



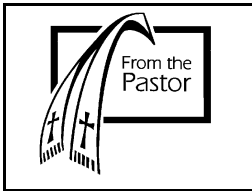
The GOOD NEWSLETTER

of
Saint Matthew Lutheran Church
Springfield, Pennsylvania

Volume 67, Number 8

October 2015

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From Our Pastor

*"God's word is our great heritage
and shall be ours forever;
to spread its light from age to age
shall be our great endeavor.
Through life it guides our way;*

in death it is our stay.

*Lord, grant while time shall last
your church may hold it fast
throughout all generations."*

Text: Nicolai F. S. Grundtvig, 1783-1872; tr. Ole G. Belsheim, 1861-1925, alt.

These are words that go with the tune for "A Mighty Fortress," our Lutheran "anthem." They convey an important truth that we as a Reformation People proclaim. We are saved by God's Word alone, and it is to that Word we cling, and from that Word that we get both our grounding and our direction for life.

October is the month in which we remember the work of Martin Luther and his efforts to reform the church of his day. On October 31, 1517, Dr. Luther posted his famous 95 theses, in which he called the whole Church to debate the role of grace and forgiveness in our lives, and how the Church needs to be first and foremost about the proclamation of this grace of God, shown in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Our threefold grounding is that we are saved by grace alone, by faith alone, through the word alone. Grace: God's love freely given to us through Christ. Faith: the gift of God to trust in the reality of God's action in Christ. Word: the written word of the scriptures, the proclaimed word of the Church, both of which bear witness to the living Word, Jesus Christ. This Word is our guide through life, because this Word is Jesus.

In Luther's day, there was a need to recover the core of this message, as there had been placed over it layer after layer of tradition that clouded the clear message of God's grace to us through Jesus for all who trust in Him. The call for the Church in every day is to be sure that tradition does not become more important than the Gospel, well and good. If they become our

source and guide, then they need to be challenged and perhaps done away with.

Many organizations share a rallying cry. For a college it may be "We Are! Penn State!" For the United States Marines it is "Semper Fi" which is shorthand Latin for "always faithful," and refers to the Marine's faithfulness to the Corps and the Country. For the Lutheran brand of Christianity, our call can be "Semper Reformandim" which means "always being reformed," or "always being made new." To be made new, we look continually to the Word of God, who calls us, challenges us, encourages us, and leads us in the ways of God.

As we come to another anniversary of our founder's ministry, may we continually be made new by the Word of God, Jesus Christ.

With you in the Word,
Pr. Karl M. Richard

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Financial Update

"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always to the end of the age."
Matthew 28:16-20

	<u>August 2015</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
Giving/Income:	\$38,845.47	\$312,113.35
Expenses	<u>36,567.76</u>	<u>320,787.82</u>
Plus/Minus	2,277.71	(8,674.47)

Summary: We finished August in the positive from a monthly basis to the tune of \$2,277, while year to date we are in the negative by about \$8,700. As we noted in our last update, if we compare where our giving and expenses are to the budget, we

are actually ahead: Our income is about \$2,700 higher than budget while our expenses are slightly lower by about \$5,000. The actual budget which was approved at the annual meeting for the year shows a negative for the entire year of \$27,000. The above passage from Matthew is known as the great commission where Jesus instructs his followers to make disciples of all nations. As commissioned disciples of Christ, let us share his love and message to our community and to each other.

Frequently Asked Questions on Tithing: As we begin to head into the fall and will be asked to think again about our financial commitment to God's Church during our Stewardship campaign, we wanted to share some thoughts/frequently asked questions on tithing. Tithing is the percentage (%) pledge of our total income that we devote to the Church. Open your heart to be led by the Spirit to be generous in all your ways, expecting nothing in return, but thanking God for the many blessings we have for today and for eternity through Christ Jesus.

Q: What is biblical tithing?

A: In general, biblical tithing refers to the practice of giving one tenth of one's income for the work of God. In the Hebrew Bible, tithing was understood as a response of gratitude and an obligation. In the light of the New Testament, some Christians believe tithing is still an obligation, whereas other Christians understand tithing to be a loving, freely chosen response to God's gracious provisions for life - God's grace! Tithing is understood by many Christians to be an important discipline of one's faith life.

