



From Our Pastor

Connect
Care
eQuip
Cultivate

These are the commands, decrees and laws the Lord your God directed me to teach you to observe in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess, ² so that you, your children and their children after them may fear the Lord your God as long as you live by keeping all his decrees and commands that I give you, and so that you may enjoy long life. ³ Hear, Israel, and be careful to obey so that it may go well with you and that you may increase greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, just as the Lord, the God of your ancestors, promised you.

⁴ “Hear, O Israel: The LORD is our God, the LORD alone. ⁵ You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. ⁶ Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. ⁷ Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise.

– Deuteronomy 6:4-7

May is the month of Mother’s Day, June the month of Father’s Day. These days have had differing levels of attention given them over the years. I remember in the days before the pandemic that Mother’s Day was often one of the best attendance days for worship, as families would come with Mom to church, and then take her somewhere special for lunch. Father’s Day was not as strong for its church connection, as it was a day to “take Dad somewhere fun,” and often meant a game, fishing, boating, or whatever. Since the pandemic, Mother’s Day has more resembled Father’s Day in just being a normal day for worship without any noticeable bump in attendance. This is not hard research; just my own sense from my subjective observations.

As we come to June, and the second of these parental recognitions, I would like to advocate for a renewal of connection of these days to our role as parents and grandparents in the faith development of our children. And I would like to remind and encourage those persons of faith who do not have children to recognize the significant role you can have in instilling faith in God in the lives of the children and youth in your sphere of influence.

To be clear, I do not want to give the impression that you are not involved in the faith development of the children in your sphere. I am quite impressed with how many of you have taken a very active role in ensuring that your kids are part of First Communion instruction and Confirmation classes. But I want

to emphasize how *key* this role is in the development of faith in your children and youth in order to encourage you in your living out your faith, and the impact it makes over time.

Many passages in the Bible speak of the role of parents to teach their children the ways of the LORD. The verses above from Deuteronomy is one such passage. The way in which we live our lives has such a profound effect on our children that books, songs, and poems have been written about it. If a child is raised with anger, the child is more likely to be angry. If a child is raised with anxiety and uncertainty, the child is more likely to be anxious and uncertain. If a child is raised with joy and love, the child is more likely to be joyful and loving.

I believe the same is true about faith. If a child is raised to believe there is a God, if a child sees their parents live a life that reflects that belief, they are more likely to believe in God. But then, how we live out our faith also shows what it is we believe about God.

If we say we believe but never go to church, it can say that church is not important. If we say we need God, but are never seen (or heard) praying, it can say that God is not all that necessary in our decisions. If we convey that God is only there to judge and reprove, it can make God out to be scary and one to be avoided.

But if we live in such a way that shows worship – spending time with God – is important; if we make prayer a part of our daily life – by praying before meals, or at the end of the day, or using a devotional booklet; if we speak of God in our walking along the way, noting the beauty of creation; if we refer to the love God has for us as the basis of why we care for others; if we share, and then follow, such passages as “do unto others as you would have them do unto you” and “we love, because God first loved us,” and “by God’s grace we have been saved” then those words and phrases, borne out by our living and our being, can have a profound effect on the children in our midst.

There is no guarantee that our words and actions will cause our children to trust God and follow Jesus. But there is ample evidence that if we do not live the faith in an audible and visible way, the chances that our children will be people of faith drop precipitously. One survey I saw showed that families where the parents were involved in an active faith life made an incredible impact:

- + Both parents are active: 72% to 93% of children remain in the faith as adults.
- + Only one parent is active: 55% to 73% of children stay faithful.
- + Neither parent is active: Only 6% to 53% (depending on the study) of children remain faithful.

We have an incredible gift in our children. And we have an incredible gift to share with our children. May we recognize the power of our example in their lives and share the gift that was first shared with us: the love of God in Jesus Christ. In so doing, we may empower them to enjoy a long life in the LORD, both now, and forever.

Pastor Karl M. Richard

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News from Your Property Committee

The month of June will see the repaving of our parking lot. Our parking lot project will start around June 15th and will take about two weeks to complete. During this time, we cannot park or walk in this area. We will have to park on the street and use the main entrance to be safe. Around the beginning of July, we should be able to park on the parking lot for services (no overnight parking at this time). In July we must use the parking lot entrance off Bennett Road only. The Harwicke Road exit will not be available till late in August.

During May we had unwanted visitors in our Nursery rooms--bees in the playground and in the upper rooms. Hoffman's Exterminating was dispatched and problem solved. We also had our birds return to our attic over the sanctuary. Hoffman will be called and once the birds leave their nest, they will reseal the vent openings. Hopefully they will not come back next year.

Joe Regan

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Christian Education Updates

We will be having our end of school year celebration on June 7th. We will start our celebration during our Sunday school time and then after the service we will be celebrating. Join us to celebrate our wonderful teachers and students during this time!

