



FISHHOOK

December 2022 / January 2023



Matthew begins his gospel account of the life and teaching of Jesus by telling us Jesus is the son of David, the Son of Abraham. Matthew then goes on to list over 40 other names and generations from whom Jesus has come.

What a list. You've got your patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Judah; the generations abiding the sojourn in Egypt and the desert wanderings; the days of the Canaan conquest; and the wild west times of early Israel recorded in the book of Judges and Ruth.

Next come the Israelite kings, David being mentioned first (and we are to remember God's promise to David that someone from his line will always be on the throne). Then you have the wisest foolish guy (or most foolish

wise guy?) who ever lived, King Solomon. This is followed by their sons and grandsons and great-grandsons until the Babylonians come and destroy the land of Judah (recorded in the books of Kings and Chronicles).

We know less about the next section, the generations that passed during the "silent" years of Israel. This period lasted about 400 years and there was no prophetic word between Malachi, the last prophet/book in the Old Testament, and John the Baptist's prophetic preaching recorded at the beginning of the New Testament.

You'll note a few things about the lineage of Jesus according to Matthew. **(continued next page)**

From a myriad of backgrounds and a myriad of times the Messiah has come.

(continued from first page) Matthew wants to communicate a sense of completion and fulfillment of God's promises, hence the three groups of fourteen generations.

Matthew really wants you to know Jesus is Messiah, bookending the genealogy with that claim.

Matthew wants you to know this Messiah is for everyone, especially you.

We see this in the inclusion of four women outsiders that were grafted into the story of God and lineage of Jesus. We can see it in the histories of those we do know something about. They weren't perfect heroes, but pilgrims journeying, stumbling, and struggling as they sought to follow God (or sometimes not). We see it in the grace God gave to these men and women over and over again.

Liars, adulterers, murderers, drunkards, prostitutes, idolaters, cowards, thieves, and more. Artists, kings and queens, farmers, craftsman, warriors, shepherds, husbands, wives, widows and orphans, and more. The good, the bad, the really bad, and the ugly.

As Matthew begins his gospel account he wants us to know the Messiah Jesus joins the story of the people of Abraham; is a rightful heir to the throne of David; and is for you, me, and anyone who calls on the name of the Lord to be saved. From a myriad of backgrounds and a myriad of times the Messiah has come. His reign is come and welcomes those of faith to live in and bring it all the more.

This Jesus, the son of David, the son of Abraham, the Son of God, is whom we adore and worship through Advent, through Christmas, through life. He is for you. He is for all.

Let us worship the newborn king.

Pastor Dan

Holiday Worship Services

Advent Midweek

Looking forward to celebrating Christmas day is about so much more than eating a little piece of chocolate each day or making a list and checking it twice. Not only do we spend time remembering God's great promises in the Old Testament to provide a Savior for our salvation, we also celebrate His promises to come again and restore all things!

On **December 7 and 14** we'll have a simple worship service of prayer, song, Scripture, and candlelight. This is a wonderful way to pause the hectic busyness of the Christmas season.



Christmas and New Year's



Christmas Eve Candlelight Services: 5pm & 11pm

Christmas Day Combined Service: 10am

New Year's Day Combined Service: 10am

Join us for Christmas carols, the Word of God, and joy!

Women in Mission

Lutheran Women's Missionary League



At our November meeting, Genny Drouin shared valuable tips on digital couponing with us, and we assembled scripture chains to include with the 45 Thanksgiving dinner baskets our church provided to families in our community.

Christmas Potluck, December 13 at NOON

Bring a salad or main dish to share and invite a guest to come help us assemble at least 80 hygiene kits for the homeless. We'll also be presenting Christmas gifts to our preschool staff.

Our journaling for the month of December is based on James 1:5: "If anyone lacks wisdom, [s]he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you." Journal about a person(s) in your life whom you ask for godly advice. Why can you count on their advice? Also, what is the best advice or words of wisdom you would give anyone who asks?

January 10 Meeting at 1pm

Our January speaker is from UOP's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI). She'll be sharing with us about the classes, events, and tours offered for the "over 50 crowd." Our project will be preparing Valentine gift bags for our preschool teachers and our home-bound church members. More details to follow.

Journal favorite memories from your recent holiday activities and any New Year's resolutions you've made. Our Bible verse is Proverbs 16:3: "Commit to the LORD whatever you do and your plans will succeed."

