

# St. Matthew's Episcopal Church Annual Report '22

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SUN. NOVEMBER 13, 2022

9:45 AM

PREPARED BY THE

Clergy, Staff, Vestry, and Volunteers of St. Matthew's

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ST MATTHEW'S  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
919 TENNIS AVENUE  
MAPLE GLEN, PA, 19002

## *Pray For the Parish*

Almighty and everliving God, ruler of all things in heaven and earth, hear our prayers for this parish family. Strengthen the faithful, arouse the careless, and restore the penitent. Grant us all things necessary for our common life, and bring us all to be of one heart and mind within your holy Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

# Meeting Agenda

1. Meeting is Called to Order
2. Review and Approve the **2022 Agenda**
3. Review and Approve the **2021 Meeting Minutes**
4. Elect Members of Vestry, Diocesan Delegates
5. Reading of the **2022 Annual Report**

## Report Contents

- **Rector's Report**
- **Treasurer's Report**
- **Parish Manager's Reports**
- **Communications Director's Report**
- **Nursery School Director's Report**
- **Program Ministry Reports**

6. Public Forum and Questions
7. Meeting is Adjourned.

# Minutes of the 2021 Annual Meeting

Respectfully submitted by Dorothea Graham, November 2021

The meeting was called to order at 10:50 by the Rev. Rodney Roehner.

AGENDA | Treva McLaughlin moved to accept the Agenda for this Annual Meeting, and it was seconded by Karen Randall. It was unanimously accepted by those present.

MINUTES | The minutes from the November 15, 2020 meeting were presented. A motion to accept the minutes as written was given by Pat John and seconded by Mary Anne Noon. They were unanimously accepted by those present.

ELECTION OF VESTRY/DEANERY AND CONVENTION DELEGATES: Fr. Rodney presented the slate for the Election of the Vestry and the Election of the Deanery/Convention Delegates. Nominations for the Vestry for a three-year term beginning in January, 2022 are:

- David Brock
- Antonia Greene-Edwards
- Jim Garrison

A motion to accept the slate was presented by Tim Walsh. It was seconded by Jane Baker. It was unanimously accepted by those present.

Nominations for the Deanery and Convention Delegates for the year 2022 are:

- Connie Dee
- Pam Dunlap
- Jeanne Garrison

Alternates are:

- George Bishop
- Judy Groben

A motion to accept the slate was presented by Karen Randall. It was seconded by Cathy Haas. It was unanimously accepted.

RECTOR REPORT: Rev. Rodney Roehner thanked the retiring Vestry members for their hard work during this unusually difficult year, Tim Walsh, Karen Randall and Chris Suhy. He also gave special thanks to those members who worked so hard to keep things going this year, including Carolyn Bedics, Joe Buesgen, Anthony Carrella, the Vestry, the team of three Altar Guild, Jackie Anderson, the Nursery School Director and musicians from Arise and the Choir. Fr. Rodney is encouraged by the bond forming with the nursery school team. St. Matthew's has had an increase in membership and average Sunday attendance is returning at a higher rate than most other churches. Prior to the Pandemic the average Sunday attendance was as high as 181. We currently have an average attendance of 125 – 135. Currently, many parishes are experiencing only a return of about 1/3 of their membership.

Though some members have not physically returned, they are still contributing with pledges and interactions other than in-house. The largest group, who have not returned, churchwide, is young families.

Fr. Rodney's complete report is included in the Annual Report. Fr. Rodney stated that we need to focus on the "Front Door" and not look back at what we used to have. Fr. Rodney opened the floor for questions. Bill Graham asked if there was a way to track Live Stream attendance. Fr. Rodney said that an accurate read of that is not possible from Facebook. Many are watching Live Stream at times other than live on a Sunday morning.

John McLaughlin stated he was glad Fr. Dave has returned and wished Fr. Rodney to speak to that new relationship. Fr. Rodney is not threatened by having a past rector here and feels we need to have "all hands on deck". Fr. Rodney has asked Fr. Dave to be with us every other week. Originally it was to be until the end of 2021, but he has now extended that request into 2022.

Jim Garrison asked when the Lay Eucharistic ministry will resume. The Pastoral ministry team has just begun visiting. It is believed that the Bishop may allow the chalice to return by Christmas.

Bill Graham asked Fr. Rodney what his goal is for this year. Fr. Rodney sees our church as a Spiritual Hospital. He wants it to be known as a place where anyone can come and be healed or ministered to. He would like to spread that message. He spoke to the fact that the church is the people, and he feels our church is very welcoming. He was very grateful for the welcome he and his family received when they came last December. Fr. Rodney wanted everyone to know how important the church membership is - it is the "Life Blood" of the church. He is looking forward to wonderful things ahead. Increased Fellowship opportunities is a priority.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Karen Randall has included her full report in the printed Annual Report.

She mentioned that our interim minister was very gracious and only accepted a minimal stipend from us along with his pension, while he was with us. That helped our finances and reduced the budgeted amount for salaries. St. Matthew's has received two PPP ( Payroll Protection Program ) loans within this year for \$90,400 each. Both were used against salaries and both have been fully forgiven. Extra moneys were moved to the Endowment account. The Nursery school is coming back and is about breaking even now.

