

# St. Matthew's Episcopal Church Annual Report '21

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NOVEMBER 14, 2021

9:45 AM

PREPARED BY THE

Clergy, Staff, Vestry, and Volunteers of St. Matthew's

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ST MATTHEW'S  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
919 TENNIS AVENUE  
MAPLE GLEN, PA, 19002

*Pray For the Parish*

Almighty and everliving God, ruler of all things in heaven and earth, hear our prayers for this parish family. Strengthen the faithful, arouse the careless, and restore the penitent. Grant us all things necessary for our common life, and bring us all to be of one heart and mind within your holy Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

# Meeting Agenda

- Meeting is Called to Order
- Review and Approve the 2021 Agenda
- Review and Approve the 2020 Meeting Minutes . . . . . A1
- Elect Members of Vestry, Diocesan Delegates . . . . . A3
- Reading of the 2021 Annual Report
- Open Forum
- Meeting is Adjourned

## The 2021 Annual Report

- Rector's Report. . . . . R1
- Warden's Reports. . . . . R3
- Treasurer's Reports . . . . . R5
- Parish Manager's Reports . . . . . R8
- Nursery School Director's Report . . . . . R12
- Program Ministry Reports. . . . . R14

# Minutes of the 2020 Annual Meeting

Respectfully submitted by Dorothea Graham, November 2020

The meeting was called to order at 10:40 by the Rev. Canon Dr. Peter Stube.

The election of the Secretary was presented by Fr. Stube. Karen Randall moved to elect Dorothea Graham as secretary and the motion was seconded by Cathy Haas.

**AGENDA:** Fr. Stube moved to accept the Agenda for this Annual Meeting and it was seconded by Jeanne Garrison. It was unanimously approved by those present.

**MINUTES:** The minutes from the November 10, 2019 were presented. A motion to accept the minutes as written was given by Alice Austin and seconded by Jane Baker.

**ELECTION OF VESTRY/DEANERY AND CONVENTION DELEGATES:** Fr. Stube presented the slate for the Election of the Vestry and the Election of the Deanery/Convention Delegates. Nominations for the Vestry for a three-year term beginning January, 2021 are:

- Nancy Austin
- John Gill
- Karen Sawyer

**Nominations for the Deanery and Convention Delegates for the year 2021 are:**

- Trent Coombs
- Connie Dee
- Pam Dunlap
- Alternates are:
- George Bishop
- Judy Groben

A motion to accept the slate was presented by Bill Reynolds. It was seconded by Alice Austin. It was unanimously accepted.

**INTERIM RECTOR'S REPORT:** At the start of the Covid Pandemic it was interesting to preach to an empty place. It was difficult to get feedback from an empty church. There were many who helped make things work. Fr. Peter was grateful for all the help he received from Joe Buesgen, Carolyn Bedics and Anthony Carrella. He also had gratitude for the musicians, Martha Reynolds and Phil LeFevre. He feels the Lord has taken pleasure in hearing our music. He felt blessed with the Vestry at St. Matthew's. They handled the closing and reopening with a carefully weighed process, in conjunction with the guidelines set up by the Bishop and Diocese. Fr. Peter feels this parish is in a good -

place. We have survived well and healthy. He feels we need to give more than we do. He feels we need to invest in the Lord's vision and work and give from hearts of deep love and gratitude for the Lord. Fr. Stube thanked the three members of the vestry who are rotating off, Joe Buesgen, who was indispensable with our Zoom and Live streaming ( Fr. Peter asked that he not go far away ), Tim Jennings, who took such good care of our buildings, and Chris Strittmatter, who was the spiritual guide. Fr. Stube felt his job was to discomfort and challenge the Vestry. They were willing to rethink how things are and to try new paths. He thanked all the committees and groups, as a whole and specifically the Altar guild, who do such good work, quietly behind the scenes. Fr. Rodney and family are coming and Fr. Stube suggested that there will be a honeymoon period, and then we must be patient, set aside any disappointments, and focus on what we all do well. He is thankful for his 15 or so months shared with us and he says farewell as best he can under these circumstances. He thanks us and entreats us to trust each other to God. He will continue to pray for us and for Fr. Rodney. He hopes that we will reach out and touch others in our community.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** We are behind on our budget, but still collecting pledges. She thanks the congregation for meeting their pledges. The Nursery School was greatly impacted by the Covid Pandemic and required shut down. Things are not as bad as they look, at the moment. We received a Federal PPP loan for \$90,400 in May, which is not yet recognized. It covered wages for the Nursery School and church staff. We must wait until the government allows the Banks to forgive this loan. Our account balances are healthy. There will be more capital expenditures. We are paying to move Fr. Rodney and his family. Stewardship – There are about 60 families who pledged last year, who have not yet sent in a pledge this year. Karen is going to send out letters this week to those individuals in the hope that more pledges will come in. It is very important this year, especially, in order to figure out a reasonable Budget for 2021. No one had any questions. Tim Walsh moved to accept the Treasurer's Report and it was seconded by Jane Baker. It was unanimously approved.

**SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT:** Chris Suhy stated that this has been a difficult year. He is thankful for the Profile committee and the Search committee. He thanked Fr. Peter for his invaluable support, in dealing with the issues this year of Covid presented. A token of appreciation was given to Fr. Peter. Chris thanked Anthony for his faithful work, and Jackie Anderson for her hard work with the nursery school and her attention to detail.

**VIDEOS:** Videos from Anthony and Jackie were shown. Fr. Rodney Roehner sent a video which was shown at this Annual Meeting. He told us we were first and foremost Christians, who are never alone. He sent a message of hope. He should be joining us for his first service on December 20, 2020.

**OPEN TO ALL :** No one had any comments. ALL REPORTS WERE FILED IN THE REPORT BY TITLE. Karen Randall made a motion to adjourn this meeting. It was seconded by Tim Walsh. It was approved unanimously. Go Forth in Peace, to Love and Serve the Lord.

# Election of Vestry Members *and* Diocesan Delegates

Our grateful and heartfelt thanks extend to those members who are now transitioning off the Vestry; Chris Suhy, Tim Walsh, and Karen Randall.

Nominations for Vestry for a three-year term beginning Jan. 1, 2022, are:

**David Brock**

**Antonia Greene-Edwards**

**Jim Garrison**

Nominations for Deanery and Diocesan Convention Delegates in 2022, are:

**Connie Dee**

**Pam Dunlap**

**Jeanne Garrison**

Alternates, are:

**George Bishop**

**Judy Groben**

# *the* Annual Report

November 2021

# *From the Rector*

Rev. Rodney Roehner

***Be strong and of good courage, do not fear . . . for it is the Lord your God who goes with you; he will not fail you or forsake you. Deuteronomy 31:6***

St. Matthew's Family, the most appropriate way for me to begin my first annual report as your rector is to extend a heartfelt 'thank you'. My family is grateful for the generous welcome you extended us nearly a year ago (and one that lasted for months!). Your patience is appreciated as I continue to discern the 'lay of the land' amidst an already tumultuous period that has disrupted the life of every other parish as well. Many thanks must also be given to all those, from staff to volunteers to our music ministry to our Vestry, who have worked tirelessly, often behind the scenes, to make sure our church weathered the ongoing storm caused by the pandemic and a rector transition. Most of all, I thank you for entrusting me with the leadership of St. Matthew's. This is a Spirit-filled congregation with genuinely good Christian people; an aspect that was apparent during the rector search, and one that I have come to realize more and more as time passes.

Needless to say, we have come a long way since December 2020, when worship was only accessible via livestream and Christmas was relegated to Zoom services from my living room! But we have collectively brought St. Matthew's back by faithfully keeping our focus on Jesus Christ and making sure the church was open, and that the sacraments and ministries were accessible to all. All along, we have also been building for the future of our parish. Yes, we have much work yet to do. But, thanks to all of you, I have no doubt that the Lord has much in store for us to accomplish together for the glory of his Name in this place.

By the grace of God, we have fared well over these past two years; very much so compared to most other Episcopal churches. Many of the parishes in the diocese have only recovered 1/3 of their pre-COVID numbers, whereas we have done significantly better. Much of that has been bolstered by newcomers, baptisms, and the healthy return of so many of our own church members. We are also strong financially, improvements have been

taking place on our campus, new outreach opportunities have been initiated, the preschool is filled once again, and our own Sunday School has expanded in grades and is back to meeting in-person.

So what about moving forward? Our main emphasis will be on growth. Growth in members and pledging certainly come to mind whenever that word is mentioned in church circles, and, yes, we will continue to work on those aspects. More importantly though, I am referring to opportunities that will continually strengthen us in deep-rooted growth as faithful Christians. Through worship, through outreach, through educational opportunities, and through more fellowship events, the growth for which we strive should draw us closer to Jesus Christ and one another. St. Matthew's is truly a 'church family' and may that remain a hallmark of this faithful congregation. Even during another year of difficulties and uncertainties in the world around us, St. Matthew's has been undeniably blessed in many ways. I am proud of you: your dedication, your ministry, your love for one another, your love for the Lord. Together, we have accomplished much for the Kingdom within the last eleven months. May God continue to bless us, give us grateful hearts, and make us bold to step forward in faith in all we do.

With Love in Christ,

**Rodney+**

# *From the Rector's Warden*

## Mr. Chris Suhy

Dear friends,

I was catching up with a member of St. Matthew's a few days ago, and we were sharing our excitement about the service on December 8th – a *highly anticipated* evening where Fr. Rodney will be formally instituted as Rector. The prayer book titles the liturgy as a "celebration of new ministry," which, admittedly, makes me laugh a little bit. After all, it has been nearly an entire year since we welcomed Rodney, his wife Carolina, and their daughters Alexa and Sophia to St. Matthew's! Upon his hiring in January, Fr. Rodney's deep faith, thoughtful leadership, and clear vision have anchored us amid challenging moments (such as the unsettlingly violent storm that blew its way through our region, and the years-long pandemic). Rodney's presence and spiritual authority has truly been a blessing at this time, and I look forward to celebrating his ministry together in a few weeks. If you're reading this, I invite you to join our church family and me at the institution and dinner reception on **December 8th at 6:00 PM**. Bishop Daniel will preside over the service and be with us, so you won't want to miss it.

