blood accomplished for our atonement from sin. And we must believe that this real event happened at a real time (when Pontius Pilate was governor) and Jesus *really* suffered and *really* died. There were Early Church heresies that said that Jesus was fully God, but denied His humanity... and since He is both fully God and fully man, the suffering and death must also have been fully experienced. The Crucifixion was not a trick; it was real.

Tenant #4c:

*And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures:*

There is no doubt in the Church that Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Saviour of the world, not only died for our sins, but He also rose from the dead! (One note: "the third day" does not mean three whole days.)

Tenant #4d:

*And ascended into heaven,*

Jesus Christ – God Incarnate – did stay on earth after the Resurrection for 40 days. This provided proof to the Early Church that He arose! But then He ascended for us! He is our eternal hope and He is in Heaven right now!

Tenant #5:

*And sitteth on the right hand of the Father:*

And what is Christ Jesus doing in Heaven? He is *seated* on the right hand of the Father. He is in the seat of honour in Heaven, having fulfilled what God set forth for the Son to do. We know that He also is our Advocate with the Father while we wait for the Second Coming (ref. 1 John 2:1,2)

Tenant #6:

*And he shall come again, with glory, to judge both the quick and the dead; Whose kingdom shall have no end.*

Our Hope will return to judge the world. Those that believe in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour and have chosen to follow Him in word

and in deed will not face the eternal consequences of their sinfulness because of what Jesus Christ did for us on the Cross. His atoning Blood has washed our sins away and now we can be reconciled to God for eternity!

Next time we will take a look at the “Holy Ghost” and “the Church” in the final paragraph of the Creed.

### **Hymn of the Faith**

The following is Hymn #209 from our 1940 Hymnal:

*1 O saving Victim, opening wide  
The gate of heav'n to man below,  
Our foes press on from ev'ry side  
Thine aid supply, Thy strength bestow.*

*2 All praise and thanks to Thee ascend  
For evermore, blest One in Three;  
O grant us life that shall not end,  
In our true native land with Thee. Amen.*

The second tune for this hymn (St. Vincent) is much more familiar to a lot of us and it is the one we use at St. Matthias. It is a hauntingly beautiful melody that aids in unpacking the lyrics of this hymn. The directions at

the top say to sing it *quietly* – one could add *reverently* as well.

In the first stanza, the singer makes a prayerful plea for the saving Victim – the Lamb of God – to open the gates of heaven. In these words, we see what should be at the heart of our prayers, asking the Lord for His Presence, confessing our need for Him because of our sins, thanking Him for giving us the only way to be reconciled to Him, and supplicating Him for His continued aid and strength so we can continue in His Will.

In the next stanza, the prayer continues in worship: giving praise and thanks to the Lord! And as Christ *ascended* back to the Father in Heaven, so our prayers *ascend* to our Triune God! The last part of this verse is a supplication for eternal life that comes only through God... and the “ask” is that we will have life forever – *with God!*

This is hymn is perfect for Holy Communion and is a great example of how we should think, worship, and express our hope in the Lord! May we ever seek the Lord through His Sacrament and worship Him through prayers like this hymn!



**Special Announcement:**  
**Our Stained Glass Windows are Coming**  
**Soon!**

These four panel-stained glass windows will be arriving soon! They may be here by December, but if not, January should be worth waiting for!

Not only will these beautiful windows add to the worshipful nature of our church, but they will also cut down on the glare (or halo?) around those of us up by the altar.

Thanks be to God!

