



St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

Around the Church

June 28, 2026

tell me
your
story

TELL ME YOUR STORY

My sermon this past Sunday (6/21) was longer than usual, I will admit. It was also one of the hardest I've had to preach in a long time! Fathers' Day... a baptism... and the Gospel is Jesus telling us he "will divide families" and "if you love parent or child more than him" you're not worthy of him...!? "Take up your cross," Jesus says (Matthew 10:26-39). Not real cheery. But *real*. The bulk of my sermon was a bunch of stories that I hoped would illustrate what Jesus meant. To try to bring the hardest parts of the text into real life and show the good news in what he's trying to tell us to do.

I love stories. I was a reader growing up, and there's something about how a narrative, plot, motivations, and feelings told in a coherent way teach and reveal something about *life* and where God is in our life and the lives of others. Faith only makes sense in the context of a story. Faith isn't merely belief "about" a set of facts that you know or agree to. Where is God in all "this"—meaning the ups and downs of your life?? The big stuff. This is where faith is a *living thing*, not some abstract belief "way up there." So, what's your story? And *where is God in it?*

I have heard a lot of stories. And the question, "Where is God in all this?" is the most important. It is also sometimes the hardest to answer, but I do think trusting who God is revealed in Christ makes answering that question way easier. Often that question isn't answered until (long) after the fact... or God's presence is only seen by others. It's in our stories that Jesus' words make sense and are shown to be true. And then HIS story of death and resurrection becomes a part of *our* story.

Peace,
Pr. Christian



SUNDAY WORSHIP WITH ST. PAUL'S, JULY 12

Due to reconstruction of their parking lot, St. Matthew's will warmly welcome the congregation of St.

Paul's Lutheran Church in Lionville to our Morning Worship on Sunday, July 12.

Pastor Paul Townsend and Pastor Stuart Luce will co-lead the service, and we will host a special Fellowship for St. Paul's members after the service in the CLC.

To sign up to help provide the Fellowship, please check the link posted in the online ATC this week.

We are looking forward to celebrating our special connection to St. Paul's and with their church members!



OUTDOOR WORSHIP SERVICE: RESCHEDULED TO SUNDAY, JULY 19

To celebrate Summer, and weather permitting, we will be having our 9:30am Sunday morning Worship outdoors Sunday, July 19, next to the Community Garden. We will have some seating available, but if you're able, please bring chairs or blankets to sit on during the service.

We will also bless the St. Matthew's Community Garden during this service.



MORE WORSHIP ASSISTANTS ARE NEEDED THIS SUMMER!

As Pastor Christian noted in his *Words From Our Pastor* article last week, we are in great need of more worship assistants this Summer. Our current, very faithful group of assistants will be taking some time off for vacations. It's a great time to try something out to help in the life of the church.

We need more lectors, communion assistants, altar assistants, greeters, Audio/Visual assistants (both for the slides and for streaming), youth acolytes, and families to provide Fellowship after Worship. Training will be provided, and scheduling is flexible!

Please contact Sara Richardson in the church office ASAP if you are interested in giving anything a try!

srichardson@stmatthews-church.org, 610-458-5675 (9:00am-1:00pm M-F)



Pints & Parables: Monday, July 7, 7:00pm at MaGerks in Lionville. Come join us for stimulating conversation & fellowship, in a laid-back relaxing atmosphere.

Coffee & Christ: Saturday, July 11, 8:30am at Starbucks in Chester Springs. Join us for coffee and good conversation at our next session!

Mission In: We are taking a break in July, see you August 9 at 10:45am

Faith Discussions: We are taking a break for the Summer, see you at our first Fall meeting on September 1 at 7:00pm



St. Mary's
Franciscan Shelter
for Homeless Families

HELP NEEDED TO PROVIDE IAC MEAL FOR ST. MARY'S, JULY 1

St. Matthew's will provide dinner for the 15 residents at St. Mary's Homeless Shelter (Phoenixville) on Wednesday, July 1, as part of the Interfaith Action Community's meal week.

We need:

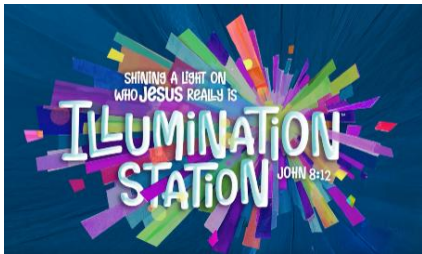
- **3 volunteers to donate \$16 each (checks payable to St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, memo: St. Mary's pizza, or www.stmatthews-church.org/give, select "Interfaith Action St. Mary's Meal")**
- **1 bagged salad (store-bought)**
- **1 dessert (store-bought)**

To help, contact Louise Rutledge at larutledge51@gmail.com or (484) 459-3389. **All items must be dropped off at the church office by 1:00pm on Wednesday, July 1.** Thank you for your support!



