



# The GOOD NEWSLETTER

of  
Saint Matthew Lutheran Church  
Springfield, Pennsylvania

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

**Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, any information in this newsletter is subject to change.**



## From Our Pastor

Connect

Care

eEquip

Cultivate

*If April showers bring May flowers, what do Mayflowers bring? Pilgrims!*

I still remember this joke I learned when I was a child, and I think of it every spring. Why do I think of it today? Because I have been speaking with colleagues about how few “pilgrims” there seem to be these days. Not those who claim a connection to the early Europeans who came to the Americas, but those pilgrims seeking God, or at least seeking God in the Christian Church. Is this because there are fewer people with any interest in God? We suspect this may be true. Is it because Christians do a bad job of speaking out about their faith? We think this is quite possibly true. Is this because there are fewer people who feel anything but contempt and judgment from what they experience of the Christian Church? We fear this is likely true. Whatever the reason, we see a pattern that has developed, particularly in this time and place.

After the first Easter, the early church grew.

After nearly 2,000 Easters, the church, at least in America, shrinks.

We can tell what is important to someone by how much time and energy they spend on something. One can tell which sports team a person follows, and possibly how intensely, by the amount of “swag” the person has on their car, on their person, and in their home. We can tell if a person is really into music by the number of concerts they go to. We pick up on a person’s political views by their podcasts and their rants, on either side of an issue. Even if we are not comfortable talking about Jesus, our pattern of attendance speaks volumes to those who may be curious about us. Pilgrims, like children, pick up on signs. Potential seekers may say, “If church is not important to you, who are a Christian, why should it be important to me? If a relationship with God through Jesus is merely a helpful background, and tangential as a need, then it must not be important for my day-to-day living.”

We are not saved by how often we come to church.

But how often we come to church does impact the relationship we have with the Savior.

Alleluia! Christ is Risen! He is risen indeed. So what?

I am concerned about the trend in mainline American Protestantism, which is also reflected in Saint Matthew, that as soon as Easter is past, we go on summer vacation. And when we go away for the summer, we also step away from God for the summer, at least from any regular worship of Jesus, or engagement with the Church, which is the family of Jesus. I am concerned with the way in which this impacts the strength of the relationship we have with Jesus. I am concerned about how this impacts the strength of the relationship we have with our fellow members of the body of Christ. I am concerned about how this impacts our witness to others of the importance of Jesus in our lives.

Again, one is not saved by one’s regular attendance in worship. But one is strengthened by intentionally spending time with Jesus, by being fed with the Holy Communion, and hearing and discussing the Word of God. One is strengthened and supported by regular contact with others of faith, both by their care when they see we are in need, and by their concern if we seem to be falling into unhealthy patterns of life and faith. We are strengthened by our engagement with the Lord in our service to the world, as we remember that our call to follow Jesus is not just an individual call, but a call to community and the need to act, together, for the good of all people. Jesus called the original 12, not one. He called them to follow as a community, not whenever they might have the chance. He then grew the number of followers from the 12, to hundreds of people by the time he died and rose. Then, when he sent the apostles out to continue the work, the hundreds became thousands. Peter, on the day of Pentecost, spoke of Jesus and 3,000 souls came to the Lord in one day. These thousands grew and became a world-wide church, extending the message of God’s love and reconciliation in Jesus around the globe.

We are not called to our Christian journey on our own. We are not called to live this life of faith on our own. We are not saved just for our sake alone. We are called to be the Church, the Body of Christ, for the sake of the world Jesus died to save. How we live, and how much we invest in this relationship matters. How much this is central to our lives matters to how we impact the world. How we live becomes a witness to others of what is important to us.

What do Mayflowers bring? Pilgrims. What do

our lives say to welcome pilgrims to the journey with Jesus? Are the April showers of God's love at Easter past and gone, or do they water our lives with the blooms of May and beyond?

People are still searching for meaning. They are still searching for God. So are we. How we live can help us in our search. How we live can point others to Jesus.

Be the Mayflower.

Pastor Karl M. Richard

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## Christian Education Updates

**W**e have had a wonderful Sunday School year! Thank you to our very special teachers and helpers who come every Sunday to help our children learn about Jesus. Before we get ready for Vacation Bible School, we would like to celebrate our school year. Please join us under the tent for a Celebration of our Sunday School Year! We will be celebrating on June 5<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 in the courtyard.