With the pandemic there were fewer students enrolled, but salaries and expenses remained.

A motion to accept the treasurer's report was made by Kevin Randall and seconded by John McLaughlin. All in attendance were in favor.

SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT: Chris Suhy's report is in the Annual Report. He is grateful for the time he has spent as the Rector's Warden.

PEOPLE'S WARDEN: Bill Reynold's report is in the Annual Report. Many upgrades and repairs were completed this year.

ALL REPORTS WERE FILED IN THE REPORT BY TITLE.

OPEN TO ALL : No one had any more comments

Karen Sawyer made a motion to adjourn this meeting. It was seconded by Jane Baker. It was approved unanimously.

Go Forth in Peace, to Love and Serve the Lord.

Respectfully submitted,

**Dorothea Graham**

# *Election of* **Vestry Members *and* Delegates**

Our grateful and heartfelt thanks extend to those members who are now transitioning off the Vestry; **Marie Clark, Mary Anne Noon, and Bill Reynolds.**

Nominations for **Vestry** for a three-year term beginning Jan. 1, 2023, are:

Jon Clark

Trent Coombs

Pam Dunlap

Nominations for **Deanery and Diocesan Convention Delegates** in 2023, are:

George Bishop

Jeanne Garrison

Judy Groben

**Alternate delegates** include:

Pam Dunlap

# *the* Annual Report

November 2022

# *From the Rector*

Rev. Rodney Roehner

“In your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect.”

1 Peter 3:15

St. Matthew's Family,

During a recent funeral of a parishioner known for her joyfulness, I began my sermon with a quote that I keep at hand in my desk drawer. It reads, “There is much that is wrong with our Christian witness, but the thing that is most wrong is the absence of joy.” To be clear, ‘joy’ doesn’t mean walking around with a perpetual smile on our faces. Rather, referring to the aforementioned verse from St. Peter, it is to so live our lives in gratitude for all that Christ has and continues to do for us and those we love, that our faith cannot help but visibly pour out through how we live this precious gift of life. And, with kindness and respectfulness, may we always be ready to give a reason for the hope and joy that we have in Jesus Christ.

It is remarkable to reflect upon how far St. Matthew's has come since mid-2020. Yet week by week and day after day, our joy in the Lord has strengthened us to make a bold resurgence. May the Spirit continually give us the courage and guidance, as a parish family, to exhibit the hope and joy that is in us. And be assured that people are noticing our witness throughout this community and the diocese.

There is much useful information to be found throughout this annual report that shares the vibrancy of our ministries. I would like to focus this space on highlighting aspects of where we are as a congregation.

**Numbers** On October 8th, we held a newcomer event to which 62 individuals (45 adults and 17 youth) were invited. These included new members since 2019, people who are considering St. Matthew's as their church home, and frequent visitors. It was a meaningful time of worship and fellowship during which several newcomers shared how welcome they feel in this parish. During the (almost) two years that I've been at St. Matthew's, we've conducted 25 baptisms, but I have also done 27 funerals.

With regard to Sunday attendance, it helps to consider the larger picture. In 2019, our ASA (average Sunday attendance) was 180 people. Calculating numbers for 2020 included only the months of January and February, during which our ASA was 136. The remainder of 2020 is difficult to gauge due to pandemic restrictions, but on weekends when in-person worship was permitted, the numbers plummeted to the 20s.

During 2021, we bounced back to 91, and as of the end of October 2022, our ASA is now at 122 people. Yes, that is 1/3 less people than 2019, but considering that most of the other churches in the diocese are down 50-60% of their pre-COVID numbers, we have made a significant return. We must also factor into this equation those who watch the services via livestream.

Financially, we have fared well through the pandemic, but we need to increase our level of income to effectively carry out our ministry moving forward. The Treasurer's report will go into more detail about the specifics, but it's worthy to note a few points. Our operations have benefited from three continuous years of financial assistance from government programs, but there is no reason to expect that will continue in 2023. Additionally, although we have seen excellent trends in our pledged giving, with over 30 pledging units showing increases, those gains were mitigated by parishioners who have moved away or have died.

**Outreach** Our outreach efforts have expanded, but this is a ministry on which we will dedicate even more effort moving forward. Operation Bear Hug was a wonderful success once again. We had our largest collection to date for the Mwamba Foundation, which provides scholarships for students in Kitale, Kenya. Our relationship with St. James School continued with financial support and sponsorship of their science classes. RIP Medical Debt was our main effort during the Lenten season, and we recently concluded collecting offerings for Hurricane Ian relief in Southwest Florida. A few of our ministries also deal with food assistance: Feed the Hungry, Mattie Dixon Community Cupboard in Ambler, and our newest addition, the much used Little Pantry on our church grounds. I would like to form a committee that spearheads our outreach ministry efforts. If you are interested, please contact me.

