



St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

Around the Church

January 25, 2026



SNOWMAGEDDON

Snow. Yep, it'll cancel worship again this Sunday. The purist in me says worship is never cancelled because we can always read/ hear God's Word and turn to God in praise and supplication (Thank you, God!; Help me, God!). That said, worship is also a communal act. Worshiping with *other people* is very different from one's private devotions. All this snow canceling reminds me of the pandemic. Thinking about how to do "virtual worship," pre-record sermons, live-stream from my phone... Sadly, I've forgotten how to do all that. But it's not a bad thing to remember how to do!

What I was *going to preach on* last week was Jesus' call to follow with his simple question, "What are you looking for?" (John 1:38). I think a lot of us don't know it until we see it. The image of the Buddhist monks walking for peace resonated with me; they were nearing Charlotte where I was visiting my dad. I think we're "looking for something" *like that*, and not the images of masked ICE agents shooting people. Jesus then invites the disciples to "Come and see" (vs. 39). John the Baptist has told us already what we're seeing—and *should be looking for!*—"Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (vs. 29, 36).

We *follow after* what it is we're *looking for*. We *follow after* a vision, something compelling, life giving, affirming, comforting, inspiring and challenging. All that is true, but all those words can be empty without something or someone (Jesus Christ!) to give it "flesh." We are also supposed to have our Annual Meeting this Sunday. Please take the time to read the reports. I believe there's a "vision" there that motivates everything we've done, have tried to do, and want to do—a vision that begins with Christ's grace.

This Sunday Jesus calls two sets of brothers, and they drop their fishing nets and follow

him (Matthew 4:12-23). They leave one life behind, to take up another one. I believe most of us live our discipleship "in the middle" of our lives, we haven't made that sharp of a break, like Andrew and Peter, James and John. But following Jesus *will mean* leaving some things behind and *taking up* other things. And that's not a bad thing. It's hard but life-giving and rewarding. We have to trust him. Christ's call is filled with images that make up that compelling image of who God is *for us*. "Come and see."

Peace,
Pr. Christian



ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING: JAN. 25, SNOW DATE FEB. 1

Please join us for our Annual Congregational Meeting next Sunday, January 25, after the 9:30am service in the Sanctuary. ***The snow date will be Sunday, February 1.*** This is an opportunity to reflect on the past year, and plan for the upcoming year.

We will:

- hear updates from ministry leaders,
- present the 2025 financials
- offer the 2026 budget for approval
- elect new members to council.

We look forward to seeing you there. For more information, please contact Council President Doug Ditillo (dougditillo@gmail.com).

Electronic or print copies of the annual report may be requested by contacting the church office beginning Monday, January 26. (office@stmatthews-church.org)



TRIP TO LANTERN HILL MEETING JAN. 29

We're going! Follow the Light to Lantern Hill on our mission week July 20-26 (may be flexed by a day on either end due to travel needs).

A Zoom meeting on Thursday, January 29 at 7:00pm will discuss travel plans, expectations, and possibly feature a visit with the founder of Lantern Hill. Attend this meeting even if you just think you want to go! We will obtain commitments to travel by the end of February.

For more information, please contact Stephanie McMullan (mcmullanfour@verizon.net) or Jen Williams (jenwilliamsrp@gmail.com). **Please check the online ATC for the Zoom info and link.**



MISSION IN:

REQUEST FOR PRAYER SQUARES

The Mission In team is looking for people who knit or crochet who would be willing to make prayer squares. The squares could be 2"x2" up to 4"x4" in any color. Mission In will be attaching a sentiment and giving these to members who might need a lift and/or are on the Prayer List. Please say a prayer over the square prior to donating it. There will be a collection box in the lobby of the CLC. Thank you for your help!