Are you looking for an unforgettable week this summer? Join us for Vacation Bible School from August 1<sup>st</sup> to August 5th. Please contact Julie Cirillo with any questions.

Julie Cirillo

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## Worship and Music Notes

**C**hrist is Risen! He is Risen Indeed! Alleluia!  
It was a glorious Easter celebration on April 17th with the Gospel, and the hymns and the special music and the lilies and spring flowers. Thank you to all who made it such a special day - to Pastor, to Janice, to the musicians and the Altar Guild, and to those who dedicated lilies, as well as those who provided music and assistance during Holy Week.

While we celebrated Easter Sunday on April 17th, the official church Easter season continues through June 4th when we observe Pentecost on Sunday, June 5th. However, in our lives and in our hearts, Easter never ends.

Pat McHugh

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## Property Update

**W**ork on the Youth Room (formerly the outside Finance Room) is continuing. Many cartons of old documents were cleared and recycled. We will be painting the walls and cleaning for the youth.

The roof was examined, some repairs were made, several tiles were replaced. Many more will be replaced as soon as the tiles are available.

The archway in between the hall and the front of the church has been scraped, plastered, and painted.

In the Education Wing, the old 24-volt rectifier switches have been replaced and are working well.

A very tiny gas leak in the boiler room was detected and repaired. Everything in good working order.

The elevator is now working well, and has been state inspected.

Property Committee

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## Women of the ELCA

**A** huge thank you to the members of our congregation for the support of Women of the ELCA's ministries, particularly the recent Bed for Kids collection. Although our original speaker was not able to attend due to a medical issue in her family, we were still able to learn about this organization and how it helps children and their families. We are honored to help out this worthy organization and thank you for the many donations to help make functional homes for families in the Greater Philadelphia area.

The LWR quilters have completed 50 quilts! This is a milestone for this little group. We are taking a break so that we can get more tops sewn and backs ready for our next session. Stay tuned for when we start up again!

Meetings for this month are the following:

May 11 9:30 a.m. Board meeting in Parlor  
May 24 7:00 p.m. Circle meeting in Parlor

All ladies are invited to attend. Try us out!

Blessings,  
Carol Penjuck

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## Financial Update

**E**ach of you must give what you have decided in your heart, not with regret or under compulsion, since God loves a cheerful giver. 2 Corinthians 9:7

	<u>March 2022</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
Giving/Income	\$ 37,012.36	\$125,151.11
Expenses	<u>47,089.83</u>	<u>144,428.95</u>
Plus/Minus	(\$ 10,077.47)	(\$ 19,277.84)

**Summary:** For the month of March we ran a deficit of \$10,100 while year to date the deficit is \$19,300. Our budget for the year is for a deficit of \$38,000. Winter heating costs and repairs were drivers for March as the Maintenance and Property expense for the month was over budget by around \$6,800. Easter and Lenten giving in April and hopefully warmer weather will be a blessing.

**Giving Opportunities:** Here are several expenses from March where donations/reimbursements would be helpful to meeting our budget — any help is appreciated:

- \$145 for Palms for Palm Sunday
- \$120 for Piano Tuning
- \$675 for Sound System components

Finance Committee

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## Men's Breakfast

**W**e have scheduled the May Men's Breakfast for Saturday, May 21, at 7 a.m. at the Court Diner in Media. It's a great way to start the day!

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## Children's Corner

Connecting People — Changing Lives

*God is with you in everything you do. Genesis 21:22*

**D**ear Children,  
If you look at the cover of our church Newsletter, you will notice the above saying - "Connecting People, Changing Lives." Although churches everywhere unite people with various

groups, worship services, retreats, and mission circles; one does not often find a special connection to friends after a 70-year hiatus. Let me tell you a lovely story of friendship that happened to us very recently. A few months ago, I was walking in a section of our hall here at Maris Grove, when I spotted several cartons in the hallway indicating that people had just moved in. Not wanting to bother them on “move-in” day, I waited a couple of days before knocking on their door. When the couple appeared at the door, we immediately started a spirited conversation. I told them the usual things about parking, garbage pick-up, how much they would enjoy living here, etc. When I asked them where they lived before, they told me Monroeville (a Pittsburgh suburb) and they were surprised to learn that Don and I lived there for about 7 years—so we chatted a bit about the area. Then, Jim (a retired Methodist pastor) asked us where we were raised as kids and I said, “Oh you probably never heard of it, but we grew up south of Buffalo”—well, their ears perked up!!! When we told him that we were born in Bradford, PA, he started to laugh and said, “I had a church there for several years.” After doing some reminiscing, we agreed to eat dinner with them and we talked about church, different stores, vacation places in the area, restaurants, etc. What a wonderful night of memories!!!