You will find myriad signs of vibrance and good health within the annual report this year, and yet the church's work continues. The careful and collaborative partnership between our clergy, vestry, staff, volunteers, and nursery school has been no less than instrumental for the vitality of our ministries. Most importantly, though, you will see that our work persists only by our parish's faithful spirit of generosity. I pray you might join me in pledging your support toward our ministries this year.

As you may know, I am approaching the final days of my term as Rector's Warden, and it has been my privilege to serve our church in this capacity. I want to thank each one of you for your support. I have enjoyed forging partnerships between members of the vestry and the several, generally very different clergy who have crossed our paths over these past few years. I am excited when thinking of all that is to be realized at this special place.

With heartfelt thanks,  
Chris Suhy, Rector's Warden

# *From the People's Warden*

## Mr. Bill Reynolds

This past year we performed several projects to upgrade and maintain our property:

- All the lighting in the church was upgraded to LED to brighten the space and save on our electricity requirements.
- We installed state of the art cameras and livestream equipment to allow us to continue online streaming of two services every Sunday.
- The pillars on either side of the front steps were repaired, waterproofed and coated after leaking for years.
- The Library and Rectors office were painted, and the spaces swapped to create a larger meeting space/library.
- We removed the old dishwasher in the kitchen and installed a new chest freezer.
- We created a new shared office space for the Arise Band and Choir.
- The spotlights on the Memorial Garden Cross and the Church Sign on Tennis Ave were replaced.
- We moved and installed the beautiful sculpture donated by Jane and Rick Baker.
- We reconfigured the space in the front of the church to allow dedicated spaces for the Choir and Arise Band.

We were fortunate to have the use of the generator we installed a couple years ago when we lost power for over four days after the tornado that came through Maple Glen on September 1st. We were spared any major damage and just had some minor flooding in a couple classroom in the Nursery School. We are making plans now for projects to be completed in 2022 to keep our facilities maintained and up to date.

Respectfully submitted,  
**Bill Reynolds**

# From the Treasurer

## Ms. Karen Randall

### Budget Overview

	2020 Actual	2021 Budget	September 2021 YTD	Actual
			9 Months Budget	Above/ (Below) Budget
<b>CHURCH</b>				
<b>Receipts:</b>				
Pledges	\$ 300,304	\$ 315,000	\$ 236,250	\$ 4,774
Plate	\$ 23,740	14,000	\$ 10,500	\$ 15,266
Other (Recurring)	\$ 76,452	91,700	64,525	\$ 1,696
Other (Designated)	\$ 515	-	-	\$ -
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 401,011</b>	<b>\$ 420,700</b>	<b>\$ 311,275</b>	<b>\$ 21,736</b>
<b>Expenses:</b>				
Diocese & Outreach	\$ 33,452	\$ 35,087	\$ 31,070	\$ 389
Salaries & Benefits	159,800	274,433	210,095	\$ 4,503
Debt Service	-	-	-	\$ -
Property	63,500	84,600	64,680	\$ 2,560
Parish Programs	12,042	23,502	17,916	\$ 1,675
Office Expense	16,313	18,200	13,585	\$ (349)
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 285,107</b>	<b>\$ 435,822</b>	<b>\$ 337,346</b>	<b>\$ 8,778</b>
<b>Receipts Over / (Under) Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 115,904</b>	<b>\$ (15,122)</b>	<b>\$ (26,071)</b>	<b>\$ 30,514</b>
<b>NURSERY SCHOOL</b>				
<b>Receipts</b>	\$ 210,737	\$ 274,938	\$ 205,745	\$ 19,429
<b>Expenses</b>	335,793	339,658	262,887	1,790
<b>Receipts Over / (Under) Expenses</b>	<b>\$ (125,056)</b>	<b>\$ (64,720)</b>	<b>\$ (57,142)</b>	<b>\$ 21,219</b>
<b>Net Operations and Nursery School</b>	<b>\$ (9,152)</b>		<b>\$ (31,480)</b>	
<b>PPP loan/grant received 5/20</b>	<u>\$90,400</u>		PPP 1/21	<u>\$90,400</u>
<b>Net change in cash</b>	<b>\$81,241</b>			<b>\$58,920</b>
transferred to Endowment 1/21	80,000			