**Fellowship** Opportunities to come together as a parish family have continued to increase, and these events have been well received. Coffee Hour has become a festive weekly gathering drawing many parishioners for a time of food and conversation. Other events during the past year have included the wonderful feast following my institution as the rector, the Spring Event, Walk to Jerusalem, the Deanery Youth event, St. Matthew's Day, and the newcomer event. Vacation Bible School had a solid group of volunteers, and it was good to see the Middle School Summer Service Camp return, with our youth spending quality time together. We also continue to seek ways to further strengthen our relationship and engagement with the preschool and its families.

May our joy and hope in Jesus Christ continue to pervade all that we do as the family of St. Matthew's.

*Updated Parish Bylaws*  
**[bit.ly/SMEC-Bylaws](https://bit.ly/SMEC-Bylaws)**

Vestry of St. Matthew's

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rodney" followed by a small cross symbol.

# From the Treasurer

Mr. Jim Garrison

## Operations Income Statement Summary

as of September 30, 2022

	2021	2022	September 2022 YTD		
		Annual	Actual Over		
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	(Under) Budget
<b>PreSchool:</b>					
Tuition and Fees	\$ 336,338	\$ 345,375	\$ 253,565	\$ 237,404	\$ 16,161
Transfer From Savings		4,500			
Total Income	<u>336,338</u>	<u>349,875</u>	<u>253,565</u>	<u>237,404</u>	<u>16,161</u>
Staff Expense	(279,042)	(262,214)	(184,890)	(184,674)	216
Other Expense	(85,355)	(87,625)	(66,264)	(60,515)	5,749
Total Expense	<u>(364,397)</u>	<u>(349,839)</u>	<u>(251,154)</u>	<u>(245,189)</u>	<u>5,966</u>
Net Inc. (Exp)	<u>\$ (28,059)</u>	<u>\$ 36</u>	<u>\$ 2,410</u>	<u>\$ (7,785)</u>	<u>\$ 10,195</u>
<b>Church Operations:</b>					
Pledge and Plate Receipts	\$ 369,614	\$ 340,000	\$ 267,535	\$ 255,000	\$ 12,535
Other Income	90,194	94,000	75,241	70,050	5,191
Transfer From Savings	-	9,000	-	-	-
Total Income	<u>459,808</u>	<u>443,000</u>	<u>342,776</u>	<u>325,050</u>	<u>17,726</u>
Staff Expense	(272,528)	(282,524)	(212,973)	(215,979)	(3,005)
Property Expense	(84,758)	(83,900)	(73,460)	(62,992)	10,468
Other Expense	(71,908)	(76,414)	(64,510)	(61,530)	2,980
Total Expense	<u>(429,193)</u>	<u>(442,838)</u>	<u>(350,943)</u>	<u>(340,501)</u>	<u>10,442</u>
Net Inc. (Exp)	<u>\$ 30,614</u>	<u>\$ 162</u>	<u>\$ (8,167)</u>	<u>\$ (15,451)</u>	<u>\$ 7,284</u>
<b>PreSchool &amp; Church Net Inc. (Exp.)</b>	<u>\$ 2,555</u>	<u>\$ 198</u>	<u>\$ (5,757)</u>	<u>\$ (23,236)</u>	<u>\$ 17,479</u>
<b>COVID-Relief Funds</b>	<u>\$ 90,440</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 49,056</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 49,056</u>
<b>Total Net Inc. (Exp)</b>	<u>\$ 92,995</u>	<u>\$ 198</u>	<u>\$ 43,300</u>	<u>\$ (23,236)</u>	<u>\$ 66,536</u>
Capital Spending (from investments)	<u>\$ (40,390)</u>	<u>\$ (41,910)</u>	<u>\$ (39,398)</u>		
<b>Total Cash Flow</b>	<u>\$ 52,605</u>	<u>\$ (41,712)</u>	<u>\$ 3,902</u>		

