



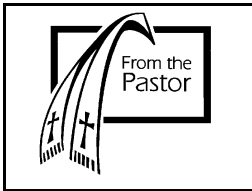
# The GOOD NEWSLETTER

of  
Saint Matthew Lutheran Church  
Springfield, Pennsylvania

Volume 68, Number 2

February 2016

Internet Web Site: [www.stmattspringfield.org](http://www.stmattspringfield.org)



## From Our Pastor

Lent is a peculiar season. It is a time for reflection. It is a time for assessment. It is a time when we consider who we are, how we have lived, and where we may need to better reflect the type of people God is calling us to be.

This season begins with the very sober Ash Wednesday when we remember our mortality. We hear the words “remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” Ashes are marked on our foreheads to remind us: “ashes to ashes, dust to dust.”

For many, Lent is simply too sad a season for them to want to deal with. Who needs such a ruthless self-assessment? Why do I want to think about sin and death and falling short?

I think there is great hope in this season, and we need to see this hope in the midst of the somber nature of this time. Yes, there are ashes placed on our foreheads. They are traced in the sign of the cross, a reminder that Jesus came to conquer death. We reflect on where we fall short of God’s desire for us, but we remember that this is why Jesus came to give forgiveness and new life. As we reflect on who we are in this season, we are also remembering who God is, and what God has done for us in Jesus.

This year during our midweek reflections we will be looking at passages that convey the nature of God in Christ. We will reflect on some of the “I AM” stories in the Gospel of John. These stories are times when Jesus tells us about himself as he identifies himself with God. I AM the Bread of Life. I AM the Good Shepherd. Each of these images gives us hope for who we are as we live in relationship to who Jesus is as the “I AM.”

Enter this season with me with honesty and humility, but also with wonder and awe. Enter it willing to fully face who you are, but ready to hear again who Jesus is. In this reflection we can learn again how we might more fully be the persons God is calling us to be as we hear him say to us “I AM.”

In Christ,  
Pr. Karl M. Richard

## Ash Wednesday/Midweek Lenten Services

Our Lenten journey begins with two services on Ash Wednesday, February 10. Both the noon and 7:00 p.m. services on Ash Wednesday will include the imposition of ashes and communion. Then there will be a Wednesday midweek evening Lenten service up until Holy Week. These services will be held at 7:00 p.m. each Wednesday evening through March 16.

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## Social Ministry - Loaves and Fishes

I recently received a letter from Joanne Castagna, who is the Director of the Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry, thanking us for our generous support in 2015. The letter also stated that the pantry has received **no** state aid for the past 6 months due to the budget impasse in Harrisburg. This means that the only help they are getting is from donations from organizations such as Saint Matthew. I urge all of our members, when they shop, to remember those less fortunate who depend on the food bank every month. If each family could bring one or two non-perishable items to church each week, it would make a huge difference. Thank you!

Cheryl Morrell

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## Christian Education Committee

Super Bowl of Caring is just around the corner. Sunday School youth are encouraged to put coins in their soup containers and bring them to church on February 7. In addition, the Loaves and Fishes food bank is always in need of nonperishable food items like 100% juices, spaghetti, spaghetti sauce in plastic jars, peanut butter, and soups or stews that contain meat. These donations can be brought to church on February 6 or 7. Families may also participate by helping to collect food items around the Springfield area or by sorting and packing the food items collected into boxes on February 6. Contact Natalie Berry for more information at [natberry@rcn.com](mailto:natberry@rcn.com). Let’s all chip in to help fight hunger!

The findings of the Church Assessment Tool revealed that some of our top goals as a congregation are to attract families with children and youth to our church and to reach out to new people and incorporate them into the life of the church. As a result of these findings, the Cradle Roll is being reactivated. We will use the Splash curriculum published by Augsburg Fortress.

Carol Penjoke

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## First Thursday Friends (“FTF”)

The First Thursday Friends will gather on February 4, 2016 at 11:30. We will be dining at Carrabba’s in Springfield Mall. Please contact John Stefl if you intend to attend so he can make reservations. Please also contact him if you would like a ride.