Q: When one tithes, is the tithe on gross or net income?

A: There is no definitive answer to this question, and one must choose the method that most adequately fulfills the intention of the person or household who tithes. This decision is clearly in the hands of the giver, and it is the faithful giver who responds generously. Most important is the commitment of a portion of our total income towards God's work.

Q: How does the New Testament deal with the opportunity to tithe?

A: We understand that Jesus and the apostles assumed that the tithe was a healthy guide for one's personal stewardship. In Matthew 23:23 Jesus warns the scribes and Pharisees not to misuse the tithe as an "excuse" for neglecting other weightier matters of justice, mercy, and faith. Saint Paul follows the same logic in emphasizing that believers should give proportionately, as God has blessed them.

- In 2 Corinthians 8 and 9, Paul describes the example the Macedonians set for other believers. In 2 Corinthians 8:2 and 3, Paul says directly "for during a severe ordeal of affliction, their abundant joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. For, as I can testify, they voluntarily gave according to their means, and even beyond their means."

- Another translation says "Although they were going through hard times and were very poor, they were glad to give generously. They gave as much as they could afford and even more, simply because they wanted to." The enthusiasm for giving in Macedonia didn't stop there!
- Looking at verse 12, Paul instructs the Corinthians that they had something very important to learn from the Macedonians. It could be paraphrased like this: "It doesn't matter how much you have. What matters is how much you are willing to give from what you have." This is the point of being faithful and generous! Nowhere in the New Testament is the teaching or practice of tithing repudiated.

Your Finance Committee

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Music Notes



The Worship and Music Committee meets the second Monday of every month at 7:00 p.m. Members are Joan Krauter, Gary Gordon, Gail Hendrickson, Chris DiSanto, Pastor Richard, and Pat McHugh. You are welcome to our meetings and/or to bring your thoughts and ideas to any committee member. Choir practice is every Thursday evening from 7:00 - 8:30.

The choir sings at the 10:15 service on the 1st, 2nd and 4th Sundays of every month. All are welcome to rehearsals, even if you know you aren't available to sing with us each Sunday. We would love to have you join us.

Five out of the **six needed bell ringers** have signed up - only need **one** more. Where are you? No bell experience is needed. You do need to be able to read one line of music, know your right hand from your left hand, and have a great sense of humor.

Also, watch for more information about opportunities to join our instrumental ensemble which will be starting in October. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Pat McHugh

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Blue Jean Saturday

The next Blue Jean Saturday will be held on October 10. We will be doing odd jobs around the church. We help our budget by doing instead of paying. Most of all, the group

has fun and enjoys good fellowship with everyone. Please join us on the second Saturday of every month, from 8:30 to 11:00. See you there!

Joe Regan

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Christian Education Committee

Rally Day was held on September 13. The theme for this year was once again “God’s Work, Our Hands.” As part of the opening in the sanctuary, the author Dalen Keys read his book *Charles T. Cup* while pictures of his book were projected on the screens. Each family received a signed copy of his book! After the Sunday School opening, youth broke up into various groups to work on the God’s Work, Our Hands projects. Our littlest ones decorated 25 bags and filled them with breakfast items for Aid for Friends. Third through sixth graders made cards that contained simple messages like God loves you. The cards were tucked into the 169 pairs of socks collected for The Welcome Church, the Church Without Walls. Our oldest youth prepared about 150 snack-sized bags of trail mix that will also be given to The Welcome Church.

Sunday School will be held every Sunday beginning in the sanctuary at 9:00 a.m. After a brief opening, individual classes will meet. There is a class for everyone from age 3 to adult. Come and join us!

Bibles for Third Graders will be distributed at the 10:15 service on October 25. We hope the children will enjoy using them.

Carol Penjuke

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Children’s Corner

Dear Children,

Do you like to watch and listen to a thunderstorm - with the lightning flashing and the thunder snarling all around you? We were at the Outer Banks with the family last summer when a huge hurricane hit and we watched it from a real high peak in our beach house. The house shook violently, the thunder roared, and lightning crackled all around us. This July we had a vicious storm and it woke me up. As I lay on the pillow, I sensed a bit of whirring above my head, then a fluffy tail brushed against my forehead, and **then** the landing gear came down. It was Clancey - our little cat - I guess he was scared. Well, violent storms have frightened many people and Martin Luther was one of them.