# Cash and Investment Summaries

**BALANCES** as of September 30, 2022

## WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS

BANK ACCOUNTS  
**\$79,570**

MONEY MARKET  
**\$160,187**

INVESTMENTS  
**\$712,615**

## WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONS

BANK ACCOUNTS  
**\$48,232**

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INVESTMENTS  
**\$6,084**

GRAND TOTAL

**\$1,006,688**

**INVESTMENT DETAIL** as of September 30, 2022

VANGUARD BALANCED INDEX FUND  
**\$293,530**

VANGUARD WELLINGTON FUND  
**\$368,191**

T. ROWE PRICE – US TREASURY FUND  
**\$50,895**

T. ROWE PRICE DIVIDEND GROWTH YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP  
**\$6,084**

TOTALS

**\$712,615** without donor restrictions.

**\$6,084** with donor restrictions.

## CAPITAL SPENDING DETAIL as of September 30, 2022

REPLACE LEDS AND ENHANCE GENERATOR  
**\$6,070**

CLEAN AND RESEAL DUCTWORK, SANCTUARY  
**\$26,170**

REPLACE STOVE, PARISH KITCHEN  
**\$3,858**

FENCING FOR PLAYGROUND (PORTION)  
**\$3,300**

**TOTAL**  
**\$39,398**

## Cash and Investment Balance Activity

as of September 30, 2022

	Without Donor Restrictions				With Donor Restrictions			Grand Total
	Bank Accounts	Money Market	Investments	Total	Bank Accounts	Investments	Total	
<b>Balances - December 31, 2021</b>	\$ 205,478	\$ 157,654	\$ 760,169	\$ 1,123,301	\$ 38,292	\$ 7,506	\$ 45,798	\$ 1,169,099
<b>Activity Jan 01 - Sept 30, 2022:</b>								
Collections and Contributions	645,397			645,397	13,730		13,730	659,127
Expenses and Capital Spending	(602,097)	(39,398)		(641,495)	(3,790)		(3,790)	(645,285)
Transfers In (Out)	(172,056)	41,056	131,000	-			-	-
Increase (Decrease) in Liabilities	2,848			2,848			-	2,848
Interest & Dividends		875		875			-	875
Investments Gains (Losses)			(178,554)	(178,554)		(1,422)	(1,422)	(179,977)
<b>Net Increase (Decrease)</b>	<b>(125,908)</b>	<b>2,533</b>	<b>(47,554)</b>	<b>(170,930)</b>	<b>9,940</b>	<b>(1,422)</b>	<b>8,518</b>	<b>(162,412)</b>
<b>Balances - September 30, 2022</b>	<b>\$ 79,570</b>	<b>\$ 160,187</b>	<b>\$ 712,615</b>	<b>\$ 952,372</b>	<b>\$ 48,232</b>	<b>\$ 6,084</b>	<b>\$ 54,316</b>	<b>\$ 1,006,688</b>

# From the Parish Manager

Ms. Carolyn Bedics

## Stewardship Report

Year	# of Pledges	Total \$ Pledged	Annual Avg. per Household	Weekly Avg. per Household	Actual Pledge \$ Received
2011	166	\$377,795	\$2,276	\$43.77	\$369,867
2012	170	\$379,923	\$2,235	\$42.98	\$373,605
2013	166	\$364,670	\$2,197	\$42.25	\$344,180
2014	165	\$358,854	\$2,175	\$41.82	\$351,852
2015	151	\$356,411	\$2,360	\$45.39	\$347,668
2016	157	\$362,092	\$2,306	\$44.35	\$372,146
2017	165	\$383,419	\$2,324	\$44.69	\$386,940
2018	148	\$362,576	\$2,450	\$47.11	\$354,054
2019	140	\$342,873	\$2,449	\$47.10	\$333,594
2020	119	\$297,124	\$2,497	\$48.02	\$300,304
2021	108	\$318,662	\$2,951	\$56.74	\$331,946
2022	108	\$310,210	\$2,872	\$55.24	\$267,455

as of 11/9/22



**Pledged Giving 2023**

as of Nov. 9th, 2022

**99 Pledges Received**

**\$289,274 Total**

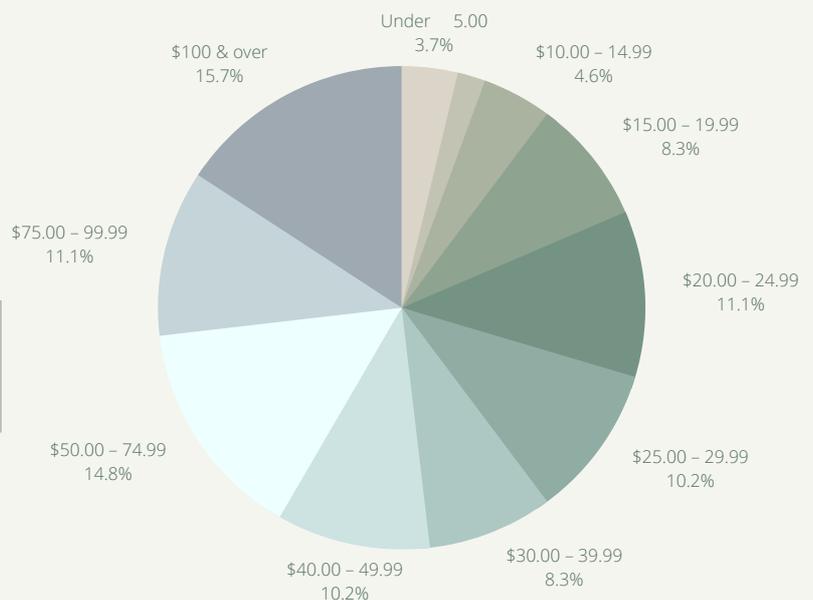
# Stewardship Report (II)

