

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

February 20 & 23, 2025

Love Your Enemies, Overcoming Evil With Good

Opening Hymn 697, “May We Your Precepts, Lord, Fulfill”

Order of Service..... Setting One, Page 154

Prayer of the Day: Heavenly Father, keep your family continually in true faith, so that those who rely only on the hope of your heavenly grace may be protected by your mighty power; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

FIRST READING

Psalm of the Day (*On Insert*)..... Psalm 33A

SECOND READING

Gospel Acclamation Page 161

Gospel Acclamation Verse: *Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven.*

Hymn of the Day 733, “Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive”

SERMON..... “**What Is God’s Providence?**” Genesis 45:3-15

Offering Hymn 749 v. 3, “God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending”

Apostles’ Creed Page 163

Hymn 767, “Lord of Glory, You Have Bought Us”

Closing Liturgy Page 171

Closing Hymn 928, “May the Grace of Christ Our Savior”

FIRST READING: Genesis 45:3-15

The account of Joseph forgiving his brothers after they had sold him into slavery demonstrates that God overcomes evil with good.

Joseph said to his brothers, “I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?” His brothers could not answer him, because they were terrified by his presence. Joseph said to his brothers, “Come closer to me, please.”

They came closer. He said, “I am Joseph, your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. Now do not be upset or angry with yourselves for selling me to this place, since God sent me ahead of you to preserve life. For two years now the famine has been in the land, and there are still five more years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. God sent me ahead of you to preserve you as survivors on the earth, and to keep you alive by a great act of deliverance. So it was not you who sent me here, but God, and he has made me a father to Pharaoh, lord over his entire household, and ruler over the whole land of Egypt. Hurry, go up to my father and tell him, ‘This is what your son Joseph says: “God has made me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me. Do not delay. You shall live in the land of

Goshen, where you will be close to me—you, your children, your grandchildren, your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. I will take care of you here, for there are still five years of famine. Otherwise you will come to ruin, you, and your household, and all that you have.” Pay attention. Your eyes and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see that it is my mouth that speaks to you. You shall tell my father all about my position of honor in Egypt and about everything that you have seen. Hurry and bring my father down here.”

He threw his arms around his brother Benjamin’s neck and wept, and Benjamin wept on his shoulder. He kissed all his brothers and wept over them. After that his brothers talked with him.

SECOND READING: Romans 12:14-21

Paul lived in a Roman empire that operated on the principles of force and aggressing. Yet, he encourages believers to operate on the principles of grace, forgiveness, and humility.

Bless those who persecute you; bless, and do not curse. Rejoice with those who are rejoicing; weep with those who are weeping. Have the same respect for one another. Do not be arrogant, but associate with the humble. Do not think too highly of yourselves.

Do not pay anyone back evil for evil. Focus on those things that everyone considers noble. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, maintain peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, dear friends, but leave room for God’s wrath. For it is written, “Vengeance is mine; I will repay,” says the Lord. But: If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink. For by doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

GOSPEL: Luke 6:27-38

In our interactions with others, Jesus calls us to disregard what people deserve. Instead, we are to show the same grace that God has shown to us.

“But I say to you who are listening: Love your enemies. Do good to those who hate you. Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who mistreat you. If someone strikes you on one cheek, offer the other too. If someone takes away your coat, do not withhold your shirt. Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes away your things, do not demand them back.

“Treat others just as you would want them to treat you. If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? To be sure, even the sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? Even the sinners do the same thing. If you lend to those from whom you expect to be repaid, what credit is that to you? Even the sinners lend to sinners in order to be paid back in full. Instead, love your enemies, do good and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the unthankful and the evil. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

“Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be poured into your lap. In fact, the measure with which you measure will be measured back to you.”

ANNOUNCEMENTS

HEAD USHERS: Ross Schultz/Wayne Schultz; next Sunday: Dean Ebert/Rob Stern

ORGANISTS: The **March** schedule is hanging on the **SCHOOL** bulletin board. Please look at your calendars in the near future and sign up for the date(s) you are willing to play for us. Thank you!

FELLOWSHIP SUNDAY: Today is Fellowship Sunday! All are invited to stay for the chili dinner, doughnuts, and BINGO event immediately following our worship service today. We thank the PTL for organizing today's event. Let's mingle and BINGO!