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## Children’s Corner

Dear Children,

*“Prosper for us the work of our hands . . . O prosper the work of our hands” Psalm 90:12-17*

When I was a young bride, I remember going to my new relatives for dinner, and besides the delicious dinner my mother-in-law prepared, I will always remember a special picture on the wall. The portrait was of an elderly man bowing his head and with his hands in the prayer position, and he was thanking God for his meal. Those gnarled and somewhat discolored hands showed many decades of hard work. Perhaps he was a farmer, a seaman, a bricklayer, or maybe a carpenter - I will also bet that those hands wiped away many a tear from a child’s eyes, and probably joined hands with the love of his life.

On Sunday mornings when Pastor asks us to “share the peace” - I always think of those moments as quite special. We can rise from our pews to stretch our legs, see smiles, ask about loved ones, talk to the small children of our congregation - but, most of all - shake hands. Have you ever noticed that some hands are nice and warm, others are a bit chilly, some are rough (that person may have done lots of hard work,) and some are smooth. God has given us these “wonderful tools” to bring love into our lives. What can our hands do?

- bake warm chocolate chip cookies
- pat someone on the back for encouragement
- write a thank you note
- pet a kitten or dog
- dry tears away
- hold hands with a dear friend
- play a musical instrument

Since this is the month to express our love, perhaps you can look at your hands and figure out some ways to use them to continue God’s work. Can you make someone happy? How do the people of Saint Matthew use their hands to do our mission of reaching out to others? I will get you started - the money counters, ushers, the newsletter, the secretary who prepares all the paperwork, the people who painted the parlor, and many more - keep your eyes peeled.

Dear Parents,

Find ways (perhaps on a Sunday morning) that the congregation uses their hands to carry out the mission of Saint Matthew - “Connecting people, changing lives.” I will bet that your list will be very long.

Sylvia Yost

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## Library



Hello to all. Trusting you have gotten through all the holiday celebrations, and all the good food that comes along with it. Now we’re into February. Have you made resolutions? Are you keeping them? Whatever you do or don’t do, visit our library.

There are many books on many subjects. Try this book by J. Stephen Lang - *1001 Things You Always Wanted to Know About the Bible But Never Thought To Ask*, found on Shelf 220 LAN.

Whether you are a seasoned Bible student or just getting started, you will enjoy reading *1,001 Things*. You’ll learn fascinating scripture facts and discover how the Bible has influenced cultures past and present. Test your knowledge with questions on the back of the book. Enjoy!

Barbara Kinsey

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## Birth of a Son

Doctor Ted Miller stood in his scrubs beside my mother’s hospital bed in readiness for the coming event. “Now, Fay,” he said. “We need you to push! Bear down! Your baby is coming!”

At that moment there was a flash outside and a thunder clap in the pouring rain. Another flash and lightning struck the chimney of the hospital room. It blew the bricks apart and the rain leaked inside. Another boom! This was an earthquake! The windows rattled, the room shook and a baby was born. It’s a boy!

“Fay! You didn’t have to be so dramatic, did you?” asked

Dr. Ted as he checked out the little one.

Here is the story of Tony’s delivery into this lifetime and yes, there was a thunderstorm and an earthquake at the same time. The year was 1942 and the world was at war. Most of the young men, my father included, had been signed up and sent overseas in the service. My mom-to-be had moved from Christchurch to Levin, my father’s hometown, to spend the first few months with my grandmother-to-be, “Webby.”

Dr. Ted was a good friend, confidante and hunting companion of my dad. They spent time together deer stalking and hiking in the high country behind the farmland which bordered the town. Dr. Ted, older than my father, could see a future for him as a leader and he often told him that his talent would take him away from the hometown. My dad at the time worked in the local bank and his friend, Dr. Ted, urged him to seek a wider horizon.

When the war in Europe broke out in 1939, my father joined the New Zealand Air Force and soon became a pilot and was posted at Wigram Airbase near Christchurch, where he quickly became an instructor-pilot to train the younger men before they were sent overseas. Dozens of young pilots emerged from his care over the next couple of years during which time he met Fay, his bride-to-be and soon after-to-be my mom!

The Battle of Britain had been fought, pilots were lost, and my dad was shipped out to replace some of his students who had died in the conflict. When I was born, back home in Levin, he was flying in his Spitfire fighter plane on a mission over France at 20,000 feet. I would not set eyes on my dad until I was three years old!

Today I find it ironic that, on the journey to Britain, my father first came to the United States arriving by ship in San Francisco and then crossing the continent to again board a ship in Halifax, Nova Scotia. As a young student, nearly 20 years later, I came to the United States to attend university, and now call this country my home.