YOUTH NEWS

DON'T MISS OUR YOUTH EVENT AT TOPGOLF IN KING OF PRUSSIA on Sunday, January 25 from 12 Noon-3:00pm! Spend a couple of fun hours showing off your golf swing (or developing one), eating, and having fun with friends! ALL youth in grades 6-12 are invited to participate, including friends. The household cost will be \$20

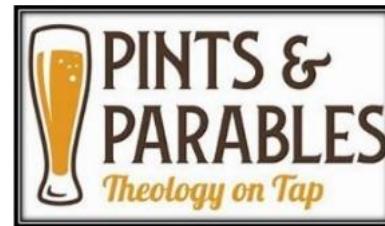
for one participant, or \$35 for two or more participants from the same household. Sign up is in the online ATC, don't throw away your shot!

REGISTER NOW FOR THE TUSCARORA LUTHERAN YOUTH RETREAT! This annual synod-wide youth event will take place **Friday evening through Sunday afternoon, March 20-22**. ALL 6th-12th graders are encouraged to participate, and friends are welcome to join us, too! The cost is \$175 per person; scholarships are available. The sign up link is on the online ATC and church website, **the registration deadline is Sunday, February 1**.

THE NEXT HIGH SCHOOL OASIS 'BIBLE DIVE' will be on **Sunday, February 1 from 6:30-8:00pm at St. Paul's (note the change in date!)** Our first session involved a really good discussion around baptism and the Holy Spirit. Come spend some time relaxing from the stresses from life and resting in God's Good News! Open to all 9th-12th graders, including friends. No sign up necessary; just show up.

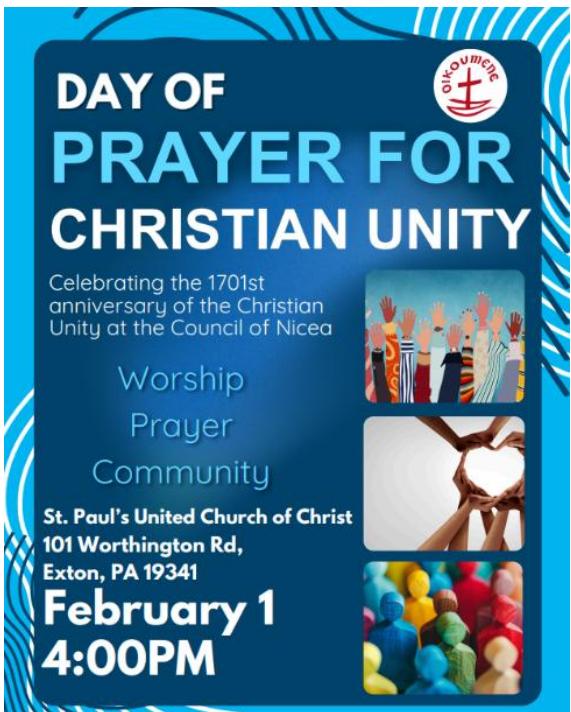
AN OUTDOOR ADVENTURE

OPPORTUNITY! 6th-12th GRADE YOUTH are invited to participate in our trip to Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area on Saturday, **February 21 (snow date February 28)**. Meet at St. Matthew's at 7:30am to carpool to Middle Creek and spend the day hiking, exploring, and hopefully seeing some of the amazing snow goose migration. Bring snacks and water; hot dogs and hot chocolate will be provided. Sign up is on the online ATC.



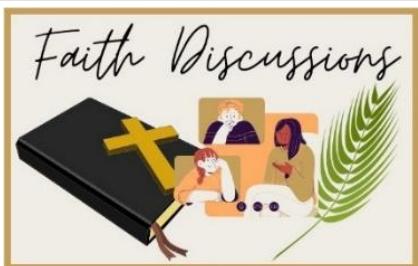
PINTS AND PARABLES, FEB. 2 NOW AT MAGERKS!

Come join us for stimulating conversation & fellowship, in a laid-back relaxing atmosphere on **Monday, February 2, 7:00pm, We will meet at MaGerks, 174 Eagleview Blvd. in Lionville.**



MINISTERIUM CHRISTIAN UNITY SERVICE, FEB. 1

You are welcome to attend the gathering of our local Christian churches as we celebrate with a special service on Sunday, February 1, at 4:00pm. The service will be at St. Paul's UCC (101 Worthington Rd. Exton, PA) with Pastor Stacy Gonzalez from Grove United Methodist preaching. Last year we were snowed out of celebrating the 1,700 year anniversary of Christian Unity through the Nicene Creed, so we hope you can gather for this celebration!