Martin Luther was a brilliant young boy and his father wanted him to become a lawyer, so he was sent to a university in Germany to study law. One night, as he was returning to the

university, a huge thunderstorm occurred and changed his plans! A lightning bolt knocked him down and he cried out, “Save me Saint Anne - I will become a monk.” Although his father was not happy about his decision, Luther became a priest who wanted to lead a holy life and have his sins forgiven. As his studies and duties as a priest continued, Martin discovered that the church at that time was not the church that Christ would have desired for his followers; and Martin wanted to make some changes. Through prayer, friends, and many struggles, Martin not only changed the church, but changed the world as well. We celebrate this change on Reformation Sunday (wear red.) Martin’s amazing life helped to make the world a better place - the printing press came into being, his Bible translation helped form the modern German language, and many hymns owe their origin to Martin Luther. In the whole process of transformation, many different religions emerged as a result of his forward thinking. His greatest gift was that the suffering and death of Jesus Christ has already paid for **all** our sins - we just have to believe in him.

Dear Parents,

There is a wonderful, beautifully illustrated book in our library by Paul Maier depicting the life of Martin Luther - *The Great Reformer*. Please take the time to read it with your youngster. The pictures should generate many questions and most are answered in this book. Some great vocabulary words would be: Reformation, Protestant, corrupt, indulgences, fish barrel, convent, monastery, Worms, Latin. **Reformation Day** is October 31 - but we often celebrate it on the Sunday before the 31st.

Sylvia Yost

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Women of the ELCA News

Good morning everyone! Isn’t it wonderful? We had rain, glorious rain, these past few days and perhaps a little more to come! Our lawns and our beautiful autumn flowers are certainly happy too, I’m sure. We thank our God for all the blessings of nature that he gives to us - each season having its own beauty. Take a few minutes in your busy days to enjoy these blessings!

Well, here we are ready to begin the 2015-2016 year of our unit’s Women of the ELCA. We welcome Carole Centrella as a Co-Leader of the Esther Circle and thank her for volunteering for the 2015-2017 term. All of our ladies look forward, in anticipation, to our fellowship together and working together for the betterment of our sisters and brothers in need. At the same time, our fellowship includes assisting with the many social gatherings within the church during a given year. We are pleased with what we can accomplish within our circles and we hope that, as you read this, you will plan to come to one of our meetings and see for yourself. You will always be welcomed, and as I have said before, the “Welcome Mat” is out and the door is always open! How about giving it a try? We look forward to greeting you!

Remember the Delaware Conference Fall Gathering on Saturday, October 3, 2015, being held at Faith Immanuel Lutheran Church, 55 Penn Boulevard, East Lansdowne, PA. Brunch is at 10:30 a.m. followed by Meeting and Speaker - The Rev. Dr. Jennifer Ollikainen, now Executive Director of Lutheran Congregation Services/Liberty Lutheran. We remember when Pastor Jennifer was on the staff at Saint Matthew Church for a number of years. It will be nice to see her again.

In May of this year we had our covered dish supper, which was open to the congregation, and our speaker for this gathering was The Rev. Violet Little, Founder of The Welcome Church in Philadelphia, where she ministers to those in poverty. After hearing her message and learning of the items she needs to serve the people of her church, we asked her to send us a Wish List so we can help provide her with some of the items she needs. We now have this list and our Unit Executive Board decided that for the month of October, we would invite our Saint Matthew Church family to donate assorted herbal teas, canned coffee, creamer, sugar and/or artificial sweeteners and hot chocolate. **Please note: There is a separate write-up of the Wish List request in this October newsletter.** Thank you in advance for your kindnesses shown to this special Wish List request.

October schedule:

- Oct. 3 - Delaware Conference - Brunch 10:30 a.m. followed by Meeting and Speaker
- Oct. 10 - LWR Quilting - 10:30 a.m.
- Oct. 14 - Board Meeting - 9:30 a.m.
- Oct. 21 - Ronald McDonald Quilting - 10:00 a.m.
- Oct. 27 - Sarah Circle - 7:30 p.m.
- Oct. 28 - Esther Circle - 9:30 a.m.

