





St. Matthew's Family,

I pray that all of you are having an enjoyable summer filled with God's blessings, but I imagine that many are looking forward to cooler autumn weather as well! Before turning to our upcoming program year of church activities, it is important to recognize the great deal of work that has taken place at St. Matthew's during these past few months. Much of it isn't glamorous or even noticeable unless pointed out, but it is needful to keep our parish healthy, sound, and prepared for our future. Let me offer a sampling of what has taken place: installation of a new gas range in the kitchen, repairs made to the ductwork throughout the church, repairs to the roof of the modular unit, floors and carpets cleaned/waxed, expansion of the preschool playground with new fencing and equipment, lighting replaced in much of the office area, new furniture in the conference room, annual audit, updated parish bylaws, preparations for confirmation program, photo directory, and on the list continues. Many thanks to all of those who made these 'behind the scenes' actions possible!

At the end of this month, we will bless our students and teachers for the upcoming school year on Sunday, August 28th. Please do keep them in your prayers throughout the academic year. The program year officially kicks off on Sunday, September 11th, with the return of full music during the services and of our educational opportunities for youth. This includes the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd for ages three through 5th grade, and we will once again use the Weaving God's Promises course for middle schoolers in 6th to 8th grades.

On Saturday, September 17th, St. Matthew's will be hosting a deanery-wide youth event. Please let me know if you'd like to help during that occasion. On the following day, we will celebrate St. Matthew's Day, details of which can be found elsewhere in this newsletter. On Sunday, October 2nd, we will conduct our annual Blessing of the Animals at 4 pm, and on Saturday, October 8th, we will hold a newcomer event at 5 pm. Further details will follow in the weekly bulletins and during announcements. In addition, on Sunday, October 16th, we will come together on Consecration Sunday to offer our gratitude to God with our yearly commitment of pledging, and that day will also include a festive coffee hour in celebration of our common life together.

On the second Saturday of each month, we will continue to hold the Men's Breakfast at 8 am, beginning on September 10th. On the third Saturday of each month, we will host The Society of the Companions of the Holy Cross, of which several women in our parish are faithful members. On the fourth Saturday of each month, we are thankful for the opportunity to host Project Roadmap, a community-based networking and life-skill program presented by the Horsham Interfaith Coalition. Each month a different topic is covered such as finding and utilizing community resources, addictions and mental wellness, credit repair, and career readiness training. We would like to offer a light breakfast (similar to coffee hour) for those attending each month at 8:45 am. Please let me know if you are willing to help.

As I have started to announce on Sundays, we will also begin our confirmation program this fall. Families with youth eligible to enter the confirmation process have been contacted, but, if your child has been inadvertently missed in that communication, please contact the church office. Adults who have never been, and would like to be, confirmed by the bishop when he conducts his visitation at St. Matthew's next year, please contact me. On one Sunday each month during the 9 am service, I will meet with the confirmands to discuss the essential basics of the Christian Faith in our Anglican tradition. The dates are 9/25, 10/23, 11/13, 12/18, 1/22, 2/26.

I am also glad to share that Fr. Dave Robinson will continue to help lead in worship two Sundays each month. So many of you have expressed thanks that he has been able be a part of our church family once again, and I certainly appreciate his willingness to do so as well!

First and foremost, thanks be to God, but also thanks to your dedication to this parish family, St. Matthew's is blessed and vibrant in so many ways. May this upcoming program year be an opportunity for us to draw closer to Jesus Christ, to one another, and to welcome those who 'come and see' our church. Prayerfully consider how you will be a part of this; through worship and prayer, through actively participating, through offerings, through invitations to friends and neighbors, through your time and talents. There are many ways to help build up the body of Christ at St. Matthew's, and we are grateful for all that you do for this sacred place.

With Love in Christ, \_



## AUTUVINAL HAPPENINGS

#### SEPTEMBER

SUN. SEPT. 11: **Program Year Start**Join us for worship, learning, and fellowship each week

SAT. SEPT. 17: **Deanery Youth Event**A festive gathering of youth throughout our community

SUN. SEPT. 18: **St. Matthew's Day** 11:30 AM on the Parish Grounds Celebrate our community with music, food, and fun!

#### **OCTOBER**

SUN. OCT. 2: Blessing of Animals 4:00 PM on the Parish Grounds

SAT. OCT. 8: Newcomer Welcome, Dinner 5:00 PM in the Sanctuary, and Parish Hall.

SUN. OCT. 16: Consecration Sunday

SAT. OCT. 29: Trunk or Treat

3:30 Setup, 4:00 PM Service, 4:15 Trunks.