ASP: CARE PACKAGE GOODIES NEEDED BY JULY 8

WE ARE LOOKING FOR CARE PACKAGE GOODIES TO SEND TO OUR ASP TEAM WHILE THEY ARE AWAY IN WV! Items can be cookies, brownies, hard candy, Tastykakes, simple dollar-store puzzles and games, etc. Donations must be received by Wednesday, July 8 and can be left on the office porch at St. Matthew's or in the airlock at St. Paul's. Questions? Contact Craig Miller at craigyouthmin@gmail.com.



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2026:

REGISTER BY JULY 6!

Registration is now open for Illumination Station: Vacation Bible School 2026. It will be held at St. Paul's from July 27-31 from 9:00am-12:00pm each day. There will be an Ice Cream Social on Sunday, July 26 at 6:00pm, and a closing show on Friday, July 31 at 12:00pm.

We welcome campers from age 4 (by 1/1/2026)-age 11 (if you completed 5th grade in the 2025-26 school year). Fees are \$15 per child/\$10 for siblings/\$30 for family. Financial assistance is available by contacting Pastor Christian. **Space is limited, please register by July 6.** Registration forms can be found on the church website (under Events), or in the online ATC.

We need lots of volunteers to make Illumination Station a success! Volunteer registration forms are also available on the church website or in the online ATC. Volunteers must have Youth Protection Policy training and clearances. We are also accepting youth volunteers who have completed 5th grade in 2025-26 and older.



SUMMER RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE, JULY 14

We will host a Red Cross Blood Drive this summer, on Tuesday, July 14 from 1:00-6:00pm in the CLC. To register to give blood, call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or go to RedCrossBlood.org. The direct link to sign up in on our website and in the online ATC. Search "19425" and scroll down to the St. Matthew's drive.



St. Mary's
Franciscan Shelter
For Homeless Families

ST. MARY'S MEAL:

NEXT MEAL JULY 26

The next meal delivery to St. Mary's Franciscan Shelter will be on July 26, and the sign up is now in the online ATC.

There are many options to provide a meal for at least 15 people residing at the shelter, including providing groceries for their kitchen team to prepare, deliver ready-to-eat items, donate a grocery gift card, or use their kitchen to become a guest chef/baker for parts of the meal.

Full details with the requirements are listed on the church website and on the Sign-Up Genius. If you have any questions, please contact Mindy Elmer: mlong1011@comcast.net



COMMUNITY GARDEN UPDATE

Our 2026 growing season is well underway! Our spring vegetables this year include cherry belle radishes, French breakfast radishes, salad turnips, beets, romaine lettuce, red leaf lettuce, butterhead lettuce, arugula lettuce and collards. So far, we have harvested 240 pounds that we have donated to the Chester County Food Bank. Even if you are not renting one of our 16 beds, we would love to have some new faces join us in helping plant, maintain, and harvest the vegetables we grow in the five dedicated food bank beds. No experience is necessary! If you are interested in helping in the garden, please contact Meghan Comegys (megcomegys@gmail.com or 484-684-3109),

Desiree Lee (dal2123@yahoo.com or 610-425-0484) or Jim Rutledge (jirutman2005@yahoo.com or 484-459-3255).

**Save the Date for the 2026
Drive Out Hunger Golf Outing:
Thursday, Sept. 17!**

Register now by going to www.stmatthews-church.org/give and select "Golf Outing Fundraiser" from the dropdown menu. \$125 per golfer, or \$20 if you're having lunch only!

St. Matthew's Lutheran Church 2026 Golf event

Drive Out Hunger.

~ Proceeds Benefit ~
Grace Crossing Community Food Pantry
West Chester Food Cupboard,
Coatesville Youth and Women's alliance

**Raffle Prizes, Mulligans, Hole Sponsors,
Fun, Food, and Music!**

Kimberton Golf Club

\$125 Per Golfer— includes
a BBQ Lunch

\$20 Lunch Only— Children
under 10 at Free!

September 17, 2026

7:00 am Registration
8:00 am Shot Gun

Live Music



Scan to
Sign Up!



Questions? Contact Patrick Miller, 610-291-3002 or pjmill98@yahoo.com



**EARLY ATC
DEADLINES
FOR JULY AND
AUGUST**

Our Church Admin will be taking some time off over the summer, and we will

have the following early deadlines for the Around the Church print newsletters:

July 12: Friday, July 3 9:30am

July 19: Wednesday, July 15 9:30am

August 2 and August 9:

Wednesday, July 29 9:30am

*If you have any questions, please contact Sara at srichardson@stmatthews-church.org
Thank you for your cooperation!*



Happy 4th of July!



CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED JULY 3

To celebrate America's 250th Birthday, the church office will be closed on Friday, July 3. We will resume normal office hours on Monday, July 6. Have a wonderful holiday weekend!