# *From the Treasurer*

## *Cash and Investment Summary*

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### **BALANCES**

as of Sept. 30. 21

OPERATING ACCOUNTS

**\$170,705**

MEMORIAL ACCOUNTS

**\$38,029**

ENDOWMENT ACCOUNTS

**\$885,718**

**TOTAL**

**\$1,094,452**

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### **ENDOWMENT**

### **ACCOUNTS**

as of Sept. 30 . 21

VANGUARD MONEY MARKET

**\$158,710**

VANGUARD BALANCED INDEX

**\$230,431**

VANGUARD WELLINGTON

**\$430,764**

T. ROWE PRICE DIVIDEND GROWTH  
YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP

**\$6,742**

T. ROWE PRICE – US TREASURY

**\$59,071**

**TOTAL**

**\$885,718**

## Cash and Investment Summary (II)

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### ENDOWMENT SUMMARY

BALANCE AS OF JAN. 1, 2021  
**\$744,379**

CONTRIBUTIONS  
**\$82,500**

ENDOWMENT EXPENDITURES  
**(\$41,318)**

UNREALIZED GAIN  
**\$100,157**

**TOTAL**  
**\$885,718**

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### ENDOWMENT EXPENDITURES

AUDIOBAHN LIVESTREAM  
**\$22,120**

REPAIR CONCRETE PIERS  
**\$9,530**

ELECTRICAL WORK  
**\$4,780**

OFFICE PAINTING  
**\$2,500**

SEARCH COMMITTEE EXPENSES  
**\$1,988**

PASTOR'S DISCRETIONARY  
**\$400**

**TOTAL**  
**\$41,318**

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# *From the Parish Manager*

## Ms. Carolyn Bedics

### Stewardship Report

<u>Year</u>	<u># of Pledges</u>	<u>Total \$ Pledged</u>	<u>Annual Avg. per Household</u>	<u>Weekly Avg. per Household</u>	<u>Actual Pledge \$ Received</u>
2010	173	\$363,605	\$2,102	\$40.42	\$350,774
2011	166	\$377,795	\$2,276	\$43.77	\$369,867
2012	170	\$379,923	\$2,235	\$42.98	\$373,605
2013	166	\$364,670	\$2,197	\$42.25	\$344,180
2014	165	\$358,854	\$2,175	\$41.82	\$351,852
2015	151	\$356,411	\$2,360	\$45.39	\$347,668
2016	157	\$362,092	\$2,306	\$44.35	\$372,146
2017	165	\$383,419	\$2,324	\$44.69	\$386,940
2018	148	\$362,576	\$2,450	\$47.11	\$354,054
2019	140	\$342,873	\$2,449	\$47.10	\$333,594
2020	119	\$297,124	\$2,497	\$48.02	\$300,304
2021	108	\$318,662	\$2,951	\$56.74	\$279,727



### Pledged Giving

\*as of Nov. 9th, 2021

96 Pledges Received  
\$288,520 Total

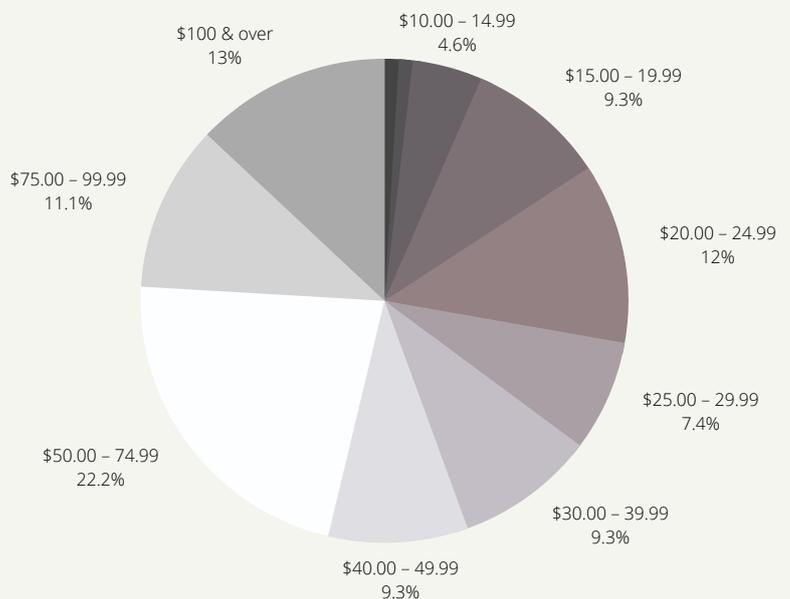
# Stewardship Report (II)

## 2021 Pledge Distribution

Weekly Pledge	# of Pledges	% of Pledges	Total Annual \$	% of Annual
Under 5.00	1	0.93%	\$240.00	0.08%
5.00 - 9.99	1	0.93%	\$500.00	0.16%
10.00 - 14.99	5	4.63%	\$3,170.00	0.99%
15.00 - 19.99	10	9.26%	\$9,740.00	3.06%
20.00 - 24.99	13	12.04%	\$14,800.00	4.64%
25.00 - 29.99	8	7.41%	\$11,080.00	3.48%
30.00 - 39.99	10	9.26%	\$17,852.00	5.60%
40.00 - 49.99	10	9.26%	\$23,060.00	7.24%
50.00 - 74.99	24	22.22%	\$74,680.00	23.44%
75.00 - 99.99	12	11.11%	\$54,360.00	17.06%
100 & over	14	12.96%	\$109,180.00	34.26%

