



The GOOD NEWSLETTER

of
Saint Matthew Lutheran Church
Springfield, Pennsylvania

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From Our Pastor

Connect
Care
eQuip
Cultivate

What is a Covenant?

As events in our family life take a turn this month with the wedding of our daughter Abigail to her fiancé Christian, this question comes to mind. But it is more than the wedding that raises this question for me. It is also the other events we celebrate this month: All Saints, Thanksgiving, and the beginning of Advent.

A covenant is, most simply, a promise. It is not the word most commonly used in the secular realm for a promise, although it is not an unknown word to many people. Beyond the simple definition of promise, however, it is a particular kind of promise, one that indicates an ongoing commitment not necessarily conveyed by the word “promise.”

I think of “promise” in three ways. First, there is the simple statement of what one assures another they will do. “I promise I will give you this book.” “I promise I will be there at 2:00.” Such a promise is one-way and involves one issue. I state that I will do something, and then I either honor my word, or I do not. The cost of breaking this promise is my integrity, and your faith in me.

Second, there is a promise between two (or more) parties that an exchange of some sort will be made. This promise binds all parties to certain expectations. This promise is known as a contract. I promise to give you \$30,000, and you promise to turn over the keys of your car to me. If either party does not fulfill their part of the promise, the contract is invalid. If I do not give you the cash, you do not give me the car. There may also be other costs and fines associated with the breaking of the contract, but when those issues are resolved, either from fulfilling the contract or paying the penalties, our dealings with each other come to an end.

The third kind of promise is a covenant, which is what I call a “relational promise.” In this promise there is an ongoing, long-term relationship established between the people involved in the process. This kind of promise involves a level of commitment that the other two do not expect or require. And the cost is, in some ways, our very lives.

On All Saints Day we remember the covenantal promise God made with us in our baptism. The baptismal and confirmation

liturgies are where we most often use the word “covenant” in our life as the Church. When we bring our children to the font for baptism, we make promises that we will raise our children in the faith so that “living in the covenant of baptism, they may learn to trust God” and live as reflections of the light of Christ in this world. And in baptism, God promises to be with us always, even to the end of the age. Then, when our days on this earth are completed, God promises that a place has been prepared for us so that where God is, we may be also. This is a covenant – a promise that establishes a relationship that is an ongoing commitment and connection one with the other. And so, on All Saints Day, we remember those who have been baptized in this past year, AND we remember those who have “claimed their baptismal promise” as they have died in this past year, assured that God receives them into the arms of mercy.

While Thanksgiving is a national holiday, it is one which churches have long celebrated, because it is a day on which we recognize God’s abundant blessings to us each day of our lives. It is always right to give God thanks and praise, and it is a good practice that, once a year, we all stop for a moment to count our blessings, return thanks to God, and recognize the covenant in which we live – one in which God gives us each day our daily bread, all we need to live and thrive in this world. And then, we watch football!

Advent is the beginning of a new Church Year, and marks the time when we look for Christ to come in glory to make all things new. It is the promise that God’s will, not the ways of the world, will ultimately win out. This also is a reflection of the covenantal relationship God has established with us, and which God wants to establish with the world. We, who are already in this relationship, are encouraged to live with such love and concern for others that they, too, might know God wants to establish a relationship with them so that all people might have new life in him.

And then, of course, there are weddings. As two people come together to make vows, they are making a promise. It is more than just a promise to be there at 4:30 on November 30th. It is more than a contract of services or items requested and paid. It is a promise to be with each other always, in the highs and the lows, the good times, and especially in the bad times, because this world is too hard to face on our own. We need each other. And in marriage, we covenant to be each other’s “person” for as long as we both shall live. This kind of covenant, this kind of relationship, is the giving and receiving of each other’s very self. Which is why, when a covenant is broken, it hurts so much more than a broken promise, or a contract gone bad.

So, what is a covenant? It is, most simply, a promise. But it is simply so much more. It is the beginning of a life-long relationship, one blessed by God for now, and eternity.