A few days later, I ran into Jim’s wife, Tracy, and she asked me if I had ever known a girl by the name of Carol \_\_\_\_\_. Apparently, Carol and her husband were good friends with Jim and Tracy. Carol was my childhood friend and close neighbor. Because we had taken different paths after eighth grade—college and job relocations, we lost contact. I asked for her phone number and called her. Carol, of course, was really taken by surprise—what fun we had talking over old times!! In the midst of our lively telephone chat, she told me that her husband was gravely ill and asked if we would pray for him. As we said good bye, I promised to pray for him and later I put him on our prayer chain at Saint Matthew. I have called and texted many times since and am happy to report that Carol’s husband is doing much better and the family was grateful that so many people they didn’t know prayed for him. Was God’s hand in this?? I think so. Later in the week, my morning devotions were based on Genesis 21:22—“God is with you in everything you do.” Try reflecting on this Bible verse and think how God REALLY is present in every aspect of your lives. God was with you during COVID, as you took your math test (of course you needed to study), when your team won or lost, when you met a new friend, etc. Remember to thank Him for being present in your daily lives and make every connection a wonderful experience.

#### Dear Parents,

Both of my parents moved around a bit and also did some traveling and always shared their surprise “connections” with my brother and me. I’ll bet you have “met up” with people who shared your past, and your children would love to hear your stories. Take time to make CONNECTIONS happen—make that phone call to a long ago friend; send a funny get-well card; ask that new neighbor to Saint Matthew for a worship service—your life will be happier.

Sylvia Yost

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### Nursery School

Here at our Nursery School we are gearing up for our Outdoor Spring Art Show on Monday, May 16th! Also, we will be learning about bees, flowers and

gardening, making special gifts for Mother's Day and will begin preparing for our graduation and recognition ceremonies in June. We continue to enroll for the 2022-2023 School Year. If you are interested in registering your child, please contact the office at 610-543-5589 and/or visit our website at [www.stmattscns.org/admissions](http://www.stmattscns.org/admissions) for more information.

Happy Spring!

Warmly,  
Ana Fischer, Executive Director

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### Food Collection for Saint Mark’s

Thank you to everyone who continues to fill our car with so many food items for us to deliver to Saint Mark’s.

I reached out to Maria Koller, the Saint Mark’s director, for any suggestions of food they might need; and she replied that peanut butter, canned beef stew, and pancake mix that just needs water added.

Those items will join the canned chicken, other canned meats and tuna, Chef Boyardee items, and deodorant bar soap suggestions we had received previously.

Our next collection will be May 1<sup>st</sup> from 12-1.

Nancy Regan

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### Newsletter Deadline

Articles for the June newsletter are due in the church office by **noon on Friday, May 13.**

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### Vital Statistics

#### Birth:

**Nicholas Portillo McHugh**

Son of Scott McHugh and Rosie Portillo  
Born April 3, 2022

#### 25th Wedding Anniversary:

**David and Diane Redash**

May 4, 2022

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### Monthly Mailbag

Dear Saint Matthew Lutheran Church,



Thank you for your generous donation to Saint Mark’s Food Center. You help us help many who are in need. God bless you!

Sincerely,  
Maria Kollar  
Saint Mark’s Food Center

Dear Saint Matthew Friends,

Thank you for your support of Gemma Services (formed by the merger of Silver Springs-Martin Luther School and the Village)! We have received and are grateful for your kind donation of treat bags and a fleece blanket (received on March 24, 2022) for the children in our residential program. They are sure to bring big smiles to the faces of the boys and girls! Your ongoing support helps us

continue to provide vital behavioral health, prevention, child welfare, and educational services for youth and families in our local communities.

We are especially grateful for your partnership at this time of unprecedented challenge for our children and families, our communities, and our organization. On behalf of all at Gemma, thank you and best wishes.

Sincerely,  
Lynn Unipan, MSW, CFRE  
Chief Development Officer  
Gemma Services

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## **Worship Responsibilities**

We will not schedule these responsibilities at this time. We will ask people to serve each week as needed.

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