### Pledge Summary for the year 2021

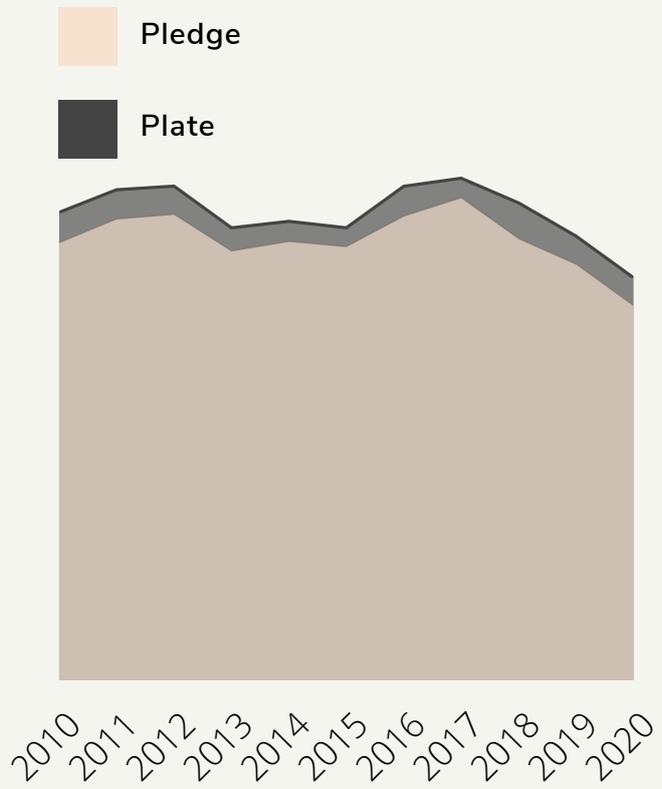
108 Pledges  
\$318,662 Total Pledged



# Stewardship Report (III)

## Giving History

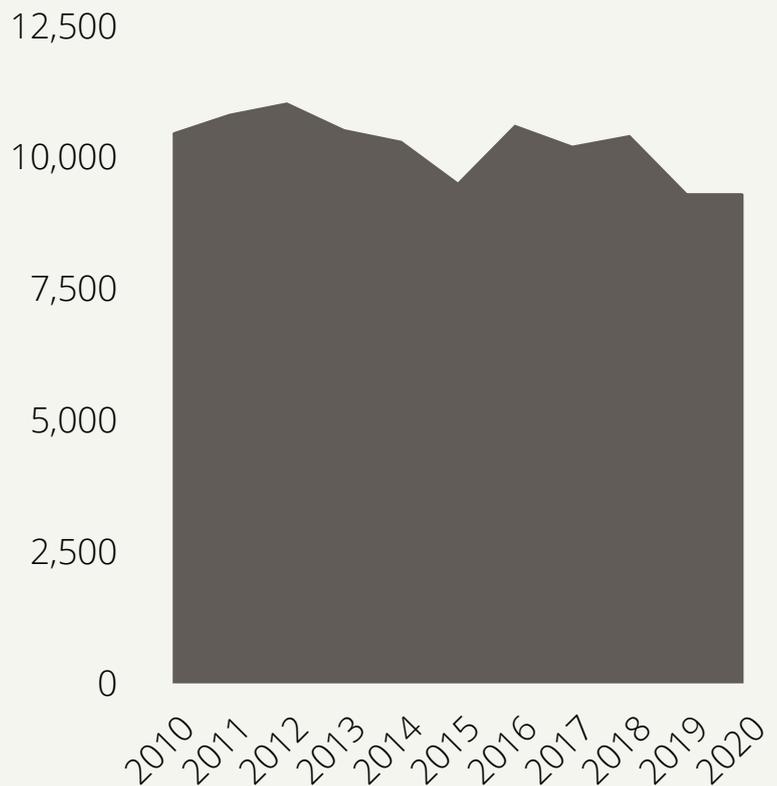
Year	Receipts Pledge	Receipts Plate
2010	350,774	25,315
2011	369,867	23,879
2012	373,606	23,033
2013	344,180	18,975
2014	351,852	16,529
2015	347,668	15,526
2016	372,146	24,362
2017	386,940	16,050
2018	354,054	29,124
2019	333,594	22,921
2020	300,304	23,740



## From the Parish Registers

### Attendance History

Year	Total	Average
2010	10,446	201
2011	10,796	208
2012	11,010	208
2013	10,504	202
2014	10,283	198
2015	9,484	182
2016	10,584	208
2017	10,189	207
2018	10,391	199
2019	9,287	181
2020	—	136*



\*January to March 12

## *From the* **Parish Registers (II)**

### **Holy Baptisms**

Lori Cherrin: January 24  
Leena Pearl Carrullo: April 4  
Lucia Bella Carrullo: April 4  
James Joseph Schellhammer: April 10  
Cameron Elizabeth Fiegel: May 2  
Blair Emerson Bobenchik: May 23  
Angela Justine Pack: June 6  
Ian Stanley Powell Pack: June 6  
Aubrey Jean Reynolds: August 1  
Aubrey Jane Geist: August 14

### **Funerals *and* Memorial Services**

Ella Fisher: December 12, 2020  
Robert Hughes: January 15  
Pamela Davis: January 23  
Mark Ermigiotti: March 6  
Dorothea Blenk: April 21  
Anthony Lodise: August 11  
Ruth Higgins: August 21  
Trevor Downing: September 17  
Robert Field: September 18  
Charles Bieler: September 25  
Karen Bieler: September 25  
John van Steenwyk: October 9  
Fuyo Sturges: October 16

