



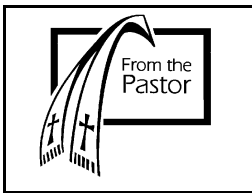
The GOOD NEWSLETTER

of
Saint Matthew Lutheran Church
Springfield, Pennsylvania

Volume 67, Number 3

March 2015

Internet Web Site: www.stmattspringfield.org



From Our Pastor

“As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea - for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, “Follow me and I will make

you fish for people.” And immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him. They went to Capernaum; and when the Sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.”
Mark 1:16-22

Lent has often been a time for extra worship in the form of midweek services, and extra education as we reflect on aspects of the faith in such services. As I read the passage above, I see the pattern is an ancient one. As Jesus calls his first disciples, they begin by going to worship, and being taught by Jesus. They begin a journey that will become a lifelong reality as they follow Jesus not just through Jesus' life, but for the rest of theirs, as well.

Lent is a time for discovery. In this season we learn more about who Jesus is. We learn more about who we are. We learn more about who Jesus is calling us to be. Ideally, we grow into becoming that person as we follow Jesus in our lives.

How do we explore this relationship with Jesus? How do we make words from ancient texts apply to today? How do we make sense of the call that comes to us, as Jesus says “follow me?” How do we hear, and how do we invite others to make Jesus a part of their lives, when faith seems so optional these days! I suppose if there were a simple answer, every church would be filled with people, and the world would be at peace. I guess the answer is as it was for Simon Peter and Andrew; we put ourselves in the presence of Jesus to worship and learn.

This Lent we will again offer midweek worship and learning experiences. We will hold a simple service of prayer and

reflection. For our topics, we will look at such things as how a relationship with God is possible, what it means to leave behind our past, what it means to forgive others, what it means to love, and what it means to be generous people. We will try to do so in a way that engages these age-old questions in a fresh way. I hope you will join us each Sunday morning at 8:00 or 10:15, and each Wednesday evening at 7:00.

We will also have our worship and learning extend through Holy Week as we walk with Jesus and the disciples to the cross. The week from Palm Sunday through Easter is the time when we see God's work be completed in the actions of Jesus. The actions of this week are what bring us to the very throne of God. To help us experience the power of this week we will worship at noon and 7:00 on Thursday (called “Maundy Thursday”), at 7:00 pm Friday (called “Good Friday”), and at 7:00 on Saturday for the Easter Vigil. There will also be a Community Good Friday Service at noon on Friday at First Presbyterian Church. We will bring our celebration to its peak with the service of the Resurrection of Jesus on Easter Day. To bring the message of each of these days to life, we will use special music and a powerful program by our choir on Good Friday. At its root, we will gather in the house of God to worship and learn.

Let us join together this season as we explore what it means to follow Jesus in our lives today. May this journey be for us, like Simon Peter and Andrew before us, a lifelong path of following Jesus, who loves us not just for the rest of our lives, but for the rest of his as well.

Pr. Karl M. Richard

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Stewardship and Staffing

I hope you have heard or read over the past several months that we are looking to add more staff at Saint Matthew. We are a congregation with 844 baptized members, just over 300 families, with a very active program of worship, learning, fellowship, service, and sharing. The reality is there is more work to do to keep such a ministry going and growing than can be accomplished with just one person overseeing all the operations.

While we are blessed to have an excellent Administrator in Janice Gardner, and a dedicated Musician and worship partner in Pat McHugh, we need more leadership to not only maintain what we have been doing, but to expand offerings for more people to come to know Jesus. We need additional staff to help us in our mission of Connecting People, Changing Lives through Jesus Christ.

Because of the economic downturn, and then because of the expense of the extensive repairs to our physical plant, we have not been adding but rather reducing staff over the past 7 years. For our programming staff we used to have 2 full-time pastors 1 full-time musician, and 1 part-time person for Youth and Confirmation ministry. (This was in addition to our support staff of a full-time office administrator, full-time sexton and part-time assistant sexton.) We now have one full-time pastor and a part-time musician. This makes it difficult to provide the opportunities for our existing membership to be engaged in ministry, let alone encourage new families to come to know Jesus and follow him as their Lord.