## 2022 Pledge Distribution



### Pledge Summary for the year 2022

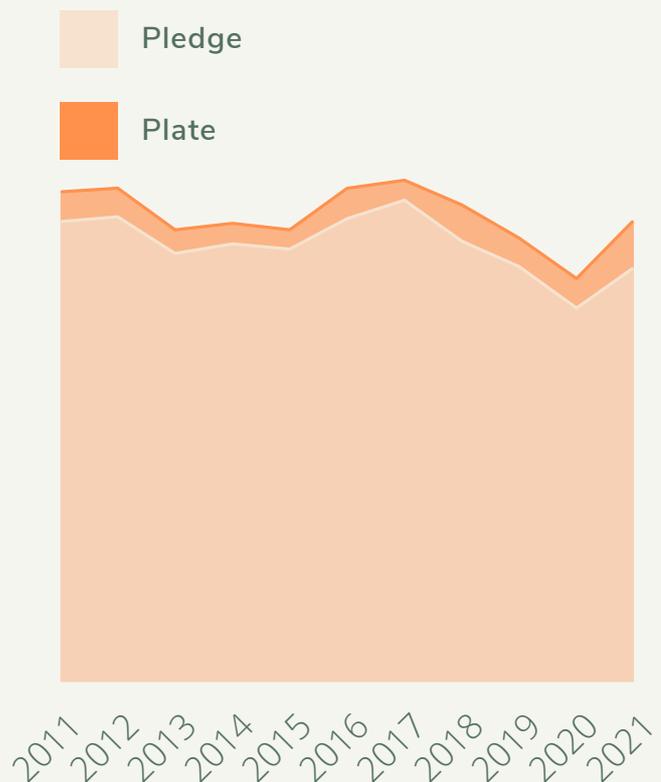
**108 Pledges**  
**\$310,210 Total Pledged**



# Stewardship Report (III)

## Giving History

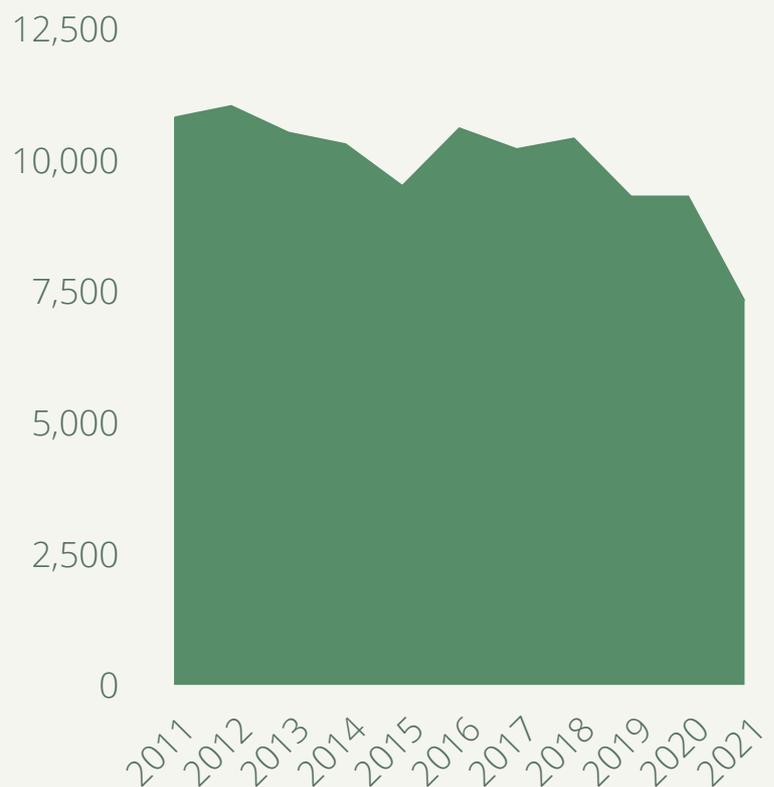
Year	Receipts Pledge	Receipts Plate
2011	369,867	23,879
2012	373,606	23,033
2013	344,180	18,975
2014	351,852	16,529
2015	347,668	15,526
2016	372,146	24,362
2017	386,940	16,050
2018	354,054	29,124
2019	333,594	22,921
2020	300,304	23,740
2021	331,946	37,668



## From the Parish Registers

### Attendance History

Year	Total	Average
2011	10,796	208
2012	11,010	208
2013	10,504	202
2014	10,283	198
2015	9,484	182
2016	10,584	208
2017	10,189	207
2018	10,391	199
2019	9,287	181
2020	—	136*
2021	7,326	91



**\*January & February 2020**

## *From the* **Parish Registers (II)**

### **Holy Baptisms**

Emma June Milner: April 23  
Louisa May Dixon: April 24  
Melanie Danielle Henderson: May 14  
Hannah Jane Garver: May 15  
Owen Phillip Smyrl: May 22  
Olivia Grace Drake: June 5  
Luna Gail Scott: June 12  
Jason Stephen Scott: June 12  
Elliott Ann McKinney: July 10  
Hudson Thomas Letts: August 27  
Quinn Torre Dooley: September 11  
Jane Riley Mullen: September 11  
Anne Marie Dunlap: September 27  
Sasha Illari Gamarra: October 2

### **Funerals and Memorial Services**

Nancy Rorison: December 4, 2021  
Phyllis Barbin: December 18, 2021  
Edward Furman: March 28  
Harriet Baisch: April 30  
Patricia Blake: May 27  
Mary Lauder: June 12  
Wallace Dunning: July 22  
Geoffrey Thomas: August 26  
Priscilla Burns Zeager: September 16  
Carol Farley: October 22  
June Neely: November 8