May you be blessed in the all the covenants God has made with you.

Pastor Karl M. Richard

What Happened Last Month at Our Church

The month started out with the smell of gas. We had PECO out; they found a small leak on their side which they repaired and a small leak on our side. Our side turned out to be a valve that is underground and close to the top. We had plumbers come out and replace the bad valve. PECO came back and gave us all clear to turn the gas back on. Our gas supplies our heaters and generator. I am pleased to report that all are working fine.

Although it was extremely expensive, all air conditioners are now working fine. Our elevator sump was not turning off and running constantly. A service technician came out and repaired it; all is working fine. The heat is now on and working well.

In our last Property meeting, our budget was reviewed. We looked at what we spent and what projects were done in the past months. Having a large, unexpected repair to one of our 10 major air conditioners, we overspent our budget category by a lot. The coming year we hope we will not need a large amount of unexpected, but necessary repairs.

Joe Regan
Property Committee

Christian Education Update

We wanted to thank all of you for your help with making the health kits for Lutheran World Relief. The donations were amazing! We were able to make 42 kits with your help. A very special thank you to Nancy and Joe Regan for driving them to a drop-off spot in New Jersey. Sunday School has started! We are so excited for Will Toland to join our teachers. With Nicole Smith they are teaching the high school students. We have classes for all ages! All are welcome to join us.

Julie Cirillo

Calling ALL Youth!

If you are in grades 6-12, we are having a church "sleep over" on November 14. We will be making the Mason Jars Mixes. Please talk to Nicole Smith or Julie Cirillo if you are interested in joining us.

Stewardship

The Committee is looking for a few new ideas and some additional members. It is time to start planning our annual campaign. If you would like to join our committee or have a new and exciting campaign idea, please contact Pastor or Fran Gordon. It is a short-term committee, we start meeting at the end of September and are done by December. And, you will not be expected to ask anyone in person for money!

Fran Gordon

Financial Update

Heavenly Father, As we enter this month of October, we come before You with gratitude for the blessings You have bestowed upon our church community. We thank You for the resources and gifts we have received, and we seek Your guidance as we navigate our financial journey. In Your holy name, we pray. Amen.

	<u>Aug. 2025</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
Giving/Income	\$ 60,632	\$ 417,058.
Expenses	<u>46,227.</u>	<u>399,322.</u>
Plus/Minus	\$ 14,405	\$ 17,736.

Summary: In August, our church saw a total giving/income of \$60,632, while expenses amounted to \$46,227, resulting in a positive balance of \$14,405 for the month. Year-to-date, we have accumulated \$417,058 in giving/income against \$399,322 in expenses, leaving us with a balance of \$17,736.

Envelope/General Giving: This month, our worship giving totaled \$52,848, which includes both regular contributions and plate offerings. Your commitment makes a significant difference in our shared journey of faith!

Giving Opportunities: As we continue to grow in faith and community, we invite you to explore the various giving opportunities available to support our mission. Every contribution, no matter the size, helps us reach our goals and serve those in need. Your generosity allows us to fund essential programs, outreach initiatives, and our ongoing ministry work. Together, we can make a meaningful impact in the lives of others.

Roof Fund Pledges: Continue sending in your pledges for the Roof Fund. It's crucial that we meet the pledged amounts from all members, as this will enable us to replenish our endowment effectively. Your commitment to fulfilling your pledges directly supports our initiatives and the overall health of our church. Thank you for your continued dedication and generosity! Together, we can ensure a strong foundation for our future.

Respectfully submitted,
Kevin Cunningham and
Rebecca DeSantis

Thanksgiving Turkeys

If you receive a free turkey that you will not be using for Thanksgiving and would like to donate it, please let us know. All turkeys received will go to needy families.

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Welcome Church

The cold winter weather is coming. The homeless will need socks and gloves to keep them warm, as well as coffee and toiletries. Please bring these things to the church. There is a box under the hallway table for your donations.