Now that the economy is turning around (however slowly), and the major repair project is completed, we need to work on staffing for ministry. I would love to be able to bring in another full-time person to help with all we have before us. At this point, our current budget is calling for a half-time person to assist with youth and family ministry.

To do this we need your help! We will not be able to make even a part-time position available without additional support from our members. I am very pleased to see that many of our 300+ families have increased their giving to the church for this coming year. What we need to make this staffing a reality is at least another \$24,000.

How can we do it? If we receive an extra \$20 per month from 100 of our families, we will be able to close this gap. If we can get more, we may be able to bring on a full-time person to help us connect people and change lives!

Will you be one of those who will give an extra \$20 a month? I don't know about you, but a 20 in my pocket does not stay long in my pocket. It isn't a huge amount of money. You can be one of the families that makes a difference in your church and in this community for Jesus.

100 families. An extra \$20 per month. This is not too hard for us to do. Will you help?

Pr. Karl M. Richard

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Financial Update

“God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work.” 2 Corinthians 9:8

	<u>January 2015</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
Giving/Income:	\$46,856.70	\$46,856.70
Expenses	<u>46,625.91</u>	<u>46,625.91</u>
Plus/Minus	230.79	230.79

January Summary: January was unfortunately a very light envelope giving month. However, Saint Matthew was blessed that a **very generous regular donor** gave an additional one-time gift in the amount of \$10,000 which allowed us to close to the positive for \$230.79 for the month. Thanks to all for your continued generous gifts for God's Work.

Giving Opportunities: Did you know that the Lutheran Magazine is received by all members at an estimated annual cost of \$2,100? There is an envelope in our January packet to help defray this cost and over the last year we have received \$540 to help cover that cost. Can you help?

Your Finance Committee

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Christian Education Committee

Thank you to all the Sunday School youth who helped with the Souper Bowl of Caring event in February. Over \$206.00 was collected in the soup pots and soup containers. In addition the youth helped out in many other ways: delivering flyers, collecting bags of food, sorting and packing boxes. Every job was very much appreciated. Thank you for your support to such a worthy cause!

Adult Bible Study classes led by Pastor Richard will not take place during Lent. They will start up again after Easter. For the early risers we have a class at 6:30 a.m. There is also another class at noon. Consider joining one of these discussion groups. You'll learn a great deal and enjoy Christian fellowship.

It's great when various committees within the church work together! Over 60 people attended the Mardi Gras party in February. Pat McHugh from our Worship and Music Committee spearheaded the event. Heather Markland from Young Family Ministries coordinated the games, crafts, music, and decorations. Janice Gardner, our secretary; Rick Link from Social Ministry; and Carol Penjuke from Christian Education helped to prepare the food. Several other church members pitched in to make this a fun-filled family time before Lent. It was a wonderful time of fellowship!

If you are interested in teaching a Sunday School class in September, please get in touch with Carol Penjuke. We have a few openings. It is a wonderful experience to work with the youth of our church. Teaching materials are supplied!

Carol Penjuke

Family Ministries' Easter Egg Hunt

Family Ministries is hosting our annual Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, March 28, at 10:00 a.m. Please join us for crafts, yummy treats, and an "egg-citing" hunt! R.S.V.P. to Heather Markland at hmteach@hotmail.com by March 20.