FAITH DISCUSSIONS, FEB. 3

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, February 3 at 7:00pm in the Lounge. We will be discussing Matthew 6:19-34. All are welcome...hope to see you there!



COFFEE & CHRIST, FEB. 7

Join us for coffee and good conversation at our next session of Coffee & Christ, **Saturday, February 7 at 8:30am at Starbucks in Chester Springs!**



FAMILY TRIP TO MIDDLE CREEK, FEB. 21

BACK THIS YEAR! OUR FAMILY TRIP TO MIDDLE CREEK WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA will take place on Saturday, February 21. Meet at St. Matthew's at 7:30am to travel to Middle Creek (about an hour's drive), or meet us there at the Willow Point Trail parking lot (off Kleinfeltersville Road) for some hiking and exploration. Hopefully we'll get to see some of the amazing snow goose migration that takes place through the area. Bring snacks and water; hot dogs and hot chocolate will be provided. **Sign up in the online ATC to join us! Snow date will be Saturday, February 28.**



MEN'S BREAKFAST, FEB. 21

Please plan on bringing something to cook and share with the group on **Saturday, February 21**. Food prep begins at 8:00am with breakfast starting at 8:30am. Please contact Tim Guyer at ttguyer@gmail.com with questions.



St. Mary's
Franciscan Shelter
for Homeless Families

ST. MARY'S MEAL DELIVERY **NEXT MEAL, FEB. 22**

You can choose from a few options when you sign up to provide a meal, two are listed below:

- Provide groceries for their kitchen team to prepare dinner. Plan a meal for 15 people, including a main dish, a vegetable or salad and a dessert. Groceries can be dropped off the day before or by 2:30 pm on the day of the meal.
- Deliver a ready-to-eat meal (frozen or fresh) from a grocery store or pizza parlor.

More information is on our Church website, and the sign up for the next meal on February 22 is in the online ATC.

ASP Appalachia SERVICE PROJECT® YOUTH REGISTRATION FOR APPALACHIA SERVICE PROJECT **IS NOW OPEN!**

Current 7th-12th graders are able to participate in this annual trip to Central Appalachia to help make homes safer, warmer, and drier for families in need. This year's ASP trip will be July 11-18, 2026 (Saturday through Saturday), with three prep sessions happening Sundays April 19, May 3, and May 31.

To register, go to ASP's registration portal at <https://apps.skycog.com/reg/APPSERV/SignIn.asp> (link is in the online ATC and church website) and do the following:

1. Log in to your ASP account. (If you have never attended ASP before, you will need to create a new account in the participant's name, not the parent's.)
2. Enter 16866 for the group number, to find our trip.
3. Complete the registration, release, and medical forms online.

The cost per participant will be \$400; youth will have the opportunity to earn money toward their trip by helping with fundraisers in late winter and spring. This trip has filled up for the past three years, so don't wait too long if you want to come with us this summer!

Questions? Contact Craig Miller
at craigyouthmin@gmail.com, or by text or phone at 484-320-0785.



RENT A GARDEN SPACE IN 2026!

Interested in renting a growing space in our thriving community garden? We have one raised garden bed available for rent for the upcoming 2026 growing season. The cost to rent the bed for a single season (April-November) is \$50. With our well-maintained garden space and drip watering system, you do not have to be an experienced gardener to enjoy growing your own veggies. If you or anyone you might know from the community is interested, please contact Meghan Comegys at megcomegys@gmail.com or 484-684-3109. We would love to have new faces join our existing team of gardeners!



CALL FOR WORSHIP ASSISTANTS!

We are in need of more Worship Assistants in all areas: Audio/Visual Assistants, Greeters, Altar Assistants, Lectors, Communion Assistants, Fellowship Providers and Youth Acolytes. Now is a great opportunity to join us in the new year!

If you are interested in any of the positions available, please contact Sara Richardson in the office: srichardson@stmatthews-church.org. Scheduling is flexible and training will be provided!