Joan Krauter

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Beds for Kids

Beds for Kids were very glad to receive 7 new pillows, 4 new sheet sets, bags of bedding, bags of books, and a large bag of hand puppets and stuffed animals that we delivered on October 1 to the warehouse in Huntingdon Valley. They provide a complete set of beds, bed frames, sheets, blanket, pillow, and comforters or spread along with books and other hygiene items for children who are currently bedless. Thank you to all who support this program.

Nancy Regan

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Children's Corner



Faith-Focused Fall Activities for Children

1. Thankfulness Tree

- **Activity:** Create a tree on the wall or use a real branch in a vase. Cut out paper leaves. Each day or session, children write something they're thankful to God for on a leaf and add it to the tree.
- **Lesson:** Gratitude and recognizing God's blessings.
- **Bible Verse:** 1 Thessalonians 5:18 – *"Give thanks in all circumstances..."*

2. Harvest Blessing Bags

- **Activity:** Put together small care packages with snacks, socks, or notes and give them to neighbors, the homeless, or nursing home residents.
- **Lesson:** Serving others as Jesus did.
- **Bible Verse:** Matthew 25:35 – *"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat..."*

3. Pumpkin Gospel Craft

- **Activity:** Carve or decorate a pumpkin while telling the Gospel story (cleaning out the "gunk" like God cleans our hearts, putting in a light like Jesus' love).
- **Lesson:** Salvation and transformation in Christ.
- **Bible Verse:** 2 Corinthians 5:17 – *"If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation..."*

4. Nature Walk & Prayer

- **Activity:** Go on a fall nature walk. Collect leaves or pinecones. Pause at beautiful spots to pray and thank God for His creation.
- **Lesson:** God's beauty in creation.
- **Bible Verse:** Psalm 19:1 – *"The heavens declare the glory of God..."*

5. Apple Object Lesson: "God's Love is Sweet"

- **Activity:** Cut open apples to show the star shape in the middle. Talk about how God is at the center of everything.
- **Lesson:** God's presence and sweetness.
- **Verse:** Psalm 34:8 – *"Taste and see that the Lord is good..."*

6. Fall Praise Jam

- **Activity:** Have a mini worship session with kid-friendly praise songs. Include motions, dancing with scarves or fall-colored streamers.
- **Lesson:** Joy in worshiping God.
- **Verse:** Psalm 100:1-2 – *"Make a joyful noise to the Lord..."*

7. Corn Kernel Prayer Jar

- **Activity:** Kids write or draw prayer requests or praises on small slips of paper and roll them into a jar filled with corn kernels.
- **Use:** Revisit throughout the season and pray over them as a group or family.

Julie Cirillo

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Food Collection

We continue to deliver a car full of food to the Media Food Bank on the first Sunday of every month. We are very thankful that the Saint Matthew family supports this program. In talking with the staff, they shared a need for paper grocery bags, and they currently are collecting plastic bags that they recycle to make benches that allow people a place to sit while waiting for their food to be ready. So, we will be happy to collect both types of bags along with the food items. I also learned that there is a freezer available and they can take frozen turkeys should anyone wish to donate one. Please notify Joe or Nancy Regan if you wish to donate a frozen turkey. Our next collection date is November 2.

Nancy Regan

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Gemma Services Report

The "Everything But The Turkey" program is underway. The response has been very positive. We hope to deliver 10 meal kits for Thanksgiving to Gemma Services who will deliver them to needy families who are supported by the programs of Gemma. Thank you to everyone who purchased and delivered food and gifts cards to make the bags we will deliver to Gemma.

The ladies of Circle will be looking for any unwanted nut-free Halloween candy to make our monthly favors for the children of Gemma. There is a box in the hallway for any donations. Thank you for supporting this program.