Heather Markland

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Children's Corner

Dear Children,

Several years ago, our son and his wife gave me a book of Bible Prayers - one for each day of the year. I have been through that book 14 times and the pages are getting wrinkled and the cover has a hard time staying in place. The book mostly contains the prayers of David (found in the Psalms,) and also many prayers of the Old Testament prophets, and finally the prayers of Jesus, Paul, and John. These prayers are very different in nature - some are calling out to God for help, some are prayers of thankfulness, many are prayers asking for forgiveness, and some are prayers of honoring God. Each prayer is accompanied by a wonderful explanation of the reason for that particular prayer, then followed with an incomplete sentence of how I might begin a prayer. I have always found these prayers to be helpful; and, even though these prayers were written several thousand years ago, they always fit into my thinking in today's world.

Although the prayers in my little book, prayers in our Sunday liturgy, and prayers in my other daily devotional book have been inspirational, I had a wonderful encounter with a very devout Christian lady (by the name of Mary) that left a huge impact on me. As we were chatting in the hall here at Maris Grove, Mary proceeded to tell me a little story about an incident in her church last Sunday. As everyone was kneeling and reciting the many prayers of the liturgy, one voice seemed to soar above the others with a fervor of praise and thanksgiving. When it was time to sing the last hymn, Mary noted that the same wonderful voice full of spiritual strength was truly belting out the words to every verse with great enthusiasm. My friend turned around and gave this young man a "thumbs up." As they all went down the aisle after church, the "source of the voice" - a bigger than life young Marine - said to my friend, "I hope my loud praying and singing didn't offend you." She replied that rather than offend her, she was truly inspired. To which he said, "Thank you, Ma'am. I just returned from 13 months in Afghanistan, and I know how to pray." As we both wiped the tears that had collected, we realized that this young man knew that God was indeed watching over him, loving him, filling his needs, and showing great mercy. How great is that?

Dear Parents,

I think it would be interesting to discuss the possible contents of this man's prayers as he served his country in a very

hostile land. How does God's faithfulness work into your lives?

Sylvia Yost

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First Thursday Friends ("FTF")

The First Thursday Friends will gather at Famous Dave's Bar-B-Que on March 5 at 11:30 a.m. Famous Dave's is located in Springfield Park Shopping Center at 825 Baltimore Pike, Springfield.

Please join us. All are welcome. Contact John Stefl at 610-544-2816 for more information.

John Stefl

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Lenten Schedule

We continue on our Lenten journey throughout March, coming together for our mid-week Lenten services each Wednesday evening at 7:00 p.m. It is especially important during this season that we set down the cell phones and turn off the distractions and dedicate extra time for reflection and prayer. Our Wednesday evening services provide that opportunity.

March 29 is Palm Sunday and the beginning of Holy Week. On Maundy Thursday (April 2) we will have two services - one at noon and one at 7:00 p.m. with communion at both services. Our 7:00 p.m. service on Good Friday (April 3) will be the Service of Tenebrae led by our adult choir. Tenebrae is a Latin word for darkness and follows Jesus' final hours of his life on earth.

Our Easter Vigil will begin at 7:00 p.m. on Saturday night, April 4. Easter Sunday will include two services - one at 8:00 a.m. and the second at 11:00 a.m. Our annual Easter breakfast will be held between the two services at 9:30.

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It's Time to Order Easter Lilies



Easter lilies that beautify our sanctuary and parlor may be ordered by signing up in the church hallway or calling the church office. Look for the sign-up sheet in the church hallway in the middle of March. The cost of each plant is \$10.00, and it may be taken home following the 11:00 a.m. Easter service. The last day to order lilies is Sunday, March 29. Thank you.

Men's Breakfast

Our March Men's Breakfast will be held at Saint Matthew on Saturday, March 21, at 7:15 a.m. Rick Link and his kitchen cohorts will work their culinary magic as more than 100 men will enjoy the full buffet breakfast for which Saint Matthew has become famous.

Our guest speaker will be Springfield Police Chief Joseph Daly.

All of the men of Saint Matthew are invited to bring a friend to this special program. Men from other Lutheran congregations in Delaware County will be invited.