Our lives move in circles. It should not really surprise us that this is so because every year we have a birthday, every year we have the changing seasons and special holidays, anniversaries and Holy Days. Our beautiful Earth rotates on its axis, and revolves steadily around the sun - a heavenly rhythm that determines our destiny as human beings - God’s people, all of us.

May gratitude be in our hearts.

In His name,  
Tony Webb

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## Men’s Breakfast

The February Men’s Breakfast will be held on Saturday, February 20, at 7:15 a.m. at the Red Iron American Pub, 650 Baltimore Pike, Springfield. All men are invited to

join us for morning devotions, a great speaker, an excellent breakfast and good fellowship. Please come and enjoy an excellent way to start the day.

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## Saint Matthew Christian Nursery School News



The children and staff are back in full swing. Our mid-year teacher conferences took place January 25-28. The teachers and parents of our 2 and 3 day children met to discuss their child’s development and placement in our school for the 2016-2017 school year, and our 5 day children for entry into Kindergarten.

We will begin to discuss and do activities for Groundhog Day, Valentine’s Day, and Clifford the Big Red Dog’s Birthday. The children will also learn about some of our presidents such as George Washington and Abraham Lincoln for Presidents’ Day. We will be discussing Dental Health Week this month as well. We will be continuing alphabet recognition, printing and coloring. We will also be starting our “Paper People” for the spring 2016 Art Show.

Our registration for 2016-2017 has already begun. Our 2 day program classes are booking up quickly, and our in-house placement of our children will begin after conferences. Our five day children will move on to Kindergarten. We are so proud of all of the children and how they have grown. A big thank you to our wonderful staff that have worked so hard and given so much to the future of our children. Anyone interested in having their child attend our school, please call Linda Maylie at 610-543-5589.

Linda Maylie, Director

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## Women of the ELCA News

*“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” John 3:16*

What wonderful loving words. God’s love for us is never ending.

Greetings to all and a happy and blessed New Year! Finally, winter has arrived in our part of town - it took a long time coming and now we will be talking about how cold it is. I like the change of seasons and what they give us in the way of nature. Enjoy it.

Were you surprised to read about the wonderful response to our Welcome Church List requests for September through December 2015? Hats off to you! Great job! Please see “The Welcome Church List” article in this newsletter for items requested

for this month.

We would like to give you the dates for our upcoming events in April. Please mark your calendars - we look forward to seeing you there! More info will be shared with you in our March newsletter.

**April 3, 2016** - Women's Sunday - both church services

**April 19, 2016** - our annual Spring Supper

### Activities for February 2016:

**February 10** - Ash Wednesday

**February 10** - Board Meeting

**February 17** - Ronald McDonald Quilting

**February 20** - LWR Quilting

**February 23** - Sarah Circle

**February 24** - Esther Circle

Dee Bratz for the Executive Board

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## The Welcome Church List

**P**astor Little requested for the month of February the following items:

- Writing paper (for letters)
- Pencils
- Pens
- Colored Pencils

Please place the items in the Welcome Church container located in the hallway. Thanks again for your support to this worthy cause. It is much appreciated by Pastor Little and those she serves - the poverty stricken.

Dee Bratz for the Executive Board

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## Monthly Mailbag

To Pastor and my Saint Matthew Family,



**I** appreciate all the prayers and cards I received when I recently had pneumonia. I still tire easily but the doctor said that is normal. Thanks to all who called with well wishes and offers of food. Thanks also to Jeff for delivering

the beautiful altar flowers. May everyone have a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Blessings,  
Joanne Castagna

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Dear Saint Matthew Friends,

You are fantastic elves! Thank you very much for the generous collection of gifts for the children of Silver Springs - Martin Luther School. The boys and girls loved receiving the stuffed animals, dolls, glow pets, movies, games, bath sets, toothbrushes (these were a big hit!) and so much more!

We are grateful for your ongoing friendship and support of our ministry. With the help of caring partners, like Saint Matthew, we are able to provide a joyful Christmas full of wonderful memories for the special boys and girls in our care. On behalf of the children, thank you!

Wishing you a very happy and healthy New Year!