## *From the* **2020 Parochial Report**

**Church School Students**

**63**

**Baptized Members**

**590**

**Average Sunday Attendance (ASA)**

**136**

### **Holy Matrimony**

Richard Edward Myers  
to Anastasia Lynn LaPolt  
March 27, 2021

### **Transfers**

from SMEC: **None**

to SMEC: **15 Individuals**

- Hans & Mary DeViso  
from Trinity Ambler
- Christopher & Lori Worrell
- Andrew, Angie & Ian Pack
- Norma Billings
- Al & Betty Farr
- Rodrigo, Anita, Nina,  
Amila, Sasha Gamarra

# *From the Nursery School*

## Ms. Jackie Anderson, Director

St. Matthew's Nursery School has been a ministry of the church for twenty-nine years. The school serves children ages two-and-a-half to five. This is the second year of school during the Covid-19 Pandemic. This school year our enrollment has grown to 120 children and a staff of seven classroom teachers, five enrichment teachers, and ten teacher's aides. Our dedicated and caring staff provides the children with arts and crafts, singing, cooking, stories, academics and lots of love every day. The nursery school prides itself on the fact that it accepts all children regardless of their needs or abilities. The school staff works very closely with outside county agencies to ensure that students with IEP's (Individualized Education Plans) are reaching their goals.

The Nursery School offers a physical education program, music class, chapel with the Rector, as well as library day for children in the four-year-old and pre-k classes. We offer Lunch Bunch every day from 11:30 – 3:00 p.m. In addition, we also offer the following enrichment classes: Mathemagic, Science, Reading Writing and Fun, Kreative Kids Art, STEAM, Sensational Art and Kids in Motion. Each year the school holds an annual Family Event and a one-week optional camp. During the school year, the children are not only busy in school, but out of school as well. The three and four-year-old classes go on short field trips and we also have many speakers that come into the school.

In our second year of the Covid-19 Pandemic the school continues to follow the guidelines set forth by the OCDEL (The Office of Child Development and Early Learning) and the Montgomery County Department of Health. Our drop off and pick up is conducted outside utilizing both parking lots and taking each child's temperature. Upon entering the school each child washes their hands with soap and water before beginning their day. Throughout the day the staff cleans high surface touch areas both in the classrooms as well as the bathrooms. At the end of each day the Director sanitizes the entire school using a sanitizing sprayer and then the school is cleaned by the church's cleaning service.

In our 29th year, our reputation is well established in the community. This is due to the excellent staff, caring parents and the strong support of the church and congregation. In June, we said goodbye to some beloved and longtime staff members who retired. Mrs. Griffin, our Pre-K teacher, has taught at St. Matthew's for 28 years since its inception in 1992. We also said goodbye to Mrs. Austin, a 25 year veteran, who was a teacher's aide and our Science Enrichment teacher, and Mrs. Clauss who has been a teacher's aide at St. Matthews for 20 years. All three women have left an indelible mark on our school and will be missed beyond words.

Moving forward we plan to become licensed by Department of Human Services and are working on the necessary changes and improvements to do so. The school will continue to evaluate our playground looking at ways we can improve it for both safety and aesthetics.

Please contact Jackie Anderson by telephone at (215) 646-4466 or at her school email address at [nurseryschool@saintmattsec.org](mailto:nurseryschool@saintmattsec.org).

Respectfully submitted,  
Jackie Anderson, Director

# *From the Outreach Ministry*

Even a pandemic couldn't stop the desire of St. Matthew's parishioners to assist others in need. Actually, we became more acutely aware of the great breadth of assistance so many need around us. Thanks to your overwhelming generosity, we were able to rekindle mainstays in our Outreach Ministry, while also adding several others. Below is a list of the main recipients of aid from our parish.

- Operation Bear Hug
- Mwamba
- Layette Collection
- Inter-Faith Housing Alliance
- Grace and Cecil Bean Soup Kitchen (Feed the Hungry)
- United Thank Offering (UTO)
- Thistle Hills
- Hurricane Relief for Louisiana
- St. James School
- Afghan Refugees
- Little Food Pantry
- Holiday Assistance for Wissahickon families
- Mattie Dixon

Mattie Dixon ministry collects food items for families in need in the Ambler area and surrounding communities throughout the year. The Community Cupboard plays an important role working to help hundreds of local people in need of food, and has been around for the past 43 years. Parishioners deposit non-perishable foods in designated boxes near the kitchen any time they are able. These items are delivered by volunteers on a monthly basis to the Cupboard location in Ambler. A list of needed foods is usually found in the weekly bulletin. There is also a special large collection in early November for Thanksgiving. Submitted by Nancy Williams.

St. Matthew's is blessed with the gifts and abilities to make outreach a hallmark of our mission and ministry. If you would like to become more involved in Outreach Ministry, please let Fr. Rodney know.

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Rodney Roehner, Rector



# *From the Life Long Learning* Ministry

## **Catechesis of the Good Shepherd**

For nearly thirty years, St. Matthew's has embraced the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. The goal of our program is to nurture each child's unique relationship with God. This is done through manipulative materials, prayer, song, listening to Bible stories, preparing children for participating in the liturgy and by giving children time to explore their own spirituality through the Catechesis materials. We are one of only a few churches in the country to offer CGS for four levels of education.

Our religious education program is based upon the work of Maria Montessori, famous for her method of educating generations of children. Originally developed in Rome by Sofia Cavaletti and Gianna Gobbi, it has spread throughout the world. Each of our atrium rooms contain materials that have been carefully chosen, are age-specific and geared to focus the children's attention on key scriptural passages or moments in our services. Each year new and updated materials are added to our atria.

