

the
O R A C L E

ADVENT 2022

ST. MATTHEW'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH
MAPLE GLEN, PENNSYLVANIA





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O R A C L E
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A LETTER FROM OUR RECTOR

REV. RODNEY ROEHNER

St. Matthew's Family,

We will soon be entering the season of Advent, a time that has a dual-purpose springing from a single theme – the coming of the Lord. Primarily, Advent is meant to focus our attention, as we say in the Nicene Creed, on our belief that “He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead.” Therefore, far from being simply an extension of Christmas, Advent is a time for deep reflection on life, death, and our preparedness to meet the coming of the Lord.

But as we approach the final two weeks of Advent, the Church shifts our attention to the first coming of the Lord as one of us. Fully God and fully man, flesh and blood like you and me, born of a woman like all of us; in short, the gift of all gifts! This build-up naturally finds its climax on Christmas Day.

Yet it would be a mistake to relegate God's coming among us to a life lived in Palestine two thousand years ago, or as an anticipated event at some unknown point in the future. For the fact is that God is constantly coming among us, throughout the course of our daily lives. Are we prepared for such moments? Do we seize those opportunities? Would we like more of them?

St. Matthew's has truly been blessed these past two years with a continual resurgence in many aspects of our parish life. The path back from the height of the pandemic and a clergy transition has been realized through our boldness in grabbing hold of those many instances of the Lord coming among us, through the Sacraments, our worship, our fellowship, our outreach, our welcoming the newcomer, our prayers for God to do a mighty work among us.

Yet there is more to be done for the glory of God in this community of faith and beyond our church campus. But this can only be accomplished through our collective efforts. As proposed at the annual meeting, I ask that you prayerfully consider how you might use the gifts entrusted to you by our Lord to help further the Kingdom of God through St. Matthew's and our ministries in the upcoming year. Will it be something new or maybe something that you haven't done in years?

I am currently updating our old Ministries and Sacraments booklet, which lists the active ministries and programs offered at St. Matthew's. Especially for our newer members, this will serve as an introduction to the opportunities within our parish to serve, minister, and grow in Christ. As we prepare our New Year's resolutions, I pray that involvement at St. Matthew's will be near the top of everyone's list! The revised Ministries and Sacraments material will be released before the end of the year to assist this process.

May God grant all of us a blessed Advent, a joyous Christmas, and the willingness to embrace those innumerable instances throughout the upcoming year when the Lord will come among us. May all that we do at St. Matthew's be a witness of our gratefulness for that greatest of gifts. For he is our Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

With Love in Christ,

Rodney +

ADVENT and CHRISTMAS

AT ST. MATTHEW'S



Advent IV | 12.18

11:30 AM

Greening of the Church

Christmas Eve | 12.24

3 PM

Children's Pageant
and Family Service

5 PM

Contemporary
Service with the
Arise Band

8 PM

Choral
Service

Christmas Day | 12.25

10 AM

Rite I Traditional Service



CHOP Toy Drive

The Cleft Lip and Palate Team seeks toy donations for young patients undergoing treatment at the hospital. When you offer a toy, you help a child feel comforted and secure while working with their specialist. Most gift opportunities cost \$10 or less and can be dropped off in the narthex. A wishlist of items can be found by going to **bit.ly/CHOP-Toys-22**

Operation Bear Hug

Spread Christmas comfort to residents dwelling in retirement facilities and local care centers. Parishioner Lisa Walsh invites you and your family to participate by ordering, tagging, and hand-delivering new teddy bears. Head to **bit.ly/OBH-22** to order bears and get involved.

Family Christmas Pageant

All children in nursery school through middle school are invited to be a part of our Christmas pageant on Saturday, December 24 at 3:00 PM! Performed during our Family Service on Christmas Eve, the pageant gives children an opportunity to participate in a centuries-old tradition, a wonderful celebration of the nativity. If you have children who would like to be in the pageant, please **sign up by going to bit.ly/SMEC-ChristmasPageant2022**

Christmas Flower Offering

As is our tradition, the parish will green the sanctuary and adorn the campus for the holidays. Contribute funds for decorations in memory of a loved one or in thanksgiving by going to **bit.ly/Christmas-Flower-Donation**