## *From the* **2021 Parochial Report**

**Church School Students**

**39**

**Baptized Members**

**598**

**Average Sunday Attendance (ASA)**

**91**

### **Holy Matrimony**

James Franklin Snyder to Norma  
Billings Oct. 15 2022

### **Transfers**

John & Nancy Austin to Christ Episcopal,  
Somers Point, NJ  
Bob & Connie Dee to St. Peter's, Osterville, MA  
Caren (Beck) Thompson to The Parish of Saint  
Matthew, Pacific Palisades, CA

### **New or Returning**

Ryann, John & Owen Smyrl  
James, Eliana King, James & Elaine Dietrich  
James, Traci, Ava, Juliet & Paige Broidrick  
Tricia Hopkins, Jason, Trace & Aiden Keen  
Sean & Olivia Drake  
Valerie-Clark Roden & Eugene Lindemann  
Robert & Amy Picciotti  
John & Joan Achey  
William & Audrey Nicola  
Haley, Holden, Jane & Elliott McKinney  
Sarah, Steven, William & Hudson Letts  
Pat Varleta  
Josephine Talarico & William Greene  
Joseph & Mary Lou Lewcun  
Marie Ciampa

# *From the Communications Director*

## Mr. Anthony Carrella

"Without counsel, plans go wrong, but with many advisers, they succeed." Proverbs 15:22

The Director of Communications (Anthony Carrella), under the auspices of the Communications Committee (Carolyn Bedics, Joe Buesgen, and volunteers), in partnership with the Rector of St. Matthew's (Fr. Rodney Roehner), discerns, creates, organizes, implements, and measures communications assets and strategies for our parish and nursery school communities. As a ministry and technical department of St. Matthew's, our mission is to channel accessible, functional, beautiful, and reliable communications throughout the parish and community. Our vision is to create the conditions for authentic connections to flourish within and beyond our church's walls.

The Director and committee meet weekly at St. Matthews and perform their duties over a five-day weekly sprint (TWThFSun). Volunteers serve the ministry in nearly every dimension of its work, including strategic planning, live streaming, content creating, photographing, proofreading, and manual print publication assistance. Areas of ministry include the following:

**Weekly Bulletins** | Parish Announcements and Parish Schedule for the Sunday Bulletins (7:45, 9:00, and 10:30 AM). Annual Metrics of Interest: **156** separate editions this year. **~18.7K** separate printings. **~65K** sheets of 8.5X14 paper. **290+** shortened and configured links.

**Livestream** | Since the last annual report, a team of dedicated volunteers has live-streamed over **150** worship services. Leaders oversee the operation of industry-quality audio and video hardware, which enables rich and lasting connections between our sanctuary and online audiences.

**Online Forms, Funnels, and Payments** | This year, the Director and committee built **15** user experience funnels in Typeform, the church's primary vehicle for capturing program registrations, product orders, financial data, and formal authorizations. Highlights of this year include the expanded use of tithe.ly online giving and the introduction of Venmo payment.

**Email Campaigns** | Weekly, the team schedules two comprehensive email campaigns serving nearly **300** subscribers. We coordinate churchwide communications for special interests, such as parish events, memorials, or administrative email campaigns.

**Social Media** | The team plans, creates, schedules, and measures weekly Facebook and Instagram posts aligning with our parish life, announcements, and community interests. Annual metrics of interest include Total Reach (people who saw our content): **11,828** individuals. Total Page Visits: **6,044** individuals, **65** new likes this year, **366** Page Likes total, **463** Followers total, **572** Check-Ins total, **4.8** Star rating. We also manage St. Matthew's Church and Nursery School Google My Business pages.

**Graphic Design and Print Assets** | Frequently commissioned assets include invitations, flyers, posters, interior, exterior, and social media banners, graphic schedules, memorials, outreach infographics, and miscellaneous graphics.

**Website and Parish Calendar** | Dimensions and actions of interest include page creation and maintenance, calendar architecture and event input, and SEO-related keyword assignments.

**People Management** | Since the last annual report, over **700+** individual records have been added or updated. Dimensions of this work include database management of Realm, newcomer pathway management, and data entry and updating.

**Photo Directory and Custom Directory Tool** | The former edition of this document was last pressed in 2019 and primarily relied on people data last audited in 2016. This year, the Director and Committee refined reporting fields and implemented new data input methods. With the partnership of a pro bono software engineering consultant, we produced an internal tool for compiling and printing directory data accurately, regularly, and on demand. We appreciate the patience and trust of the parish as we finalize this robust project.

**Oracle Quarterly Newsletter** | Since the last annual report, the Director, committee, and volunteers have designed and pressed four editions of the Oracle. Annually, over **1.2K** pieces are printed and folded in-house, with postage applied manually by a dedicated team of volunteers. This year, the committee focused on refining the newsletter's look and feel and optimizing its physical production workflows. We are particularly proud of our newly integrated, custom-built mail merge system, which prints unique parishioner address data via individual print jobs. This new functionality eliminates one of several post-processing steps which previously required manual application.

**Annual Report** | Last year, the Director and committee designed and integrated a new format, layout, and process for compiling the Annual Report. The aim was to magnify as many voices in the report as possible and increase the number of visual storytelling opportunities.