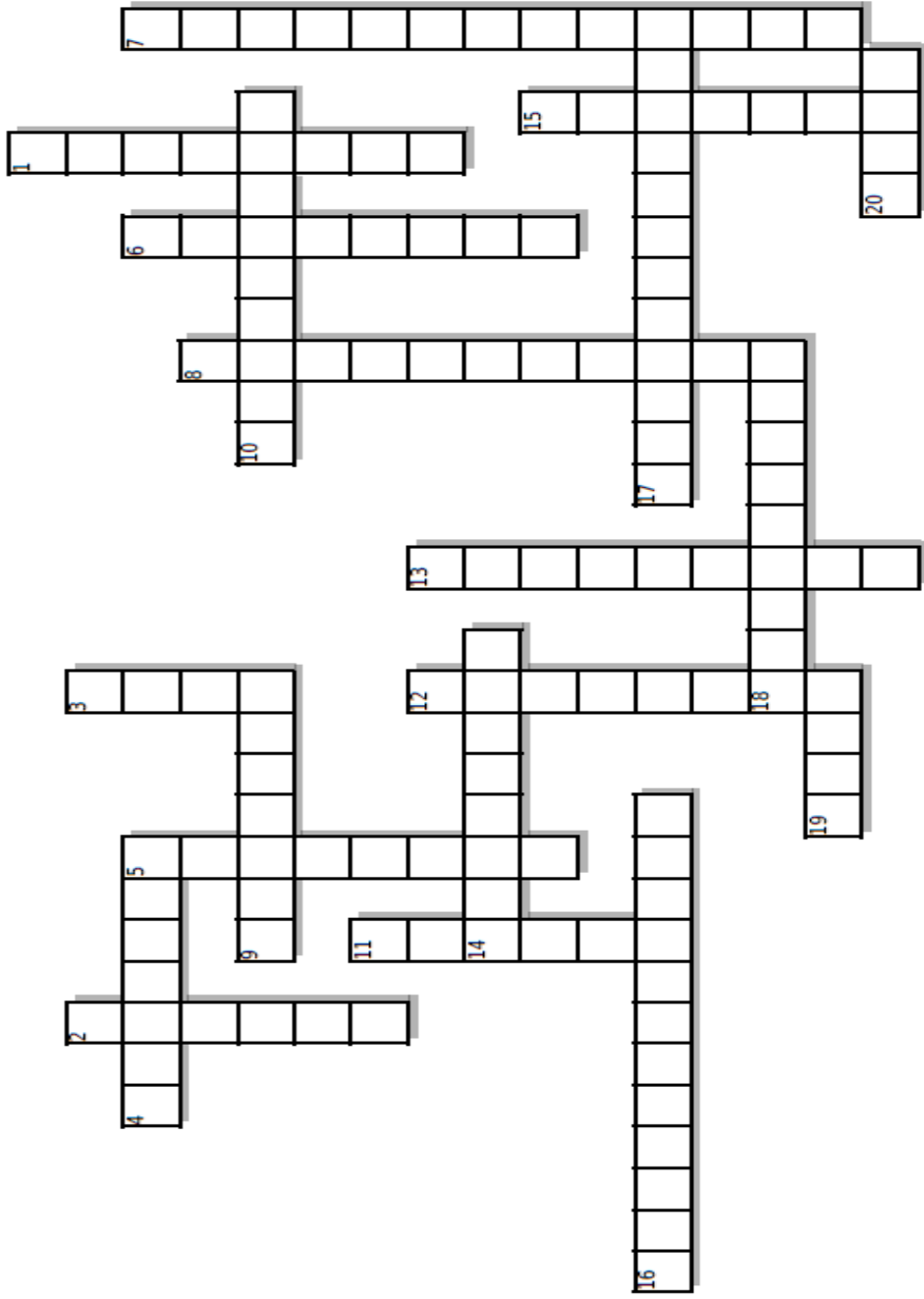
**Windows from left to right:**

The Nativity – This window demonstrates God’s gift of love for us by sending us His Son – God in the flesh – to save us from our sins. The Incarnation is quintessential to Salvation.

The Good Shepherd – Jesus Christ is our Good Shepherd! He is our Protector and our Saviour. He takes care of His own... both now and forever!

The Crucifixion – This window illustrates why Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came into the world: to be our atonement through His one-time Sacrifice for the sins of the whole world.

The Ascension – Jesus Christ is our hope and has risen from the dead and ascended! He is God indeed and continues to be our Advocate with the Father.





# Crossword

## Clues:

### Across:

4. this word means “joyful” and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Advent is sometimes referred to by this name
9. the season of green that ends with the advent of Advent
10. the 12 day period on the Church calendar that starts with a "Mass" commemorating the Incarnation
14. term for God Incarnate that emphasizes His deity
16. the Caretaker of the Sheep who sacrifices for them
17. this time begins at 6:00 pm on the 4th Sunday in Advent this year
18. happened 40 days after the Resurrection and gives us hope that our Advocate is at the right hand of God the Father
19. the Apostle whose feast day is the third day of Christmas
20. the seasonal color for the 3rd Sunday in Advent (I will not be wearing this color.)