Dee Bratz for the Executive Board

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The Welcome Church Wish List

The Rev. Violet Little, Founder of the Welcome Church in Philadelphia (also known as the Church without Walls) was the guest speaker at our Women of the ELCA covered dish supper, held last May, at Saint Matthew Lutheran Church. Rev. Little ministers to those persons in poverty, within an area of Philadelphia, and meets with them once or twice a week at different churches in this area where they receive meals. On Sundays she presides at outdoor church services (with Holy Communion) along the Parkway in center city (thus the name Church without Walls.) After hearing her message and learning of the different items she needs to serve the people of her church, we asked her to send us a Wish List so we can help provide her with

some of the items she could use. At our Unit Executive Board meeting, we decided to invite our Saint Matthew Church family to join us in donating the following items for the Welcome Church Wish List for the month of October:

Assorted Herbal Teas
Canned Coffee
Creamer
Sugar and/or Artificial Sweeteners
Canned Hot Chocolate Powder

There will be a special container in the hallway at church marked for The Welcome Church Wish List. We thank you in advance for your kindnesses shown to this worthy cause. Look for the next Wish List in the November newsletter. For further information, it has been established that The Welcome Church has the backing of the ELCA.

Dee Bratz

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Saint Matthew Christian Nursery School



The staff and I are so happy to be back for another school year. We have 165 smiling faces that greet us and lots of hugs. I am pleased to welcome back all of our staff members and cannot express enough thanks for all of their hard work and dedication getting our school ready for the 2015-2016 school year. We would like to thank Ted Hidell, Joe Regan, and Janice Gardner for helping with the opening of our school year.

The month of October brings a visit from the Springfield Fire Company, Mrs. Helen Shelton beginning our music program, and our Halloween parades.

We ask for God's blessing and thank Him for the children who are in our care.

Linda M. Maylie, Director

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Silver Springs - Martin Luther School News

Halloween will be here soon; and, as we have done in years past, we will be collecting candy. We will be asking the children in Sunday School to share their candy with the children at Silver Springs. We will be collecting candy on Sunday, November 1, and Sunday, November 8. There will also be a box in the hallway. Should you have any candy left over from the trick or treaters, please consider donating to the children.

The ladies from the two Women of the ELCA circles will

use the candy to make favors for the children.

Thank you.

Nancy Regan

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Men's Breakfast

The October Men's Breakfast will be held on Saturday, October 17, at 7:15 a.m. The location will be announced in the Sunday bulletin. 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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Family Ministries

Family Ministries is hosting a Halloween Party on Saturday, October 24th, from 7:00 - 8:00 p.m. Please join us for exciting games, fun crafts, and delicious treats. Children and adults may come in costumes. R.S.V.P. to Heather Markland at hmteach@hotmail.com by October 16th.

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Social Ministry

Once again the Social Ministry Committee will be sponsoring the Christmas Pajama Gifts Project for the children of Faith Immanuel Lutheran Church in East Lansdowne. As we learned from Pastor Moses last year, these gifts are many times the only gifts these children receive for Christmas. Therefore, we would like to expand this effort by asking our members to include a little something extra, possibly a small toy, book, slippers or socks, along with the pajamas, if possible. On **Sunday, November 15**, there will be a bulletin board in the hallway with a tag for each child. When you take a tag, **please** sign the list with your name and phone number next to the name of the child's tag you have taken. We are asking that the gifts be returned to the church library by **December 13** so the gifts can be delivered to Faith Immanuel in time for their Christmas party. There will be more information in the bulletin next month. If you have any questions, please see Rick Link or Cheryl Morrell.

Cheryl Morrell

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First Thursday Friends ("FTF")

The First Thursday Friends will be gathering at Miller's Ale House for lunch and fellowship on Thursday, October 1, at 11:30 a.m. Miller's is located at 18 Baltimore Pike,

Springfield, PA.

Contact John Stefl at 610-544-2816 for more information. Everyone is welcome.

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Library



Fall - and a time when many changes happen. The leaves change color, then fall; fall flowers are blooming. There are also changes that take place in our lives and in the church.