The Director and Committee's aims for 2023 center on deepening the existing work while codifying processes and procedures via control documents. Additionally, we hope to increase the range and quantity of volunteers serving in our ministry. If you or a loved one has interest, skill, or expertise in a facet of our work, please get in touch with Director Anthony to discuss and learn more about the ministry.

In Christ,

**Anthony Carrella, Director**

Expressing the utmost gratitude for our committee, volunteers, and contributors: **Carolyn Bedics, Joe Buesgen, Janine Buesgen, Jim Dietrich, Kyle Higgins, Doris Hunsicker, Treva McLaughlin, Lynn Partington, and Lucie Shubert.**

# *From the Nursery School Director*

## Ms. Jackie Anderson, Director

This year, St. Matthew's Nursery School celebrates 30 years of ministry to children and families in the community. Since we opened our doors in 1992, our team has raised and nurtured thousands of children ages two and a half to five. Our reputation is well established throughout and beyond Maple Glen, primarily due to our world-class staff, caring parents, and strong support from parishioners.

The configuration of staff at the nursery school includes seven (7) classroom teachers, six (6) enrichment teachers, and six (6) teacher's aides. Our facility prides itself on its inclusivity, supporting the needs and abilities of all learners. The school staff works closely with county agencies to ensure accommodations and IEPs (Individualized Education Plans) are effective.

Children's imaginations are engaged daily with core skill building, arts and crafts, cooking, stories, physical education, music, chapel, library, and other enrichment opportunities. Our Lunch Bunch program offers meals daily from 11:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Throughout the school year, learners of all ages interact with special guest speakers, and older children enjoy short field trips. Annually, the school hosts an annual Family Event and a one-week optional camp.

With the threat of COVID-19 abating, this year, the school has returned to its typical rhythms; the facility is now mask optional, and parents are back in the building for drop off and pick up. Families and staff could not be happier! In June, our community said farewell to our beloved gym teacher, Kim Gehlhaus. In September, we welcomed Jocelyn and Barry Weidner as our new instructors.

The Nursery School is growing closer to attaining its desired credential of being a Licensed Childcare Facility by the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services. Recently, our facility underwent several upgrades that will enable it to comply with the state's childcare facility requirements. Enhancements include expanding our playground space, implementing a grass playground substrate, and adding a classroom.

Please get in touch with the Nursery School by telephone at (215) 646-4466 or via [nurseryschool@saintmattsec.org](mailto:nurseryschool@saintmattsec.org).

Respectfully submitted,

**Jackie Anderson, Director**

# *From the* Life Long Learning Ministries



## Catechesis of the Good Shepherd *for Children*

For over 30 years, St. Matthew's has embraced the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS). Our teaching pedagogy is based upon the work of Maria Montessori, famous for her methods of educating and empowering generations of children. Our program aims to engage and nurture each child's unique relationship with God via specially chosen materials, prayer, song, listening to Bible stories, and spiritual self-exploration. St. Matthew's offers the following CGS classes on Sunday Mornings:

- Level 1: Led by **Nancy Cunningham** and **Nancy Williams**. A total of **seven (7) children** aged 3-5 years old are enrolled.
- Level 2: Led by **Linda Schindewolf** and **Linda Baier**. A total of **ten (10) children** in grades K-2 are enrolled.
- Level 3: Led by **Judy Groben**. A total of **six (6) children** in grades 3-5 are enrolled.

St. Matthew's is blessed to have five (5) experienced catechists who have undergone rigorous training for at least 90 hours to lead our CGS program (some have trained for hundreds of hours). Catechists direct the Sunday school through prayerful stewardship of monetary and human resources, with responsibilities including; providing administrative structure; defining our mission, goals, and objectives; problem-solving; establishing and maintaining lines of communication; program development; and ensuring the quality of our program.

Additionally, Four (4) of our catechists have recently completed their training formation classes for leading the Level 2 atria. In addition, we have a staff of dedicated volunteers who assist our catechists, including **Sue Acquaviva, Diane McCleary, Katie Brown, Mike Acquaviva,** and **Caryn Brannen**.

Due to the COVID situation over the past two years, there has been a general decline in the attendance of CGS families and staff members. In response, we have had to make some difficult decisions, including the recent discontinuation of the Toddler Atrium due to ongoing staffing issues.

Other changes include adjustments to our instructed eucharist program, Solemn Communion. In the past, children in third grade and older explored the meaning of the Eucharist during five evening classes, a Friday evening bread-baking activity, a Saturday retreat, and a special service. After discerning a new approach with Fr. Rodney, CGS

has opted to align its eucharistic instruction with increased attention to aspects of our Episcopal tradition.

Despite the pandemic's effects, CGS continues to welcome new families on Sundays and beyond. Our team has exciting offerings planned for the community in 2023, a highlight being the annual Liturgy of Light. This children's worship service is modeled after the Episcopal Easter Vigil and allows children to lead a service that celebrates the risen Christ. As always, CGS plans to maintain its strong program and add new and updated materials. Our hope for the future is to continually attract young families to our parish so that more children can benefit from our wonderful program. We also hope to recruit and train new catechists and assistants.