Nancy Regan

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Social Ministry

Social Ministry will be continuing with our annual pajama gifts for the children of Faith Immanuel Lutheran Church. Their congregation is growing, which is wonderful; however, this also means a growing list of children to provide gifts for. Many of you were kind enough to purchase gifts for more than one child last year, and we hope that those of you who can will consider doing this again so that each child will receive a gift. For many of these children, it's the only gift they receive. If possible, a small toy, book, etc. is very much appreciated to add to the gift. When these families lived in their home country, they were continually running from war, so Christmas trees and gifts were non-existent.

In early November, a bulletin board will be in the hallway with a gift tag for each child. On the tag will be the child's name, sex, age, and clothing size. There will also be a sign-up sheet. **PLEASE SIGN YOUR NAME AND PHONE NUMBER ON THE SIGN-UP SHEET NEXT TO THE NAME OF THE CHILD ON THE TAG.** Please bring your gift, **WRAPPED WITH THE TAG ATTACHED**, to the Library by **DECEMBER 14** so that the gifts can be delivered to Faith Immanuel in time for their Christmas party.

Our congregation has always been very supportive of this endeavor. Thank you, in advance, for your generosity.

Cheryl Morrell

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Nursery School

A Place for Friendship and Learning

"Train up a child in the way he should go..." – Proverbs 22:6

October was a **spooktacular** month at Saint Matthew Christian Nursery School—full of fun, learning, and community spirit! We're so thankful for the families, staff, and volunteers who helped make this month so special. Here's a look at what we've been up to:



Safety Week (Oct. 14–16)

A heartfelt thank-you to the Springfield Fire Department for visiting our students and providing hands-on lessons in fire safety and emergency preparedness!



Lunch Launch

Our full-day Friday students enjoyed their very first hot lunch—and it was a hit! Pizza, chips, and juice boxes brought lots of smiles to the lunchroom.



Parades (Oct. 30 & 31)

Our students lit up the **community streets** with creativity and joy as they paraded in their costumes. Thank you to the

amazing volunteers who helped make these festive days run smoothly!



Speech & Language Screenings (Oct. 24)

These optional screenings provided families with valuable insight into early childhood speech and language development.



Fun Day (Oct. 5)

We had a wonderful time connecting with families from our community, sharing our mission, and showcasing all the special things happening here at Saint Matthew.

Now Enrolling for the 2025-2026 School Year!

We currently have **immediate openings**. If you or someone you know is interested in joining our loving and Christ-centered preschool community, please call **Jenny Redding at 610-543-5589**.

New Afternoon Program Launching January 2026!

We're excited to introduce our **Mixed Age Group Program** for children ages 3–5. This nurturing class is perfect for children who are new to a school setting or ready to transition out of naptime.



Schedule: 3 days a week | 12:15 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.



Start Date: January 2026

To register or learn more, please contact the Nursery School Office at **610-544-5589**.

Show Your Saint Matthew Spirit!

We're excited to announce that **Saint Matthew Christian Nursery School spirit wear is now on sale!**

Support our school and show your pride with cozy **hoodies** and fun **t-shirts**—perfect for students, parents, and all supporters of our nursery school community.



Order now at:

<https://brothersscreen.tuosystems.com/stores/st-matthews-nursery-school-25>

Hurry—shop closes soon

Support Our Nursery School!

Our nursery school is currently holding a Joe Corbi's fundraiser, and we'd love your support! From now until **November 7th**, you can purchase a variety of delicious items—perfect for busy weeknights or upcoming holiday gatherings. Proceeds go directly to supporting our nursery school programs and activities.

All items purchased will be delivered in time for the holiday season, making them a great gift or addition to your holiday meals. Thank you for helping us nurture young hearts and minds!

Jenny Redding

Nursery School Director

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December Newsletter Deadline

Articles for the December newsletter are due in the church office by **noon on Friday, November 14.**

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Vital Statistics

55th Wedding Anniversary: **John and Cynthia Stalker**
November 21, 2025

25th Wedding Anniversary: **Keith and Jamie Bennett**
November 24, 2025

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Monthly Mailbag

Dear Saint Matthew Lutheran Church,

We're so appreciative of your continued generosity and the thoughtful donation of cards, calendars, planners, pens, religious items, puzzle books, and more. Each item brings a moment of joy and connection to our residents, and your kindness never goes unnoticed.