We are blessed to have six experienced catechists who have undergone rigorous training for at least 90 hours to lead our program—some have trained for hundreds of hours. Four of our catechists have recently completed formation classes for Level 2. In addition, we have a staff of volunteers who assist our catechists.

Our six catechists direct the Sunday school through prayerful stewardship of monetary and human resources. Their responsibilities include providing administrative structure to the Sunday school program; defining and updating our mission, goals, and objectives; problem solving; establishing and maintaining lines of communication; program development; ensuring quality of our program; and annual budget review and proposal to the Vestry.

Because of COVID, in-person Sunday school was not offered during the 2020-2021 school year. Instead, Zoom or recorded lessons and take-home materials were offered. In-person classes resumed in September 2021. A breakdown of active students within their respective classes is offered on the next page:

- Toddler – 16 to 36 months, led by Sandie Preusch. No toddlers registered at this time. We expect a few after the 1st of the year.
- Level 1 – Preschool ages 3-5, led by Nancy Cunningham and Nancy Williams with 6 children participating
- Level 2 – Primary – Kindergarten through Grade 2, led by Linda Schindewolf and Linda Baier with 7 children participating
- Level 3 – Senior – Grades 3-5, led by Judy Groben with 9 children participating

Many of our CGS families and staff members have not yet returned. We are hoping they will be back when the COVID situation improves. We have welcomed three new families to CGS so far this year. In January 2022, St. Matthew's will offer children in third grade and older the opportunity to participate in Solemn Communion preparation. This program is an opportunity for children to explore the meaning of the Eucharist during five evening classes, a Saturday retreat and then receiving communion during a Sunday Service.

On the Saturday before Easter, a Liturgy of the Light worship service will be held. This children's service, modeled after the Episcopal Easter Vigil, is an opportunity for children to participate in the worship service and to celebrate the risen Christ with their families. During the coming year we plan to maintain a strong program and add new and updated materials. Our hope for the future is to attract young families to our parish, so that more children can benefit from our wonderful program. We also hope to recruit new people to become catechists.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Linda Baier, Lead Catechist

### ***Weaving God's Promises for Middle School***

With the start of Sunday school and using *Weaving God's Promises*, leading the classes with me are Pam Dunlap, Heather Kennedy, and Megan Williams. We have had as many as ten and as few as two children of grades 6th – 8th in attendance. The diverse mix of adults gives an "out of the box" thinking and responses to the variety of questions and opinions brought out in our readings and discussions. At this age, the perfect mix of our guidan -

-ce and their curiosity in the text of *Weaving God's Promises* helps our children to find their faith in Christ in the levels they are comfortable with. We hope to continue to use WGP as a tool to encourage their faith and to strengthen ours to go forward and spread God's word and love.

Yours in faith,  
Erin Whalen, Co-leader

### **Adult Life Long Learning Forum**

The adult forum has continued to meet during 2021, initially via Zoom with a bible study of Mark's gospel during Epiphany, followed by a video tour and study of the Holy Land during Lent. We completed our study of Mark during Eastertide. This fall, we were able to again meet in person, sharing several podcasts and articles for discussion. We are ending the calendar year with a 6-week video course by Pete Enns entitled "The Evolution of Adam". The class meets at 9:00 in the parish hall, and is also available via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,  
Karen Randall and Jon Clark, Leaders

### *From the Pastoral Care Ministry* Ms. Treva McLaughlin

The Pastoral Care Team is composed of a group of parishioners who have had pastoral care training and who have an interest in serving in this ministry. Our mission is to visit members of the parish who are homebound, can't get out to church very often or just need a visit. During the Covid-19 pandemic, we have been making regular telephone calls to keep in touch with these parishioners. We are now beginning to resume monthly visits. Bimonthly, the team members meet to communicate and serve as a support system for one another. Clergy provides supervision and ministry support. If you're interested in training for this ministry or would like information about it please speak to the clergy.

Respectfully submitted,  
Treva McLaughlin, Team Member

# *From the* Music Ministry

## **Arise Band | 9:00 AM Service**

Our main goal as the Arise Band is to provide meaningful worship music in a contemporary style that reflects the scripture each Sunday morning at the 9:00 service. Because of COVID, the first half of the year was challenging. We had limited band members, and in addition, we needed to be spaced throughout the church, including our equipment, trying to make it a safe environment for everyone while we lead worship. With God's grace it worked. By April of 2021, the full Arise band came back together, and from that time on we have been together leading praise and worship every Sunday morning. Looking ahead, we hope to continue to keep the worship music fresh, enjoying the old songs but bringing out new songs with great messages praising our Lord. We look forward to an even better year!

Respectfully submitted,  
Martha Reynolds, Arise Band Leader

# *From the Communications Committee*

The Communications Committee was formed in 2020 and is comprised of Carolyn Bedics, Joe Buesgen and Anthony Carrella. The Committee works closely with the rector, vestry, staff, nursery school and ministry groups to provide timely, informative, and effective communications that reach all members of our parish and nursery school communities, as well as the wider community where necessary.