ONGOING OPPORTUNITIES

AT ST. MATTHEW'S

*and via bit.ly/SMEC-Zoom-Gathering



SUNDAYS

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

Weekly **Rite II Contemporary**
9:00 AM in the Sanctuary

Weekly **CGS Sunday School**
9:00 AM in the Atria

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

Monthly **Confirmation Class**
9:00 AM on 12/18, 1/22, 2/26

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

Weekly **Rite II Choral**
10:30 AM in the Sanctuary

MONDAYS

1st and 3rd Mon. **Bible Study**
7:00 PM on Zoom*

TUESDAYS

Weekly **Prayer and Share**
7:30 PM on Zoom*

WEDNESDAYS

Weekly **Holy Eucharist**
12:00 PM in the Sanctuary.

THURSDAYS

Weekly **Morning Prayer**
9:00 AM on Zoom *

SATURDAYS

2nd Sat. **Men's Breakfast**
8:30 AM in the Parish Hall

4th Sat. **Project Roadmap**
8:45 AM in the Parish Hall



LITTLE PANTRY DONATIONS SAUGHT

Last year, members of St. Matthew's built a Little Pantry to support members of the community who might be going through hard times. Groceries and essential items are collected on campus, and organizers seek **feminine hygiene products, toothpaste, bars of soap, shampoo, and conditioner** for the pantry. Individuals can label and leave these items in the parish kitchen when the church offices are open. We kindly ask that you do not place offerings directly in the pantry.



HOUSE BLESSING

Fr. Rodney invites individuals and families to participate in the annual blessing of homes during the season of Epiphany (January and February). Participate in the ancient tradition by contacting Fr. Rodney at rector@saintmattsec.org



NURSERY SCHOOL REGISTRATION IS OPEN

The enrollment season is upon us, and now is a great time to discuss registering your child for Nursery School! Families already enrolled in our program may register children from the last week of November into the first week of December. St. Matthew's church members can register children during the **second week of December**. Please get in touch with Jackie directly to begin the process at nurseryschool@saintmattsec.org

VESTRY AND LEADER UPDATES

St. Matthew's welcomes new Vestry members, Diocesan Delegates, and Alternates.

Vestry

Jon Clark
Trent Coombs
Pam Dunlap

Diocesan Delegates

George Bishop
Jeanne Garrison
Judy Groben

Alternates

Pam Dunlap

Grateful and heartfelt thanks extend to those members who are now transitioning off our Vestry; **Marie Clark, Mary Anne Noon, and Bill Reynolds**. St. Matthew's has been blessed by their leadership.

FAREWELL, PHIL LEFEVRE, DIRECTOR OF MUSIC!

Phil LeFevre, Director of Music, has moved on from St. Matthew's to pursue a career in medicine. Phil has been an incredible asset to our parish for four years, blessing us with his outstanding musicianship and dynamic leadership.

Choir members celebrated Phil's ministry on Sunday, October 30th, following Phil's final 10:30 service. May God bless you, Phil!



**ST. JAMES
SCHOOL**



**YOUR TAX DOLLARS,
YOUR CHOICE**

Did you know that members of
ST. MATTHEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
support St. James Episcopal School (North
Philadelphia) by redirecting their state tax
liability to provide student scholarships?

**It helps St. James remain tuition-free,
AND IT'S EASY!**

You most likely qualify if you are an
employee, owner, or shareholder of a
business authorized to do business in PA,
and your state tax liability is \$3,500 or more.



**Contact Martha Heuser to
reserve your spot today:
MHeuser@stjamesphila.org
or 215-226-1276 x 114**

PHOTO REFLECTIONS OF

TRUNK OR TREAT

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 29TH



SEASON'S GREETINGS FROM THE NURSERY SCHOOL

Jackie Anderson, Director

Dear friends,

The next few months in the Nursery School will be fun and exciting!

In November, the children enjoyed activities related to Thanksgiving and the Pilgrims, Native Americans, Autumn, foods, and nutrition. Many classes also prepared feasts, where parents joined their children at school to celebrate the holiday. Additionally, teachers held their first Parent Teacher Conferences of the school year. These meetings present an excellent opportunity for parents to interact with their child's teacher one-on-one and learn how their child has adjusted socially to school.