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Saint Matthew Christian Nursery School



March will be another month containing many activities appropriately developed for the various happenings of March. We will discover if March "comes in like a lion" and "goes out like a lamb." All classes will celebrate Saint Patrick's Day with shamrocks, rainbows and leprechauns. We will also have a visit from the Philadelphia Zoo. All of the children continue to learn to recognize and print the letters of the alphabet, printing their names, doing fun activities and making new friends along the way. We will be singing new songs during music with Mrs. Shelton, and the children just love coming together to sing and march with the instruments.

Registration is now under way for the 2015-2016 school year. We offer a 2 day class for three year olds, a 3 day class for four year olds, and a 5 day class for the five year olds.

Linda M. Maylie, Director

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Pictorial Directory

The information for the new directory was submitted to Lifetouch at the end of January. Hopefully, by the time you are reading this, our "proof copy" will have been received, and Kathie Morgan, Carol Penjucke and I will have been able to complete the proofreading that must be done before Lifetouch does the printing. We are hoping to have the final copies for the congregation by some time in April. This has been a long process, but we hope everyone will be pleased with the final product. Our intent is for this to be another tool for all of us to get to know one another better.

Cheryl Morrell

Ronald McDonald Tab Report

There were six more jugs of tabs delivered to Ronald McDonald House. That means that since we started this program in 2010, we have delivered 73 jugs of can tabs to help with the heat at the house. Well done, everyone who helps by donating the can tabs. They were very appreciative of our visit and our collecting of the tabs at Ronald McDonald House.

Nancy Regan

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Women of the ELCA News

Warm greetings to all! Hopefully all of you are keeping warm and staying well during this winter season; just remember Spring is not too far away. That's right, March 20 is designated the beginning of the season of Spring - great news!

Our circles are always busy with their ongoing projects plus their schedules for serving and working on special functions within Saint Matthew Lutheran Church. We enjoy what we do for others - it's a good feeling to know we are helping those in need and enjoying the fellowship within the church when we join forces to work on planning and serving the special gatherings held throughout the year.

Be sure to stop in the church hallway on Sunday, March 8, and see the handiwork done by our ladies for the Ronald McDonald House. This group meets the third Wednesday of each month (September to May) at 10 a.m. in the Parlor. Their door is always open to welcome you!

On April 12, 2015, we will be having our annual Women's Sunday at both the 8:00 a.m. and 10:15 a.m. services. This particular Sunday is always held the Sunday following Easter. The ladies look forward to serving on this day - please let us know if you would like to assist us. Our speaker for the two services that day will be Lorraine Martinez from the Chester County Migrant Ministry. She was with us for our Christmas breakfast and had a wonderful message that she shared with the ladies. There will be more info coming in the next newsletter.

The schedule for March is as follows:

March 8	Ronald McDonald Display in church hallway
March 11	Board Meeting - 9:30 a.m.
March 14	LWR Quilting - 10:30 a.m.
March 18	Ronald McDonald Quilting - 10:00 a.m.
March 22	Sarah Circle - 7:30 p.m.
March 28	Esther Circle - 10:00 a.m.

Dee Bratz and Executive Board

Library



We've come through Christmas and praising the birth of Jesus Christ our Savior and into a New Year. We've been lucky in not having the snows of last year. Already we've had Ash Wednesday and are well into Lent.

Intimate Moments with the Savior by Ken Gire, Shelf 232.9/GIR is a devotional tapestry, richly woven from threads of scripture, meditation, and prayer. It captures the intimate moments Jesus spent with individuals and how those moments forever changed their lives.

You will also see what these people saw in Jesus. You will see the kindness in his face, the forgiveness in his eyes, and the power in his hand. Moment by intimate moment, you, too, will be changed.

Barbara Kinsey

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Monthly Mailbag

Dear Pastor Richard and the entire Saint Matthew congregation,



I would like to send a heartfelt thank you to everyone at Saint Matthew for your continued prayers for my aunt Betty Gantz. My aunt passed away Friday, January 9, 2015. Although her passing was extremely hard for us, we were comforted by your prayers and support through her year-long battle with brain cancer. Although we were miles and miles away from home in Boston, your prayers, love, and support continued to sustain us as we laid my aunt to rest. There are no words that can truly express how much everyone means to us. God bless you all!