Respectfully submitted,

**Linda Baier, Lead Catechist**

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## *Weaving God's Promises for Youth in Middle School*

Sunday School for youth in grades 6-8 follows the *Weaving God's Promises* curriculum. Instruction is provided by **Pam Dunlap** and me. Classes occur on Sunday mornings at 9:00 AM in the Conference Room with an average of 6 youth attending each week.

Together, the class reads scriptures, shares conversations, and plays games that help us understand how God fits into our lives. We also share our personal achievements and struggles while building friendships. We welcome all who are interested in joining us each week.

Respectfully submitted,

**Erin Whalen, Co-leader of Weaving God's Promises**

# *From the Pastoral Care Ministry*

## Mr. George Bishop and Ms. Treva McLaughlin

The Pastoral Care Team is comprised of parishioners who have undergone pastoral care training and are interested in serving in this important ministry.

Current Team members include **Jon Clark, Nancy McElwee, Susan Ricciardi, Karen Sawyer, and the coordinators below.**

Our core mission is to minister and visit parish members who are homebound, infrequently attend church, or need support. A typical visit includes contemplative conversation, fellowship, prayer, and on occasion, providing the Eucharist. When our team is not performing visits, we interface with parishioners via handwritten notes, calls, texts, and other means of communication. Occasionally, we deliver prayer shawls prepared for us by the Knit Wits and other volunteers. Bimonthly, the team members meet to communicate and serve as a support system for one another. Fr. Rodney provides supervision and ministry support.

We invite parishioners called to this ministry to volunteer with us, particularly those possessing good listening skills and a desire to continually connect individuals to the life of St. Matthew's. If you are interested in training for this ministry, please connect with Fr. Rodney.

Respectfully submitted,

**George Bishop and Treva McLaughlin, Team Coordinators**



# *From the Music Ministry*

## Martha Reynolds, Arise Band Co-Leader

The Arise Band provides meaningful worship music in a contemporary style for the 9:00 AM service based on scriptures designated by the lectionary.

Most of the team has been playing together for over 20 years, and the band was excited to welcome Ed Myers (bassist) three years ago following Dave Robinson's retirement. This year, we are blessed to have the full band back together again.

Current band members include:

- **Martha Reynolds**, Co-Director: guitarist, and vocalist. **24 years.**
- **Anne Flood**, Co-Director: keyboardist, and vocalist. **20 years.**
- **Cathy Haas**, vocalist. **24 years.**
- **Dianne Versack**, flutist. **23 years**
- **Greg Darnley**, drummer. **15 years.**
- **Ed Myers**, bassist, and vocalist. **3 years.**

Since the last Annual Report, one highlight of our ministry was playing for Fr. Rodney's Institution in December of 2021. The band had a moving experience while playing *Hear Our Praises* in the packed Sanctuary with Bishop Gutiérrez present.

In 2023, our team hopes to invite young musicians to share their gifts with us and the parish during special services. Additionally, the band invites parishioners to suggest new songs for our lineup, which we take under prayerful consideration each week. To get involved in these opportunities, please contact Martha Reynolds at (215) 205-1634. Singing is another form of praying to our Lord. Let's continue to lift up our voices and worship Him in song!

In Christ,

**Martha Reynolds**



## *From the Outreach Ministries*

**Mattie Dixon Food Cupboard** | The Cupboard was founded by Mattie N. Dixon, a longtime resident of Ambler and a true visionary. In response to learning that people in her community were going hungry, she started serving families out of her basement in 1973. As word spread of Mattie's generosity and others joined her efforts, she moved to several other homes for her service, including Zion Baptist Church, Church of the Brethren, and 57 Butler Ave. In 2004, with help from the community and the Ambler Rotary Club, Mrs. Dixon was able to purchase our current building. This ministry distributes food items to families in need in the Ambler area and surrounding communities throughout the year. Parishioners deposit non-perishable foods in designated boxes any time they are able. These items are delivered by volunteers on a monthly basis to the Cupboard location in Ambler. There is also a special large collection in early November for Thanksgiving.

Respectfully submitted,

**Nancy Williams, Coordinator**

## *From the Fellowship Committee*

Since our last Annual Meeting we have had several Fellowship events starting with the Institution of Fr Rodney as our new pastor in December 2021. There was a fantastic barbeque reception follow the service. In February we brought back our online Bingo Party for Nursery School families and our church families. In March, the fellowship Committee hosted the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper with close to one hundred people attending. In June we introduced Spring Fest that despite the weather not cooperating was still a success. We were able to move all our food prep to the kitchen utilizing our new skillet top range installed in the spring of 2022. In September we had our annual St Matthew's Day celebration with a different menu than in years past. This year we smoked ribs and chicken for something different. Our final event of the year is Trunk or Treat, another combined event bringing together the Nursery School and St Matthew's families. The Fellowship Committee is a talented group of folks who work hard to set up, stage and breakdown all these events, thank you to all.

Respectfully submitted,

**Bill Reynolds, Warden**