Sincerely,  
Amanda Bryant  
Silver Springs-Martin Luther School

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Dear Saint Matthew Elves,

You are the best! Thank you very much for spending your day with us on Wednesday, December 9, wrapping (and unwrapping and wrapping) gifts for the boys and girls of Silver Springs - Martin Luther School! It would be impossible to get all of the gifts wrapped and ready without your incredible help.

While the children wasted no time unwrapping all of your hard work, I can assure you that they appreciated the love and care that went into preparing the gifts. More than one child commented on the pretty paper and how impressed (or maybe disappointed?) they were that they couldn't peek into any of the presents to determine the contents!

With your help, we were able to ensure that every child at Silver Springs - Martin Luther School had a wonderful Christmas full of joyful memories. On behalf of the boys and girls, thank you!

Wishing you a happy and healthy New Year!

Sincerely,  
Amanda Bryant  
Silver Springs-Martin Luther School

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Dear Pastor Richard, Janice G., et al,

This is simply a quick note to thank you for your guidance and assistance with respect to final services for my mother, Marion R. Deans.

The thoughtful personalization of the service was greatly appreciated, as was your aid in notifying several of mom's earlier acquaintances.

I noted also that the service inspired several folks - from "closed communion" traditions - to partake of our communion in the manner in which it was offered.

Thanks again, and may we all be at peace as we prepare to celebrate Christ's birth.

Respectfully,  
Kenneth Deans and family

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Dear Saint Matthew,

Thank you so much for the lovely poinsettia and a visit from Joan Krauter. Both were a surprise and much appreciated on a very dull day - a ray of brightness!

Sincerely,  
Frieda Lenthe

\* \* \*

Dear Saint Matthew Friends,

Thank you so much for the lovely poinsettia which was delivered to me. It was a very bright spot in our apartment during these past dreary, rainy days. Your thoughtfulness is very much appreciated. God bless you all.

Sincerely,  
Donna Winters

\* \* \*

Dear Friends at Saint Matthew,

I am enjoying the beautiful poinsettia plant delivered to Lima Estates for me several days ago. Again, thank you so very much for remembering me. Best wishes for a healthy, faithful 2016.

Sincerely,  
Edna Graefe

\* \* \*

Dear Pastor Richard,

Thank you for sending me the beautiful poinsettia that

adorned the church at Christmastime. It now adorns my apartment for many days to come.

Greetings to all!

Sincerely,  
Helen McHenry

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Dear Family of Saint Matthew,

Once again I am moved by the generosity of this family of faith as you blessed me and my family with your gift at Christmas time. It is a joy to serve here at Saint Matthew, and to be welcomed into your lives at times of joy and at times of sorrow, as well as just the day-to-day way in which we live and journey in faith together. When you show such kindness with such a generous congregational gift, it is truly an amazing expression of your care, and for that I am very thankful.

I am using a part of your gift to support some ministries that are dear to me, such as our Synod's "All the Saints" Appeal, and the Leadership Fund at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia. I will also be using part of your gift to go towards a new dishwasher, as ours decided to enter its final usefulness just as Christmas dinner was coming our way!

Once again, thank you for your expression of love and care, and God bless each of you!

Sincerely,  
Pr. Karl M. Richard

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Dear Saint Matthew Congregation,

Thank you so much for the generous Christmas gift. I really appreciate the thoughtfulness and support of the congregation. God bless!

Sincerely,  
Rick Link and family

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Dear Saint Matthew Congregation,

Thank you to the congregation for the very thoughtful and generous Christmas gifts and cards. I truly appreciate them. It is a privilege and an honor to play a part in your worship life all year round, and it is especially so during the Christmas season as I have so much to be thankful for. Plus, I get to spend time with you all! So thank you again, and best wishes for a spiritual filled and blessed 2016!

With love,  
Pat McHugh

\* \* \*

Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for the very generous Christmas gifts and cards. They are all very much appreciated. The generous gift from the congregation will help us take a trip to visit our son and his family in Seattle. It is truly a blessing to be a member of the congregation and staff of Saint Matthew. It is wonderful to work with Pastor Karl, Ted, Pat, and Rick—and everyone in the congregation makes it a pleasure to be here. May 2016 be a year filled with God’s blessings for each of you.