## NOVEMBER

SUN. NOV. 13: **Annual Meeting** 9:45 AM in the Parish Hall

SUN. NOV. 27: **Advent Begins** 10:00 AM Parish Advent Event in the Parish Hall

# ONGOING OPPORTUNITIES



WEEKLY **Rite I Spoken** 7:45 AM in the Sanctuary

WEEKLY **Rite II Contemporary Music** 9:00 AM in the Sanctuary

WEEKLY **CGS Sunday School** 9:00 AM in the Modular *Atria Toddler - Elementary* 

WEEKLY **WGP Sunday School** 9:00 AM in the Conf. Room *Middle School* 

MONTHLY **Confirmation Class** 9:00 AM on 9/25, 10/23, 11/13. *Please ask Fr. Rodney for details.* 

WEEKLY **Coffee Hour** 10:00 AM in the Parish Hall

WEEKLY **Rite II Choral, Organ** 10:30 AM in the Sanctuary



### MONDAYS

1st and 3rd **Bible Study** 7:00 PM on Zoom. See details below.

#### TUESDAYS

WEEKLY **Prayer and Share**7:30 PM on Zoom. See details below.

### WEDNESDAYS

WEEKLY Holy Eucharist, Healing Prayer at Noon in the Sanctuary.

#### THURSDAYS

WEEKLY Morning Prayer (BCP)
9:00 AM on Zoom. See details below.

#### SATURDAYS

MONTHLY Men's Breakfast 8:00 AM on 10/8 and 11/12

MONTHLY Project Roadmap 8:45 AM on 9/24, 10/29, and 11/26

MONTHLY Society of the Companions of the Holy Cross 9:00 AM on 9/24, 10/15, and 11/19





Many of us are familiar with handling or being subject to unexpected property issues at our residences. Most of the time, these projects are not inspiring but handling them is necessary for ensuring the health and safety of our households. Thankfully, there are always those other projects we choose to undertake because their implementation enhances our lives. The church is no different! There have been many projects in both categories taken on at St. Matthew's this season:

#### **Unexpected but Critical:**

- Duct Work: Ducts for heating and cooling the church run beneath the sanctuary. In 2020, we
  discovered that the duct linings were flaking. We commissioned an analysis of the ducts to
  understand what was going on. Footage from a flexible camera showed that the issue was
  excess moisture accumulation, due to the duct's underground location. The moisture caused
  protective coatings to flake off into the ducts, allowing rust to form. The necessary resolution
  was complicated, requiring all the ducts to be thoroughly cleaned and resealed with a new
  protective coating.
- Modular Roof: The tornado in September 2021 caused interior and exterior damage to the modular roof. The church contracted a roofing company to remedy the damage, which was finally completed in early August (yes, it took until this Summer to complete the necessary repairs!)
- Water Backflow Assembly: Horsham Water & Sewer now requires a specific backflow
  assembly on water lines coming into facilities like ours. While the church's sprinkler system
  already had the correct assembly installed, its main water line did not. Integrating the newly
  required hardware necessitated that we turn off all water coming into the building. This was
  only possible after the Nursery School was out of session this June.
- Nursery School: To meet state licensing standards for its youngest students (2 ½-year-olds),
  the school needed to upgrade its playground. The regulation required installing new fencing
  and integrating a new play surface. We also plan to create a new classroom out of the former
  choir room, which involves the installation of a new door.

#### **Upgrades and Enhancements:**

- **Kitchen:** In the spring of 2022, we replaced a 30-year-old, inefficient stove with a new gas range. The upgraded appliance features six burners, two ovens, and a flat top griddle.
- Electrical Work: We have upgraded the exterior soffit lighting at both entrances of the church, which now features LED bulbs for increased reliability and efficiency. We have also installed new ceiling lights in the conference room and office spaces. Finally, we added the keyless door access system to the generator's power supply so that the system remains powered during an outage.

What haven't we completed yet? We had to defer several projects this year because of the unforeseen duct work issue, including: replacing the carpets, painting all NS classrooms, updating the NS kitchen, and exterior painting. We anticipate that we will complete these projects in 2023.



Revenues and Expenses: We are more than halfway through the year, and I am happy to report that YTD operating results are \$20K better than plan (though this may partly be the result of collections received earlier in the year than were budgeted). I am also very pleased to tell you that, for the third year in a row, we have received a substantial federal COVID-relief payment (\$50K this year). In total, this brings us almost \$70K above plan this year to date.

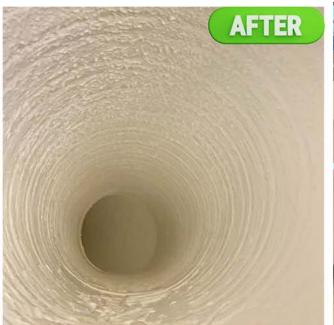
Cash and Investments: As many of you know, it has been a difficult and volatile year for investments. While our portfolio has performed better than the overall market, its value still decreased by almost \$100K. Additionally, we have spent another \$40K on capital improvements as of this writing. Despite these events, our total Cash and Investments remain over \$1.1M, down from last year by only about \$60K.