Hope you join us, and don't forget your mite boxes!

An Evening of Dessert and Romance



Women ages 10-100 only! Set a beautiful table and invite seven gals to join you for a chick flick and a little pampering. Find out about The Greeting Card Club, Jewelry Crafters, Dayle's Cookie Club, St. Andrews Strollers, and other groups—you're bound to find someone who has similar interests as you! Or call the office and we'll find a perfect seat for you and a ride if you like! (209) 957-8750 or Deb Johnson at (209) 481-1570.

This event only happens once every 17 years (so-far, anyway), so don't miss it! **Sunday, January 29, 5:30-7:30pm.**



Trunk or Treat

What an incredible time of sharing God's love...with decorations, costumes, and candy! On October 30 we had about 60 volunteers of all ages put on an incredible free community event. The Eisenbeisz and Deuel families transformed our empty lot into a wonderland with harvest decor and lights, while St. Andrews cars showcased themes from SpongeBob to Charlie Brown.

About 1,500 people walked through our campus that evening! Every child was greeted with a smile (and candy, of course), and parents were invited to bring their families to church.





Team Rahab was one of the first stops on the circuit, and our Stockton neighbors all learned of how Rahab can help in times of crisis.

Besides decorating, volunteers led games, cooked hot dogs, directed traffic and crosswalks, and ran around distributing candy reinforcements. Much of our candy was donated from congregation members. The incredibly-talented Jaime Eisenbeisz also created photo op stations for our visitors.

We are so encouraged that God used our little corner of Stockton to bless so many people. We look forward to next year!



Serving Stockton and Beyond

Rahab Comfort Dog



Rahab's Bible verse is Joshua 2:11: "When we heard of it, our hearts melted in fear and everyone's courage failed because of you, for the Lord your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below."

As we look at Advent, Christmas, and the new year, Team Rahab wants all of you to know that we are so appreciative of the love and kindness you have shown the team. We humbly serve those in need of mercy, compassion, presence, and proclamation of Jesus Christ in our community and Northern California. During our monthly meeting in November, we talked about 2023 and how we can grow as a team and continue to serve our congregation and community. Our devotional time helped set that goal and vision. What we do and how we live during our short time on Earth has eternal implications. The Holy Spirit invites us as Christians to join Him in His work, so what we say and do can affect everyone we come in contact with. *But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what*

lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Philippians 3:13b-14 ESV

Team Rahab participated in St. Andrews' Trunk or Treat event on Oct 30. Barbara Britton and Laura, Dustin, and Bobby Moore were the first to greet everyone who attended. Barbara sat on the mat for 3 hours letting the children (and adults) pet Rahab while she talked about the ministry. It was a "paw-some" evening, with over 1,000 people having a chance to meet Rahab. *Everything that God made is waiting with excitement for the time when God will show the world who his children are. The whole world wants very much for that to happen.* Romans 8:19 ICB



Top Dog Deb Rider, Rahab, and Pastor Dan attended a vigil in downtown Stockton for the victims of the shootings our city has recently endured. Thank you to all the law enforcement organizations for your hard work in apprehending the alleged shooter! The following evening, Deb and Rahab were invited to attend the Victims of Violent Crimes support group. Deb said it was emotionally difficult, yet it was an honor to be present and have the opportunity to listen, talk, and pray with families who have experienced the loss of a loved one due to violence. *"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God."* Matthew 5:9 ESV



Brianna Solis, Rahab, and Cathy Pauley attended the Madison Elementary School Harvest Festival, and Rahab had a chance to meet students she had not previously met during school visits. For the first time, she also met Madison parents, whose children have talked about Rahab visiting their classrooms. There were lots of pumpkins, scarecrows, and games. *Then [Jesus] said to His disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few."* Matthew 9:35 ESV

Teams Rahab, Micah, and Genesis had a great evening with Safe Trick or Treat at University of the Pacific. Children from all over the community came to the event and loved on the three Comfort Dogs. *"Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the Lord your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you."* Deuteronomy 31:6 ESV

Rahab has resumed her visits with St. Peter Lutheran School in Lodi. The children have embraced Rahab and the Comfort Dog program, praying for the teams and the dogs. She also met with the Newday Preschool children who sang at St. Andrews on October 23. The preschoolers really enjoyed petting and meeting her. *"Sing to him, sing praises to him; tell of all his wondrous works!"* 1 Chronicles 16:9 ESV