Our Vacation Bible School is July 27th- July 31st. Everyone is invited to come! We have classes for preschoolers until about 5th graders. We are always looking for helpers. Come spend the week with us! If interested or having questions please see Julie Cirillo.

Julie Cirillo

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Fellowship Committee

The Fellowship Committee would like to honor our fathers with a coffee hour between the services on June 21st with Donuts for Dads. We will be attending the Blue Rocks Baseball game on Friday, July 24th at 6:35 p.m. There will be fireworks after the game. Tickets are \$16. Please sign up on the table in the hallway if you will be attending. Money is due to Barb McClintock by June 21st. Hope to see everyone there.

Barb McClintock

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Financial Update

Heavenly Father, we thank You for the many blessings You continue to provide to Saint Matthew Lutheran Church. We are grateful for the generosity of our congregation, the

commitment of those who faithfully give, and the many hands and hearts that help sustain the ministries of our church. May we continue to use our resources thoughtfully, care for our church home responsibly, and trust in Your guidance as we plan for the months ahead. Amen.

	<u>April 2026</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
Giving/Income	\$ 38,432.	\$ 203,312.
Expenses	<u>44,701.</u>	<u>197,337.</u>
Plus/Minus	(\$ 6,269.)	\$ 5,975.

Summary: For the month of April, Saint Matthew's expenses were higher than income, resulting in a monthly shortfall, but the year-to-date financial position remains positive. This is encouraging and reflects the continued generosity and support of our congregation. As we move through the year, regular giving remains important in helping the church meet ongoing expenses, support ministry needs, and plan responsibly for the future. Every contribution helps Saint Matthew continue to serve, worship, and care for our church community.

Envelope/General Giving: April giving reflects the faithful commitment of our congregation. Worship giving continued to provide important support for the church's ongoing ministry and operations. Consistent giving helps create stability, especially during months when expenses are higher than income. Thank you to everyone who continues to give regularly, whether through envelopes, online giving, special gifts, or other contributions. Your generosity makes a meaningful difference and helps Saint Matthew remain strong and prepared for the work ahead.

Giving Opportunities: Your giving supports far more than numbers on our financial report. It helps keep our church home cared for, supports worship and ministry, and strengthens our ability to serve one another and the wider community. Please prayerfully consider continuing your regular giving and supporting the funds that are most meaningful to you, including general giving, the Roof Fund, the parking lot, memorial gifts, youth activities, and other designated ministries. Each gift, no matter the size, is an act of faith and a blessing to Saint Matthew.

Roof Fund: Thank you to everyone who has contributed and continues to honor their roof pledge. These pledge payments are especially important because they help replenish the endowment, which supports the long-term fiscal needs of the church. Continuing to meet pledge commitments allows Saint Matthew to care for our building today while also protecting resources that help sustain our future.

Respectfully submitted,
Kevin Cunningham and
Rebecca DeSantis

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Newsletter Deadline

Articles for the summer (July and August combined) newsletter are due in the church office by **noon** on **Monday, June 15.**

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Social Ministry

This summer, beginning in July, we will again be collecting school supplies for the children of Faith Immanuel in East Landsdowne. Any and all items are welcome. There will be a pink bin in the hallway for your gifts. We will deliver everything to the children in mid-August. Thank you, in advance, for your ongoing support of this ministry.

Cheryl Morrell

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Children's Corner

In June we celebrate our dads on Father's Day. Fathers in the Bible:

Ask the children to look up Bible stories about fathers in the scriptures. For each of these you could discuss the different ways the children showed honor to their Father. This activity is better suited for older children. Know your students and use your best judgment. • Luke 15:11-32 "The Parable of the Prodigal Son" • Genesis 47:1-11 "Joseph provides for his aged Father" • Genesis 22:1-19 "Abraham almost sacrifices Isaac"

Some activities to do with the younger children in the family:

- **"My Dad Rocks" Paperweight:** Have children paint a smooth, heavy rock with bright acrylics and write messages like "My Dad Rocks" or a verse from Proverbs 14:26 using permanent markers.
- **"Tie-rrific" Necktie Cards:** Fold colored cardstock into a shirt and attach a decorated, paper tie. It is a classic, simple craft.
- **Handprint Keepsakes:** Use washable paint to stamp handprints on cardstock. Include a printed poem or a message of appreciation to take home.

Hope everyone has a wonderful Father's Day!

Julie Cirillo

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Welcome Church

Please continue to remember the homeless. They continue to need toiletries, coffee and socks.

Joan Krauter

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Gemma Services

The ladies of Women of the ELCA continue to support the children in the residential treatment program of Gemma with small bags of candy that the ladies have assembled at our meeting. We are told that the children look forward to our bags each month of the school year. Gemma will soon be opening a new and much larger school for the children in the program. The ladies are looking forward to attending the open house program this fall.