**Challenges and Opportunities Ahead:** This is all good news, but there is more that we need to consider as we look to the future:

- As described in this Oracle, we have had many necessary property projects to complete this year. As our facilities age, we can only expect such spending to increase.
- Over three years, we have received COVID-relief funds totaling \$230K. These funds paid for capital projects, covered operating losses, and bolstered our savings. We cannot expect any more funding and will need to plan accordingly.
- Finally, St. Matthews does many good things, but the church is called to do much more.
   Balancing this calling with our resources will be an ongoing topic of discussion and discernment in the future.

To summarize, we are having a good financial year and continue to retain significant reserves. These factors are helpful as we consider the opportunities and challenges ahead.











# MEASURE TWICE CUT ONCE

Written by Anthony Carrella, Director of Communications

MAPLE GLEN, PA | Unless you consider his seventh-grade woodshop experience, Fr. Dave Robinson didn't know much about carpentry until a few years ago. Sure, small projects might pop up in his home from time to time, but Dave was not known to himself or others to be a woodworker — he was St. Matthew's beloved guitarist-priest on the path to retirement. All of this changed soon after Dave departed St. Matthew's in 2019. While fixing-up an area in his basement, Dave thought of constructing a simple, handmade shelf for his utility room. With freshly cut pine boards and pencil in hand, Dave got to work marking, cutting, sanding, and staining the resin-scented lumber. In the end, the finished creation wasn't the best thing he'd ever made, but it was an actual, functioning shelf. Something to be proud of.

After briefly sharing this recent accomplishment with his daughter on a phone call, Dave would receive a message from her later. . . requesting shelves! Four of them! Again, Dave got to work, sourcing a few quality pine boards before making the first cuts at his workbench in the garage. This time, the new shelves turned out 'fairly well,' and the finished pieces attracted even more woodworking requests! Family and friends reached out with their ideas, and Dave worked hard at them. This was around the time when Dave started noticing something positive emerging as the result of an ongoing carpentry practice; his cuts were getting cleaner, his stains were being applied more sensitively, and none of his fingers had been lost! Dave began deeply enjoying the 'satisfaction of taking a raw piece of wood and transforming it into something beautiful or functional.'

This past spring, another woodworking request popped up for Dave, this time, from St. Matthew's. The church commissioned four wooden tables for the conference room, which now happens to be located at the site of the former Rector's office. Dave explains:

"Once I knew the size . . . the width, height, length. . . I started designing the set. I sat down, drawing simple sketches of tables that fit within the measurements. Then I estimated how many linear feet of lumber the project would require and where I could source the wood at a easonable cost (in this case, cherrywood). When I found the right materials, I prepared a report of estimated costs, and finalized the design, delivering these to Rodney and the Vestry. I got to work soon after the plan and budget (I did not charge for my labor) were approved. Creating the

tables began by taking cherrywood planks and preparing them for gluing. Then, I brought these together as seamlessly as possible to create the top before working on the legs. For those, I glued up a few boards until I got a nice, thick support. Next, I figured out how I would join the tabletop to the legs before the finishing process began. That's when I sanded and chose a stain." The finished tables were installed in July, and they look (and smell!) wonderful.

Mistakes? They happen too, Dave says. 'Everyone makes mistakes when working with wood, but the key is to learn from them.' Remaining optimistic and patient throughout the woodworking process can be a particular difficulty, Dave shares. 'Just learning to be patient and to take your time with things is vital because if you rush, well, that doesn't always end the way we want. Being very careful — having a carefulness about what you do and not being hasty — it avoids many errors. Like relationships, there is an opportunity in carpentry to learn how to be more patient and thoughtful and accept imperfections. The whole theme of this, of course, is the theme of forgiveness. I guess, in a way, whether it's forgiving yourself or forgiving others, things do get messed up and aren't always perfect, and, learning to be gracious about that reality . . . that's sort of a mindset I think woodworking reinforces. Each day can be like a meditation.'

Dave encourages those interested in woodworking to search YouTube for videos on building your desired object using inexpensive wood (like construction pine) and simple techniques. Dave also adds it helps if you know or can approach someone who already builds furniture or works with wood. Reach out to them and ask for tips.





The Nursery School will open its doors on Monday, September 12th, and will celebrate its 30th year in the community!