We hope and pray everyone had a blessed Thanksgiving with family and friends. Again, we are thankful for all of you! Happy Christmas and Merry New Year 2023!! *And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.* Colossians 3:15 ESV



Good Shepherd Christmas Play

Please join Good Shepherd Family Ministry on **Saturday, December 10 at 12:15pm** for their annual Christmas Nativity Play. A tamale lunch follows. RSVP is not required, but helpful for the lunch. Call or text Jennifer (209-298-5532), John (209-298-5523), or Cathy (915-479-1060). We also want to thank Anicia Hibdon for her labor of love sewing 30 costumes!



Family Promise

As we look forward to Family Promise in the New Year, we are still waiting to see what our assigned dates/rotations will be for 2023. Please continue to be in prayer for Family Promise, our involvement with them, and the mission as a whole. *We will be having a meeting for all volunteers during the month of January to reassess, revitalize, and to continue in prayer.* A huge thank-you to all of our volunteers for their continued support. You're being Jesus' hands and feet!

Business Updates

Courtyard Plans

The Council has adjusted our plans in keeping with the original scope of the project and staying within the funds raised by the congregation. We should be signing contracts in the next couple weeks and hope to see the project begin breaking ground in the near future (dependent upon contractor's schedule, of course). Thanks again for your generosity and patience in this process! Feel free to ask a staff member or council member for more information.

Children's Ministry

Thank you for your faithful prayers for God's leading in our search for a DCE. Over the past 13 months the call committee has prayed, met, contacted DCEs, and interviewed a number of candidates, even offering a call to someone in the early spring of 2022. (She declined the call.)

But as time has passed, it has become clear that because of the dramatic rise in cost of living in such short a time period, St. Andrews is unable to reach salary guidelines to hire a DCE and meet guidelines for current staff. Eliminating current staff members is not being considered at this time, thus the Council and staff's next step will be looking at which elements of a DCE's role are important for the life of our church and then probably hiring congregational members to do those things part-time. We believe St. Andrews still has very generous givers; we've just gotten outpaced by skyrocketing costs.

How can you help? Be praying for workers for the harvest. We've got wonderful opportunities to connect to the families of our preschool. Each of you have connections to people in our community that are opportunities to share the Gospel. And feel free to volunteer and help out when we are doing ministry for families and children. St. Andrews is going to continue to be a light to this community for this and following generations.

If you have more questions about this, feel free to reach out to anyone on the Mission and Ministry Council, the Call Committee, or Pastor Dan.

Congregational Meeting

Members are invited to vote on a solar proposal. Please join us between at **9:45am on Sunday, December 18**. To learn more about this proposal beforehand, please email Craig Santos at santosdcraig@gmail.com.

Newday Preschool

November was another busy month here at Newday! We focused on being thankful for God, our family, and friends. We enjoyed our Thanksgiving parties, talking about all we have to be thankful for. The children made turkey sandwiches, had pumpkin pie, and played "Pin the Feather on the Turkey." The Newday staff enjoyed a delicious Thanksgiving feast thanks to Pam. We were so thankful for the good food and fellowship.

December is here! We have been working hard and practicing for our Pre-K Christmas program. We will have pajama day, Christmas shirt day, and our Christmas parties. Kids Care Dental will be here to teach the children about dental hygiene.

We are excited to celebrate the reason for the season: Jesus! All of us at Newday Preschool would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. May God continue to bless us with good health, love, and happiness.

If you are looking for a school that helps children grow spiritually, socially, emotionally, academically, and physically, call our preschool director Marla Rivas at (209) 957-4089 or email newday@stalc.org.



Sharing with the Needy



People come to the office several times a week asking for food, so our food pantry really is a valuable ministry.

In December, we're collecting *canned meat/fish, such as tuna, chicken, Spam, and Vienna sausages*. (Pop-top lids are best, but regular cans are fine too.) In January, we'll be looking for *jars of peanut butter*.

Look for the donation wagon in the Fellowship Hall, and thank you for your kindness!

Thank you for your generous shopping and donations! You packed 88 Operation Christmas Child boxes that are now being sent off to share the love of Jesus around the world. What a blessing!