2025 – 2026 SCHOOL REGISTRATION IS UNDERWAY! Enrollment for all classes (4K-8) for the 2025 – 2026 school year is now underway. Children must be 4-years-old by September 1, 2025, to enroll in our 4K program. 4K classes run five days per week (Monday-Friday) with two options—full days (8:05 AM – 3:05 PM) -or- half days (8:05 AM – Noon). Children must be 5-years-old by September 1, 2025, to enroll in our 5K program. 5K classes meet full days, five days per week. All registrations are being done ONLINE ONLY through our new automated registration system—*DreamClass*. Please speak with Mr. Lorge or Debbi Foulkes for more information if you know of family, friends, or neighbors who may be interested in having a child join our school family next year so we can supply them with the appropriate registration information.

EVERYONE OUTREACH: Our *Everyone Outreach* program is scheduled for this coming **Saturday, March 1**, from **9:00 AM – 2:30 PM**. (Lunch will be provided.) *Everyone Outreach* is designed to help our congregation build a culture of outreach so that every ministry and every member is thinking about and participating in outreach. There is still time to sign up for this event! It is FREE to attend. If you would like to participate, please sign up on the sheet located on the church bulletin board. Any questions about this program may be directed to **Scott Mittelstadt**.

LENTEN SEASON IS FAST APPROACHING: The Lenten Season will begin on **Wednesday, March 5**. Ash Wednesday communion worship services will be held at **3:15 PM** and **7:00 PM**. Thereafter, Lenten worship services will be held each Wednesday at both **3:15 PM** and **7:00 PM**. Please also remember that during the Lenten Season there are **NO** Thursday evening worship services held.

LUTHER PREP – SACRED SPRING CONCERT: Everyone is invited to Luther Preparatory School's Sacred Spring Concert in Watertown, Wisconsin. This concert is scheduled for **Sunday, March 9**, at **2:00 PM**. The concert will take place in the Luther Prep gymnasium. Luther Prep is located at 1300 Western Avenue in Watertown.

LENT BY CANDLELIGHT: All women of our congregation are invited to join St. Paul's, Neosho, and Bethany Lutheran Church, Hustisford, for an afternoon of being in the Word, music, and fellowship to prepare your hearts for Christ's sacrifice on the cross. This event will take place on **Sunday, March 16**, at **2:00 PM** in the St. Paul, Neosho, fellowship hall. Please **RSVP** to Sam Kesting (by calling or texting) to **(920) 625-2021** or to Rachel Wisniewski at **(920) 860-1583**.

WE THANK the Adult Choir for their lovely song on Sunday morning!

OUR GIFTS TO THE LORD

Attendance: Thursday: 23; Sunday: 74

Offerings: \$3,272.30

Tuition: \$2,775.00; **4K Tuition:** \$558.00

(Budget Amount Needed Each Week: \$7,355.00)

Special Funds: Debt Retirement: \$20.00; Church Refurbishment: \$1,050.00; Lutherans for Life: \$20.00; Christian Life Resources: \$25.00



We invite you to support this ministry through financial offerings out of thanksgiving for the Gospel you have received here. Offerings may be placed in the plate located on the table at the back of church, or you may scan the QR code to give electronically



OUR WEEK AT ST. MATTHEW'S

Sunday:	Worship Service (FELLOWSHIP SUNDAY).....9:00 AM Chili Dinner (w/BINGO) – Immediately following worship service
Thursday:	Communion Worship Service7:00 PM Adult Choir.....8:00 PM
Saturday:	EVERYONE OUTREACH PROGRAM..... 9:00 AM – 2:30 PM <i>(Lunch provided)</i>
Sunday:	Communion Worship Service9:00 AM Adult & Teen Bible Class/Sunday School 10:15 AM

33A LORD, Let Your Mercy Be on UsPsalm 33A

Refrain

LORD, let your mer - cy be on us,
as we place our trust in you.

Tone

Sing joyfully to the Lord, you / righteous;
it is fitting for the upright to / praise him.
For the word of the Lord is / right and true;
he is faithful in / all he does.
By the word of the Lord the / heav'ns were made,
their starry host by the breath / of his mouth.
For he spoke, and it / came to be;
he commanded, and / it stood firm. *Refrain*

The Lord foils the plans of the / nations;
he thwarts the purposes of the / peoples.
But the plans of the Lord stand firm for- / ever,
the purposes of his heart through all gener- / ations.
We wait in hope / for the Lord;
he is our help / and our shield.
In him our / hearts rejoice,
for we trust in his / holy name.

**Glory be to the Father and / to the Son
and to the Holy / Spirit,
as it was in the be- / ginning,
is now, and will be forever. / Amen. *Refrain***