Your ongoing support is a true gift—it lifts spirits, sparks smiles, and reminds us all of the goodness in the world. Thank

you for being such a caring part of our extended Fair Acres family.

With heartfelt appreciation,
Susan Harrar
Director of TAS & Volunteer Services
Fair Acres

Dear Saint Matthew Friends,

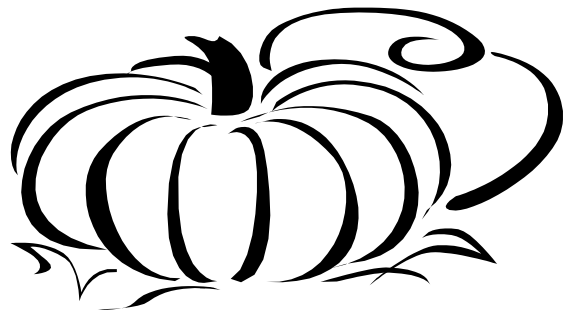
We are very grateful for Saint Matthew's long-standing friendship and generosity to Gemma Services? Thank you, once again, for your donation of candy-filled treat bags, books, markers, and a game for youth in residence at Gemma. Your generosity brings so much joy to the children, and your support helps Gemma continue to provide vital behavioral health, prevention, child welfare, and educational services (through Martin Luther School) for youth and families who are facing challenging times. Your friendship matters a great deal to us; thank you!

Thank you all for always keeping the kids in your thoughts and prayers!

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

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Please share your
HALLOWEEN CANDY
with the children of
Silver Springs Martin Luther
School.



The candy will be collected
through Sunday,
November 2nd, 2025.
Thank you!

**The youth of Saint Matthew
will be selling
mason jar mixes.**

**They are wonderful Christmas gifts.
The proceeds will benefit the youth of
Saint Matthew.**



**The jars will be available for purchase
beginning November 16.
Jars will cost \$15.00 each.**

**Any questions, please contact
Julie Cirillo
manoa1stgrade@hotmail.com**

St Mathews Christain Nursery School

ORDERS DUE BY:

11/7/2025

REGISTER
SHARE &
SHOP @

SHOPFUND.COM



Together, We Can Make a Difference!

We're excited to launch a fundraising effort to raise \$1,875 to purchase iPads/tablets for each classroom, a resource that will benefit students, staff, and families throughout our school community.

We're inviting each student to REGISTER and SHARE with 5 or more supporters to help us reach our group goal.

While additional funding sources may support us, your participation will help us reach this goal faster and more fully. Every share and every contribution big or small moves us closer to providing these valuable tools for learning and connection.

Thank you for being part of this effort and supporting our school!

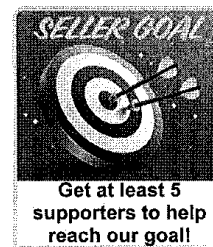
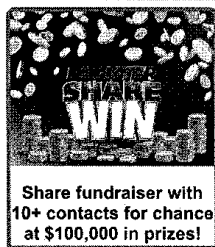
Make sure to play the Register. Share. Win. Game after you create your account.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

GROUP CODE
NNNAX

1. REGISTER today at ShopFund.com/reg.
2. SHARE with 5 or more supporters with the online tools.
3. WIN from over \$100,000 in prize giveaways.
4. Make checks payable to: St Mathews Christain Nursery School

800+ items available online PLUS take your order form to work, practice & other places to raise more!



Questions? Contact Dawn Baxter at (610)543-5589 or email stmattscns@gmail.com



FAMILY & FRIENDS CAN SUPPORT NATIONWIDE AT **ShopFund.com**

PLUS, REGISTER TO GAIN ACCESS TO THESE FUNDRAISER FEATURES:



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AND SHARE TO WIN FROM
\$100,000 IN PRIZES



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TRACK SUPPORTERS &
LEADERBOARD STANDING



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