The Great Emergence, How Christianity is Changing and Why by Phyllis Tickle is found on Shelf 270.83 TIC. Every five hundred years, the church cleans out its attic and has a giant rummage sale. Well, not exactly, but according to internationally renowned religion expert Phyllis Tickle, this is an accurate summary of the church's massive transition over time. According to the pattern, we are living in such a time of change right now. Tickle calls it "the Great Emergence - a time of dizzying upheaval and hopeful promise during which various sectors of today's church swirl into a great confluence at the center." Phyllis Tickle offers a creative and provocative overview of multiple social and cultural changes in our era, their relation to previous major paradigm shifts, and their particular impact on North American Christianity. This is an immensely important contribution to the current conversation about new and emerging forms of Christianity in a post-modern environment - and a delight to read!

Barbara Kinsey

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Pumpkin Patch at Holy Spirit, Secane



Holy Spirit Lutheran Church, 2545 Franklin Avenue, Secane is having a Pumpkin Patch at the church beginning Monday, October 5, through Halloween. There will be pumpkins of all sizes for sale. Stop in Mondays through Fridays from 2 to 8 p.m., Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Sundays from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.

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Thoughts About Being a Shepherd

Several weeks ago, Pastor Jerry Faust was here to lead Sunday service while Pastor Karl was away. Pastor Jerry, in his sermon about sheep in scripture, asked the congregation to make the noise of a sheep when he used the word "sheep" in his remarks. We all complied with enthusiasm and soon our pews were resounding to sheep sounds in all of their various versions.

Pastor Jerry, delighted at our participation, then asked any of us in the congregation who was a shepherd to raise our hand. I believe I was the only one to raise my hand.

In New Zealand, as a young lad of seven or eight, I often spent my school holidays on my uncle's farm - a paradise of wonder and adventure for a growing boy. I made friends with all of the farm animals, especially the sheep. They would come to me for a gentle touch and would follow me as I led them to graze in a new pasture or down to a stream for a drink. To see the trust in their eyes as I tended them from day to day was a great wonder to me and remains a powerful memory.

So many of us think of sheep as docile and dumb animals but I found them to be very smart, sweet natured, able to think for themselves, and fiercely defend their little ones.

When I was little, my grandmother "Webby" had a house on a country road with houses on one side and fields on the opposite side. Her front garden had a picket fence with a gate; and, where the driveway entered, there was a "cattlestop." A cattlestop, which you often see in country places, is a series of rails set six inches apart over a wide ditch perpendicular to a driveway entrance, instead of a gate. It is a deterrent for farm animals who could easily trap their legs between the rails.

One morning, my grandmother looked out her front window to see a sheep in the yard nibbling on her prized flowers in the garden. She was shocked at this intrusion because the gate was latched and there were no gaps in the fence - there was a mystery as to how the sheep got in. Webby shooed the intruder out through the gate and off the sheep went down the road.

After a couple of days, Webby looked out her front window and again there was the sheep nibbling on the flowers in the garden. The gate was latched, there were no holes in the fence and no way for this sheep to get in. The mystery deepened. Webby decided to stand watch for the next time the flock of sheep came down the road to the neighboring field.

In a few days, along comes the eager flock - they know they are heading for another green pasture. The shepherd is behind them with his black and white collie dog. As grandmother Webby sat waiting and watching, one of the sheep stopped in front of the driveway, lay down on the ground and rolled over the cattlestop into the yard, then stood up and again headed for the flower bed.

Webby was astounded! The sheep had figured it out! How to get a tasty treat!

We human beings often think of ourselves having the edge on intelligence, and pride ourselves with our college degrees and other great achievements. We are well to remember that we share our world with other beings having greater intelligence than we presume. I was given the title "Sheepman" at communion during Pastor Jerry's service - this is an honor for me, I can assure you!

The Babe in the Manger signaled by the Star of Bethlehem over 2,000 years ago, was worshipped by kings and shepherds, cattle and sheep. Without exception, every one of us is a precious sheep! May peace be with you all.

Tony Webb

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Monthly Mailbag



Dear Saint Matthew Lutheran Church,

Thank you for your generous in-kind donation (33 blankets, 13 pillows, 1 teddy bear and 7 containers of tabs) to the Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House. We rely on in-kind gifts such as yours to create a community of comfort and hope for the thousands of families with seriously ill children that we serve each year through our two Ronald McDonald Houses, two Ronald McDonald Family Rooms, Hospitality Kiosk, and Ronald McDonald Camp. To learn more about the impact of your contribution, please visit www.philarmh.org/familystories.