Nancy Regan

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Food Collections

We continue to support the food program at Media Food Bank with our monthly donations. We are told that the need continues to be necessary for many families that are served by the bank. Also, many of the children who receive lunches at school will need lunch items this summer. Thank you to all who support the program.

Nancy Regan

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Nursery School

We are grateful to have welcomed the beautiful spring weather this April, a wonderful reminder of God's creation and the joy that comes with new beginnings. Our Friday evening family event was a great success, with gorgeous weather setting the stage for a fun-filled night. The children had a blast enjoying moon bounces, getting their faces painted, and spending time together with their families. Guests also enjoyed delicious food from Zac's and sweet treats from Vera's Water Ice. It truly was an evening where fun was had by all!

During the week of April 20th, we were excited to participate in the PA One Book Initiative. The Springfield Library visited our school and shared a special story with our students, making it a meaningful and engaging experience for everyone.

As we look ahead, we are currently enrolling for the 2026–2027 school year. We offer programs for children ages 3–5, including 2-day, 3-day, and 5-day options. For more information or to schedule a tour, please contact Jenny at 610-543-5589.

We appreciate the support of our families and are eager to continue making meaningful memories together this spring season, as we grow in both learning and faith.

Jenny Redding
Director

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Vital Statistics

High School Graduates:

Scarlet Kiely
Riley O'Donnell
Luke Plachuta

Deaths:

Sara Riegner
Died: April 21, 2026
Funeral: May 16, 2026

Carol Penjuka
Died: May 22, 2026
Funeral: June 1, 2026

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Monthly Mailbag

Dear Saint Matthew Lutheran Church Women of the ELCA,

Thank you for your recent gift of \$100 supporting the ministries of Women of the ELCA. Your gift makes a real difference to the organization and those we serve.

As the new Interim Executive Director of Women of the ELCA, it is a great joy to be part of this community in which members share their gifts of time, talent, and financial resources in order to support each other in our callings, engage in real action and healing ministry, and promote love and justice in the church, society and the world. Your gift helps the organization do its work.

It is an honor to be part of an organization whose funding began with women over a hundred years ago, women who did not yet have the right to vote nor the ability to be ordained in the Lutheran church. These women knew they had great gifts and they could do great things. By coming together and pooling their resources, their faithful generosity continues to support women today and continues to inspire others to give. Thank you for being part of the faithful community of givers with your financial contribution.

Indeed, thank you for your generosity. Together we can do so much good in the world. For regular updates on our ever-growing work together, please see our website, www.womenoftheelca.org.

With gratitude,
Jennifer Hockenberry
Interim Executive Director
Women of the ELCA

Dear Pastor Richard,

We are very grateful for Saint Matthew's friendship and generosity! Thank you for the donation of \$120. This gift supports Gemma's vital behavioral health, prevention, child welfare programs, and Martin Luther School. Your support truly matters!

Thank you for being a part of Gemma! Together we are working to create a world where every person knows they matter. Should you have any questions, wish to schedule a visit, or explore volunteering, please contact Lynn at 610-825-4440 ext. 3206 or Lunipan@gemmaservices.org. On behalf of all of us at Gemma, thank you and best wishes.

Sincerely,

Lynn Unipan, MSW, CFRE
Chief Development & Communications Officer
Amanda Bryant
Director of Donor & Volunteer Engagement
Gemma Services

Dear Saint Matthew Friends,

We appreciate you greatly! Thank you for your long-standing friendship and generosity to Gemma Services: We are grateful for your donation of 60 candy-filled treat bags and one bag of extra candy for the youth in residence at Gemma. You bring so much joy to the children, and your support helps Gemma continue to provide vital behavioral health, prevention, and child welfare services and specialized education services through our Martin Luther School for youth and families who are facing challenging times. You and your friendship matter a great deal to us—thank you!

With the help of friends like all of you, Gemma is able to accompany more than 3,000 youth and families each year as they face life's challenges, heal from traumas, manage mental health challenges, learn new skills, and work to reach their individual goals. As always, we would be happy to welcome any of our friends from Saint Matthew to visit one of Gemma's three locations to see firsthand the programs you are helping us to provide. We will also continue to keep you up-to-date with any volunteer opportunities beyond all the ways you currently support us. You can learn more about all of Gemma's programs, latest happenings, and current support needs by visiting www.gemmaservices.org.

Should you have any questions or wish to schedule a visit, please contact me at 610-825-4440 ext. 3307 or Abryant@gemmaservices.org. On behalf of all at Gemma, thank you!

Sincerely,
Amanda Bryant
Director of Donor & Volunteer Engagement
Gemma Services

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