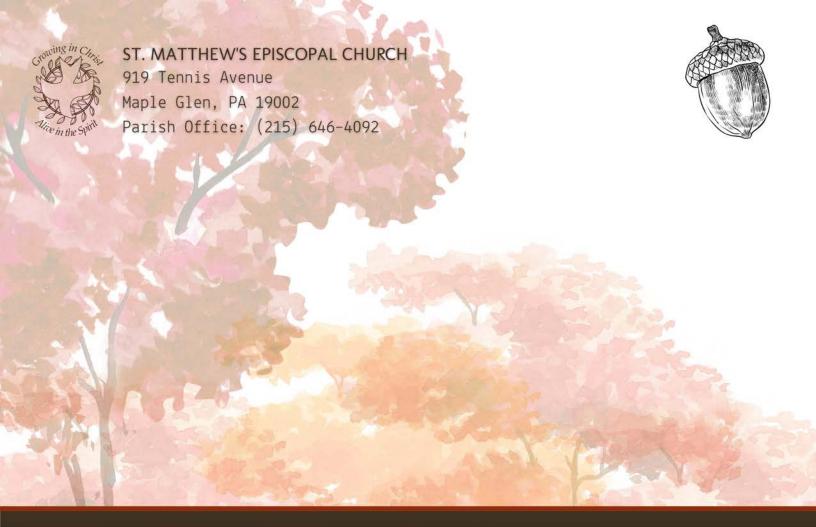
The 2 ½-year-old classes will begin with a visiting day, where a child's Mom or Dad comes to school and stays to play and visit with their teacher and aide. The 3-year-old classes will begin with a short session where half of the class arrives by themselves and remains for an hour, followed by the other half for the same amount of time. The 3-day, 4-day, and 5-day Pre-K classes begin with a typical full day of school. By the second or third day of school, almost all children are settled, happy, and ready for fun and learning!

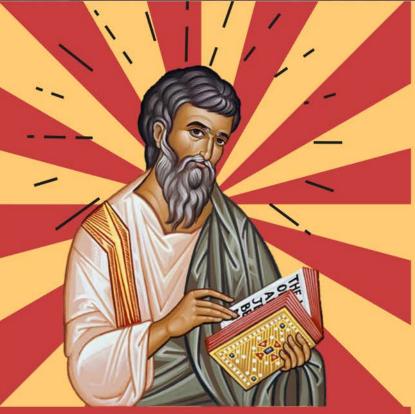
The Nursery School continues to move forward in becoming a licensed facility by the Department of Human Services. Over the Summer, enhancements have been made to our facility to meet DHS guidelines, including adding a new section to the playground that features a grass surface for the 2 1/2-year-old children. Also, the rear portion of the playground was bumped out, and woodchips were laid. One of the most important differences in being licensed will be the size of our classes. DHS currently requires 40 square feet of space per child. In the past, we have had to exceed this density requirement. We are now utilizing the previously designated choir area for classroom space to prevent this issue.

Please also join me in welcoming our new Gym teachers, Jocelyn and Barry Weidner, to the Nursery School Staff! Barry and Jocelyn's three children, Emma, Brady, and Sam, have attended our school in the past. One of our teacher's assistants, Mrs. Eliana Dietrich, will now teach our 3-year-old classes on MWF and T-TH. Eliana is a St. Matthew's parishioner and has a daughter Lainey in our 4-day pre-k class. The Nursery School children will again participate in Chapel with Father Rodney, Music with Mrs. Martha Reynolds, and Gym with Mr. and Mrs. Weidner. Enrichment classes are held weekly for children in the 4-year-old classes. They include Mathemagic, Science, STEAM, Kreative Kids, Reading, Writing, and Fun. The 3-year-old classes can participate in Kids in Motion, Sensational Art, and STEAM. Children will also enjoy our school's seasonal programs with the Horsham Fire Company, Horsham Police Department, Goldfish Swim School, and What Knott Farm. The 3 and 4-year-old classes will visit several different places in the community for field trips. The first field trip of the school year will be in October as the classes visit Kohler Farms for a hayride and pumpkin picking. The school will also partner with the church in a Trunk or Treat on October 29th.

Finally, there are still a few openings in our afternoon pre- k and 2 1/2's T-TH classes. If you have friends or family looking for a nursery school. Please call or email the school with any questions at (215) 646 - 4466 or nurseryschool@saintmattsec.org

Jackie





ST. MATTHEW'S DAY LIVE MUSIC, FOOD & MORE Celebrate our patron saint and common life together with friends and families on Sunday, September 18th from 11:30 AM to 2 PM.

Donations of \$10/person (max \$35/family) are accepted. Pay via Venmo or Tithe.ly when you RSVP, or cash/check in the narthex.

SCAN TO RSVP, SIGN UP IN THE NARTHEX or GO TO:

tinyurl.com/RSVP-StMatthewsDay-23