Sincerely,
Greg, Nicole, Gregory, Abigail, and Ryan Smith

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Dear Saint Matthew Lutheran Church,

Because you care, we have a donation of lots of tabs and 22 quilts. Thank you! That will certainly help our families. We are only able to care for our families so well because **you** care! Thank you for caring!

Sincerely,
Craig Butchenhart, Volunteer
Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House

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Dear Pastor Richard and congregation,

On behalf of over 1250 client families and the volunteers of Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry, we want to thank all of you for your great generosity towards the Pantry. Your weekly donations last year totaled 3,404.4 pounds of food. Your ongoing generosity is so thoughtful, and needed.

Without donations of product and funds, we cannot keep food on our shelves. In 2014, Loaves and Fishes provided 259,872 meals for 10,828 individuals. You can imagine how much food especially meats, all of this took to do. Your continued support is deeply appreciated for helping us meet our clients' needs throughout the year. As gas prices, food prices and the cost of living continue to grow, so will our pantry as we do our best to meet expanding need.

Each time we are open, new families come to us who have been forced to ask for help as they can no longer afford even the most basic necessities, What this means is a constant influx of new families to Loaves and Fishes. Thank you for seeing their need and being so generous in helping them. What you have done has had a profound effect upon our clients' lives.

Your thoughtfulness and generosity for our client families means a great deal. The clients and volunteers of Loaves and Fishes were very thankful for this donation and encouraged by your generosity. We are deeply grateful.

Sincerely,
Joanne F. Castagna, Director
Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry

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Dear Lovely Ladies of Saint Matthew,

Thank you for the wonderful bags of treats! The children always enjoy a small treat and your bags are perfect! Thank you also for the jacket and box of candy for the staff. The recipient of the jacket will be a very happy little girl and the candy was a hit with our staff members. We are so grateful for the ways you care for all of us (children and staff) throughout the year!

Sincerely,
Amanda Bryant
Martin Luther-Silver Springs School

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The Way It Is

If we could shrink the earth's population to a village of precisely 100 people with all the existing human ratios remaining the same, it would look something like the following:

- 57 Asians
- 21 Europeans
- 14 from the western hemisphere
- 8 Africans
- 52 would be female
- 48 would be male
- 70 would be non-white
- 30 would be white
- 70 would be non-Christian
- 30 would be Christian
- 89 would be heterosexual
- 11 would be homosexual.

Six people would possess 59% of the entire world's wealth and all 6 would be from the United States. 80 would live in substandard housing, 70 would be unable to read, 50 would suffer from malnutrition. One would be near death. One would be near birth. One (yes—only one) would have a college education. One would have a computer.

When one considers our world from such a compressed perspective, the need for acceptance, understanding and education becomes glaringly apparent.

Therefore, if you have food in the refrigerator, clothes on your back, a roof over head and a place to sleep, you are richer than 75% of the rest of the world. If you have money in the bank, in your wallet, and spare change in a dish someplace, you are among the top 8% of the world's wealthy. If you have never experienced the danger of battle, the loneliness of imprisonment, the agony of torture, or death, you are more blessed than three billion people of the world.

If your parents are still alive and still married, you are very rare, even in the United States. If you hold up your head with a smile on your face and are truly thankful, you are truly blessed because the majority can, but most do not.

If you can hold someone's hand, and hug them, or even touch them on the shoulder, you are blessed because you can offer a healing touch. If you can read this message, you are more blessed than over two billion people in the world that cannot read at all.

Source and author unknown

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Vital Statistics

Death: Jerome "Lee" Jacque
 Died: February 3, 2015
 Funeral: February 10, 2015

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints" Psalm 116: 15

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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 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