### Down:

1. the last day of Christmas
2. the traditional Anglican color for the season of Advent
3. the mother of our Lord
5. the celebration of the arrival of the Wise Men
6. the birth of Christ
7. the Holy Communion service which commemorates the most brutal act against young children in the New Testament on the 28th of December
8. the point in history that allowed for the reconciliation of man after sin entered the world
11. the human father of our Lord
12. term for God Incarnate that emphasizes His humanity
13. the date of the beginning of the Church year this year
15. the name of the deacon and martyr whose feast day is the second day of Christmas

## **Current Events**

The Bible tells us that there will be wars and rumors of wars... and still the end will not come (ref. Matthew 24:6).

We have conflicts all over the world, and sometimes we can become desensitized to what is not happening directly to us.

However, we need to keep the political state of Israel in our prayers.

They are an ally of the United States and they stand for some of the same things that we claim to stand for, including many personal freedoms and an economic system that makes sense... i.e. capitalism (where anyone can make it if that person puts in the effort).

We need to make sure that we are not praying necessarily for governments or political positions, but for the people (men, women, and children) who are caught up in the horrors of violence and evil.

The following prayer is from our 1928 Common Prayer Book:

### *In Time of War and Tumults.*

*ALMIGHTY God, the supreme Governor of all things, whose power no creature is able to resist, to whom it belongeth justly to punish sinners, and to be merciful to those who truly repent; Save and deliver us [those in need], we humbly beseech Thee, from the hands of our [all] enemies; that we [and all those in harm's way], being armed with Thy defence, may be preserved evermore from all perils, to glorify Thee, who art the only giver of all victory; through the merits of thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

### **A Note from Your Vestry**

We now have an opportunity to take a breath of fresh air (perhaps near the Memorial Garden) now that our building is up and we are able to worship and fellowship together in our own space!

We keep moving forward in the Lord... but we also need to take time to enjoy the fruits of our labor and work on growing together as a community of faith!

May God continue to guide us all in 2024 and beyond!

## Service Times & Schedule

### **Sundays**

8:00 am – Morning Prayer

9:00 am – Sunday School

10:00 am – *Holy Communion*

**Mondays** – The office is usually open, but please call first!

### **Tuesdays**

8:00 am – Morning Prayer

9:00 am – 4:00 pm – Office Hours

5:30 pm – Evening Prayer

### **Wednesdays**

8:00 am – Morning Prayer

9:00 am – 4:00 pm – Office Hours

5:30 pm – Evening Prayer or Holy Communion

### **Thursdays**

8:00 am – Morning Prayer

9:00 am – 4:00 pm – Office Hours

5:30 pm – Evening Prayer

**Fridays** – The office is closed. Please call, text, or email Fr. Steve with any questions, concerns, or needs.

**Saturdays** – The office is closed. Please call, text, or email Fr. Steve

**2023 December Holy Communion**  
**& Special Services**

December 3<sup>rd</sup> (Sun. at 10:00 am) – *Holy Communion*  
**1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Advent**

December 6<sup>th</sup> (Wed. at 5:30 pm) – *Holy Communion*

***December 8<sup>th</sup> (Fri. at 5:30 pm) – 9 Lessons & Carols***

December 10<sup>th</sup> (Sun. at 10:00 am) – *Holy Communion*  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Advent**

December 13<sup>th</sup> (Wed. at 5:30 pm) – *Holy Communion*

***December 15<sup>th</sup> (Fri. at 5:30 pm) – Christmas Party!***

December 17<sup>th</sup> (Sun. at 10:00 pm) – *Holy Communion*  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Advent**

December 21<sup>st</sup> (Thurs. at 12:00 pm & 5:30 pm) – *Holy Communion*  
**St. Thomas the Apostle**

December 24<sup>th</sup> (Sun. at 8:00 am) – *Holy Communion*

December 24<sup>th</sup> (Sun. at 9:30 am) – Morning Prayer / 9 Lessons & Carols

***December 24<sup>th</sup> (Sun. at 6:30 pm & 11:00 pm) – Holy Communion***  
***Christmas Eve!***

***December 25<sup>th</sup> (Mon. at 10:00 am) – Holy Communion***  
***Christmas Day!***