## **LIVESTREAMING AND HYBRID WORSHIP**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, livestreaming has allowed St. Matthew's to remain an active, liturgical community. St. Matthew's has offered the opportunity to participate in online worship every Sunday since March 22, 2020. This year, worship services were offered livestream only during the month of January. After the return to limited in-person worship on February 7, St. Matthew's offered multiple livestream worship opportunities each Sunday for those unable to attend in-person worship.

In March, St. Matthew's invested in an advanced, multi-camera system that significantly increased the quality of our livestream offerings. This investment was underwritten, in part, by a technology grant from the Diocese.

St. Matthew's continues to deliver multiple livestreamed worship services every Sunday to the congregation and community of St. Matthew's. Even after the return to in-person worship, livestreamed services continue to engage an average of 150-200 people weekly. This technology has helped St. Matthew's reach a greater audience than ever before - including engaging parishioners from afar, serving the homebound, and providing an opportunity for people to learn more about the worship experience at St. Matthew's.

## **WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA**

The Communications Committee generates numerous congregation-wide emails weekly, informing members about opportunities to worship and participate. The usage of social media (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram)

to engage members of the parish and the community continues to increase. The Communications Committee also maintains the St. Matthew's website, adding both content and functionality as required, and look forward to a new iteration of the website in 2022.

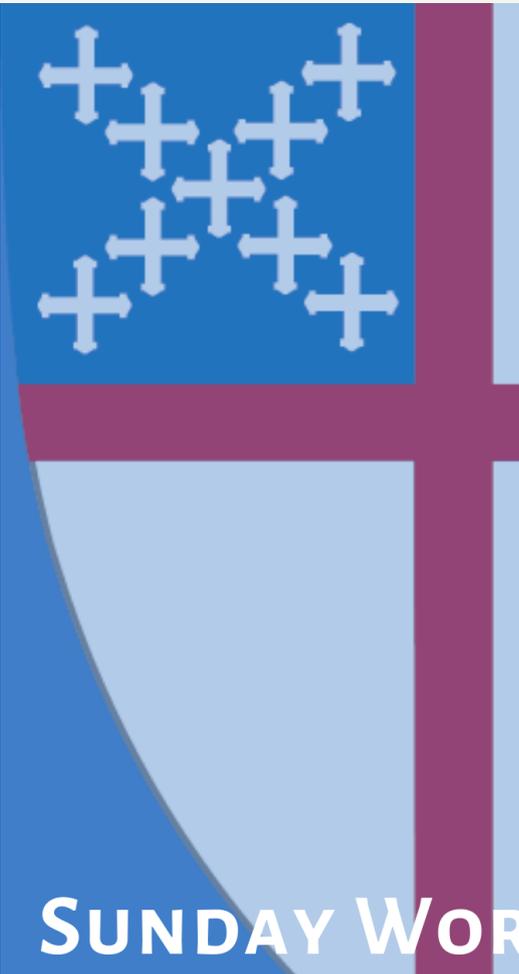
## **PRINT**

The Communications Committee works closely with the rector to generate weekly service bulletins. The Oracle, which is also produced by the Communications Committee, has undergone significant improvements over the past two years. The Communications Committee also handles the design and publication of St. Matthew's Annual Report, physical mailings, posters, flyers, invitations, and more.

## **STAFF POSITION**

In October, Anthony Carrella transitioned to the staff position of Director of Communications. Anthony will assist in the development of St. Matthew's communication strategy along with the church staff and volunteers. This effort aims to strengthen our relationships in the wider community and diocese, as well as those of our St. Matthew's family.

Respectfully submitted,  
Joe Buesgen, Communications Committee



# WEEKLY OPPORTUNITIES

## **Monday Night Bible Study**

*On Zoom first and third Mondays at 7:00 PM.*

<https://tinyurl.com/SMEC-MondayBible>

## **Tuesday Night Prayer and Share**

*On Zoom Tuesdays at 7:30 PM.*

<https://tinyurl.com/SMEC-Tuesday-PS>

## **Wednesday Afternoon Healing Eucharist**

*Live in the Sanctuary each week at Noon.*

## **Thursday Morning Prayer**

*On Zoom each week at 9:00 AM.*

<https://tinyurl.com/SMEC-Thursday-MP>

# SUNDAY WORSHIP AND LEARNING

- ✠ Rite I Service and Holy Eucharist at 7:45 AM in the Sanctuary
- ✠ Rite II Service and Holy Eucharist *with Contemporary Music* at 9:00AM in the Sanctuary, Livestreamed, and recorded via Facebook.
- \* CGS Sunday School at 9:00 AM in the Modular Atria.
- \* Weaving God's Promises for Middle School at 9:00 AM in the Conference Room.
- \* Adult Life Long Learning Forum at 9:00 AM in the Parish Hall and via Zoom  
<https://tinyurl.com/SMEC-Adult-LLL>
- ✠ Rite II Service and Holy Eucharist *with Choir and Organ* at 10:30 AM in the Sanctuary, Livestreamed, and recorded via Facebook.



Celebration  
of new  
Ministry

The Institution of  
The Rev.  
Rodney Koehner

Wed. Dec. 8, 6:00 PM  
Reception to Follow