Sincerely,
Philadelphia Ronald McDonald House

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Dear Saint Matthew Family,

Thank you for the beautiful flowers delivered by Barbara on August 30. It was very thoughtful of you to think of us.

Sincerely,
George and Portia Bahl

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Dear Friends,

Thank you to the ladies who went up to Silver Springs - Martin Luther School on August 31 to help stuff, label, and stamp mailings. We all enjoyed working with a good deal of laughing and talking. Thank you to Marge Kobasa, Joan Krauter, Maureen McCleary, Carol Penjuke, and Cyndy Touhsaent.

Sincerely,
Nancy Regan

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Dear Saint Matthew Friends,

You are the **best!** Thank you very much for helping stuff, stamp, and label the Chefs and Christmas mailings. I don't know what we would do without you! You are all so helpful and efficient it makes putting together mailings fun!

We are grateful for your ongoing friendship and support of our ministry. With your help we are able to bring hope and healing to the boys and girls we serve.

Sincerely,
Amanda Bryant
Silver Springs - Martin Luther School

P.S. I look forward to seeing you all at Fun Day!

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Dear Julie,

Thank you so much for designating the VBS collection for our backpack program. Thanks also for offering to purchase the backpacks and sending them down with Rick Link.

Your thoughtfulness for our clients' children means a great deal.

Blessings,
Joanne Castagna
Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry

(This year in VBS the children and their families collected many school supplies and enough money to purchase 14 backpacks for the children of Loaves and Fishes. Thank you for your support, Saint Matthew Family! Julie Cirillo)

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Dear Saint Matthew Friends,

Don and I would like to express our gratitude for your kind words of sympathy, lovely cards, and phone calls during the loss of our sister-in-law (my brother's wife.) Saint Matthew has always been a loving and caring congregation and a refuge in times of sadness. Shea's presence will be missed, but our faith in God gives all of us hope for the future. "Be still and know that I am God" - Psalm 46

Sincerely,
Sylvia Yost

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My Dear Friends,

What can I say to truly thank you all? Throughout John's illness and his hospitalizations beginning June 11, I have had nothing but prayers and support from all of you. Every card was a comfort to both of us, as were the phone calls and the times you asked after John in church. Toward the end, prayers increased, and we could almost feel God wrapping loving arms around us in response. I thank those who called John in the hospital and/or visited him - enduring the hot plastic gowns and gloves. The flowers were just another reminder that people were praying and thinking of him. He truly appreciated every time someone reached out to him in one way or another.

When I lost John, the prayers continued for me and my

family and helped us get through the most difficult time in our lives. Every card, and there were ever so many, was like a ray of sunshine shining on us. There were visits and enough food to sustain us for weeks! I still have food tucked away in the freezer. Never underestimate the importance of a card, a call, a gesture of kindness, an interest in someone. Even as I felt that Jesus was carrying me through this saddest of times, I could feel the love of family and friends, especially church friends, lifting us in prayer. I really expected to have John around for a week or two once he got to hospice, but it was not to be. God is caring for him now in a way I never could.

Thank you for all the kind gestures during his illness and after his death. Thank you, Pastor Karl, for all your visits and prayers and for the immediate response to the late night phone call when John left us. You have been a comfort beyond measure. I am so grateful for all those who helped make John's funeral service so beautiful and meaningful. For all those who expressed regret at not being able to attend because of vacations, of course, I understand.

It has been a long, sometimes tough, journey caring for John, but I wouldn't have traded it for anything. I have a dramatic change in my life to get used to, and I know just the folks who will help me along the way.

Blessings to you all,
Jeff Wesley
JR, Steve, Gary

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Vital Statistics

Death:

Mr. John Wesley
Died August 29, 2015
Funeral September 5, 2015

Baptism:

Josephine Pearl Lavery
Daughter of Michael and Melissa Lavery
Born November 18, 2013
Baptized September 13, 2015

25th Wedding

Anniversary: Mr. and Mrs. Robert Larkin
October 13, 2015

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