The nursery school is busy preparing for many Christmas festivities. On **Saturday, December 3**, we will host our annual Family Holiday Luncheon. A delicious lunch from Sam's Italian Market in Willow Grove is served in the Parish hall. After lunch, gift baskets are raffled to the attendees while children take their picture with Santa Claus and make crafts. Later in the month, we will hold our fifth Christmas Concert on **December 21** and **December 22**. Mrs. Reynolds, our music teacher, works with children in their music classes, preparing them for the big day. Parents arrive upstairs in the church for the concert before heading downstairs for classroom parties with their children. Finally, please note that the school will be closed from **December 23** until **January 3**.

January is typically a quiet month in the school. However, a particular highlight is our Food Cupboard collection in partnership with the Ambler Food Cupboard (Mattie Dixon).

At their monthly chapel services with Fr. Rodney, children are invited to bring provisions such as peanut butter or jelly (January), laundry detergent (February), bars of soap (March), and toilet paper (April).

The Nursery School staff and I would like to thank members of the Vestry and Fr. Rodney for supporting the Nursery School. We appreciate their attention and care in enhancing our playground and classroom spaces this year. Our gratitude extends to many other supporters helping us with space improvements, including Bill Reynolds, Bruce Baldus, Carolina Roehner, and Bill Garver.

Register Children Now!

The enrollment season is upon us, and now is a great time to discuss registering your child for Nursery School! Families already enrolled in our program may register children from the last week of November into the first week of December. St. Matthew's church members can register children during the second week of December. Please get in touch with me directly to begin the process at nurseryschool@saintmattsec.org

Sincerely,

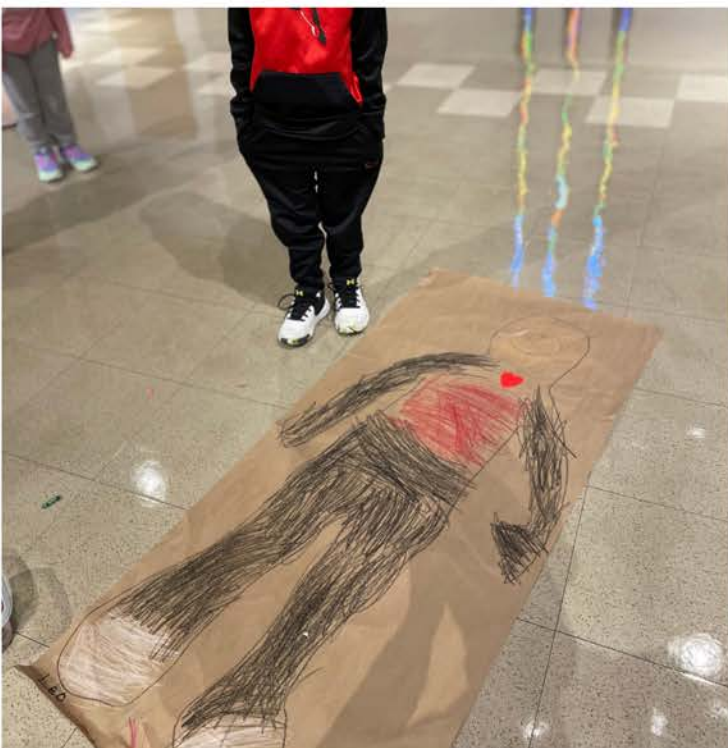


SHINING A LIGHT ON Ms. Lisa Giuliani



Lisa has been an assistant teacher at St. Matthew's since 2010. She began working one morning a week, moving to 5 mornings a week. In 2021 Lisa took on the role of our Science Enrichment teacher. To say Lisa has knocked it out of the park is an understatement!

Lisa shares that: "Science at the preschool age brings as much delight to me as it does to the child. This is the age of discovery, and students are natural-born scientists! The Science enrichment class offers a hands-on experience where students can observe, experiment, create, construct, classify, compare, and question. Students are curious and eager to explore the world around them and everything in it!



A recent Science Enrichment lesson, Our Body is Remarkable, discussed the basic concepts of how the human body works. We began with a body outline craft, drawing a face, hair, and clothing. Our scientists built a skeleton by putting all the bones in the right place. We all have bodies and our body parts. We are different because our body features are not the same. Our eyes, skin color, height, and weight are different. We might not think the same way or like the same things. We are unique individuals."



ST. MATTHEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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