Love,  
Janice Gardner

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Dear Congregation,

I want to thank all of you for the many gifts I received this year - the almonds, cookies, and candies as well as other gifts. It is very appreciated. I want everyone to know that I enjoy working here. It’s a gift from God for me to be here and help you keep your church as nice as possible. It doesn’t feel like work. I look forward to each and every day. I also want to thank Pastor, Janice, Rick, and Joe for all their support. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,  
Ted Hidell

\* \* \*

Dear Friends,

Thank you very much for your May 11, 2015 contribution to our ministry of \$343. Chester County Migrant Ministry is a non-profit Christian ministry serving the immigrant community in Chester County and the surrounding area. We share the love of Jesus by offering assistance with immigration procedures, English tutoring, citizenship classes, a Christmas for Migrants program, blankets, coats, health kits, donated furniture and appliances, distribution of food baskets, and other services. We appreciate your ongoing financial and prayer support. We could not carry on our work serving the spiritual and physical needs of the poorest members of our community without partners like you.

May God bless you all for your generosity in serving the neediest among us.

In His Service,  
Jeff Hellrung, Treasurer  
Chester County Migrant Ministry

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Dear Friends,

We thank you for your recent donation of lap robes, calendars, greeting cards, etc. that was dropped off at my office. Your continued support of Fair Acres and its residents over the years is exemplary and I am happy to be associated with you all.

I hope that you will all have a wonderful and blessed holiday season. May God bless you for your good work.

Sincerely,  
Cheryl Evernham  
Director of Volunteers  
Fair Acres Geriatric Center

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Dear Church Members,

The McLaughlin family would like to thank everyone for your cards, phone calls and prayers and sympathy.

We want to thank Pastor Richard for his visits and a wonderful funeral service.

Sincerely,  
Janet, Dan Jr., Diane and Lori

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## Financial Update

### A New Year’s Prayer

Lord, You make all things new.  
You bring hope alive in our hearts  
And cause our Spirits to be born again.

Thank you for this new year  
For all the potential it holds.  
Come and kindle in us  
A mighty flame  
So that in our time, many will see the wonders of God  
And live forever to praise Your glorious name.

Amen.

	<u>December 2015</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
Total Income:	\$ 51,642	\$484,678
Total Expense:	<u>\$ 39,290</u>	<u>\$486,740</u>
<b>Plus/Minus</b>	<b>\$ 12,352</b>	<b>(\$ 2,062)</b>

**S**ummary: 2015 was a very challenging, but very rewarding year financially for Saint Matthew. Although we began the

year budgeting for a loss of \$26,991, we finished December and the year very strongly. For the month of December we finished to the positive to the amount of \$12,352! This allowed us to finish overall for the year with a loss of only \$2,062 (\$24,929 stronger than our budget). We were able to accomplish this by our continued support for Saint Matthew from our congregation. We had several donors throughout the year who made large donations of \$5,000 or more (in addition to regular giving.) In the monthly Finance update we listed "Giving Opportunities" for us to participate in, and the response was outstanding. In addition to much other support for these opportunities, we were able to fully fund the following:

- Snow Removal
- Grass Cutting
- Piano and Organ Tuning
- New Advent Candles and Worship Supplies

**Giving Opportunities:** Souper Bowl of Caring is a venture we do as the Springfield Ministerium, where we encourage our neighbors to support those in need of food. We need to replace many of the lawn signs used to alert the community of this event. Could you make an extra gift to help us defray this cost as we care for those in need? Please mark your gift "SBOC signs." Thank you!

Your Finance Committee

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## Vital Statistics

**Retirement:** David Krauter  
December, 2015

**Baptism:** Julia Rose Chastain  
Daughter of Derek and Laurie Chastain  
Born August 1, 2005  
Baptized December 20, 2015

**Death:** Mr. Daniel McLaughlin  
Died January 3, 2016  
Funeral January 8, 2016

Mr. Edward Baer  
Died January 11, 2016  
Funeral January 15, 2016

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## Health and Healing

We ask you to remember all those who are ill, as well as those who mourn the loss of a loved one, in your thoughts and prayers. We also remember and pray for the homeless, the hungry, and all the men and women serving in our armed forces.

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*The Good Newsletter*, a congregational newsletter, is published monthly, September through June by Saint Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church, 400 Lynbrooke Road, Springfield, Pennsylvania 19064-3599. Please direct all correspondence pertaining to this publication to the Editor, Dr. Carl E. Aronson, at the above address. The deadline for submitting copy is 12 noon on the 15th of each month.



*Welcome*

