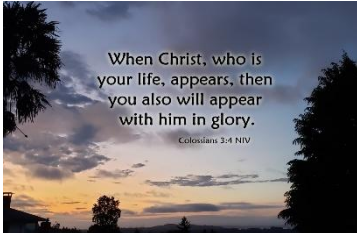




St. Matthew's Lutheran Church: Around the Church Easter Sunday, April 5, 2026



OH HAPPY DAY!

I love Easter. It is truly my favorite holiday in the church year. It might not get all the hoop-la in our society that Christmas does,

but that's OK. Easter is God's Good News to us in its purest form. Life over death. Resurrection. No more pain, or tears, or sorrow. Every time I preach a funeral, I preach a little Easter. Because of Jesus Christ's resurrection, death is not the last word—for those who've gone before us, our loved ones who've died, and for us who struggle with the pain of death, who continue our lives in the valley of its shadow—death is not the end.

I think of Christ's resurrection as that moment when eternity, melded into the material of human being, broke completely through the "veil" that divides this life from God's Life. Yes, we are called to live *this life* within eternity, before God as an ever-present Friend. Or as St. Paul reminds the Colossians, "You've died, and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Colossians 3:3). He says all that in the past and present tense. We can say St. Paul is speaking symbolically, but there is a very real *reality* underneath that direct language. That *reality* broke through in Jesus' resurrection. Because Christ lives, we too live (in the present!) through the Holy Spirit.

But there is a finality to earthly death. Jesus wasn't resurrected in a world that had the privilege of an average life expectancy in the 70s. Child mortality was 50% (!!) before the age of five. Fifty percent! In our modern world, it's easy to see death as a natural part of life, but I don't think God intends for a very large percentage of 3-year-olds to die. Heaven is overwhelmingly filled with children who never reached puberty.

Look at ourselves and the world we've created and what do you see? *God's* image? Yes! And no... There is a finality to all of the death-dealing we do—at the very least we suffer its effects. So did Jesus. And yet he was *God's image* ("...the exact imprint of God's very being..." Hebrews 1:3). God's Son on the Cross. God hallows all of life in him.

Christ's resurrection restores that image *in this life, in this world of existence* with the promise that we too will share his resurrected glory (Colossians 3:4).

Me? I pray for knees and a back that won't hurt. I pray for when I won't have to keep praying, "Lord, have mercy." I long for the peace and joy of the birds and lilies. But the Risen Lord reminds me that that is possible now in his Risen Spirit. Because of Easter.

Peace,
Pr. Christian



EASTER **CONGREGATIONAL** **BREAKFAST 8:30AM**

Our Annual Easter Congregational Breakfast will take place this morning between the 7:30am and 9:30am Worship Services. Please join us for Fellowship, and extra hands are always needed!

EASTER MONDAY

The church and school offices will be closed on Easter Monday, April 6. We will resume regular office hours and school will resume on Tuesday, April 7!



We wish you all a Happy and Blessed Easter!

BRAVER ANGELS: **DEPOLARIZING** **WITHIN** **WORKSHOP,** **APR. 11**

Braver Angels

Please join us for this very special workshop

on Saturday, April 11 from 9:00am-12 Noon in the CLC. Lunch will follow the workshop. Participants will develop strategies for engaging in politics without demonizing the other side and constructively intervene in conversations with like-minded peers.

An EventBrite registration link can be found in the online ATC. This will connect you with some of the resources for the workshop.

Too often common ground is lost when emotions and conflict cloud relationships. We could all use a little more humility and learn to listen better. Jesus said, "Love your enemies," (Luke 6:27, 35), and that means learning how to listen to them...knowing what is within us that gets in the way.

The "Depolarizing Within" workshop is not "political" in the normal sense--it's not about "blue or red" positions. Its purpose is for us to learn how we ourselves can be polarizing, in order to listen better and prevent others from being polarizing.

Braver Angels is a volunteer-led organization whose stated purpose is to foster healthy, civic dialogue. If you have any questions about this program, please contact the church office: office@stmatthews-church.org



PENNY WARS END ON APR. 12!

As of Wednesday, Pastor Christian has \$156.28 and Pastor Stuart has raised \$102.64, while in the youth competition, John Lueders from St. Matthew's has \$90.87 and Zack Heath from St. Paul's has \$82.63. The pastor and youth who raise the highest amount will "win" the privilege of performing in front of the congregations. Our grand total to date is \$430.42; if we raise \$1,000 total combined, our Youth Director, Craig Miller, will be involved as well! Containers are in the narthex at both churches; be sure to vote with your pennies, coins, and dollars who you want to "win" in both contests!



BLUE JEAN SATURDAY AND CLEAN OUT AROUND CAMPUS, APR. 18

Spring is coming and we are planning our Blue Jean Saturday clean-up will be held on Saturday, April 18 from 9:00am-1:00pm. This will make sure that our campus is looking its best after a very rough winter. We will need several volunteers...all you'll need to do is bring yourself,

your family or friends, and a pair of gloves. We will have tools for weeding and moving mulch. **Please sign up in the online ATC!** Please contact the church office with questions: office@stmatthews-church.org

We are also in need of many volunteers to assist with the clean out of the CLC closets, the garage and the basement. Please join us on the same date, Saturday, April 18 starting at 9:00am. Many hands make lighter work! For more information, contact Sue Hummerston: hummerstonsue@gmail.com



MISSION IN: CARE PACKAGES FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS, APR. 19 NEW DATE AND LOCATION!

Please sign up in the online ATC or on the church website to bake/purchase cookies or donate candy for care packages being sent to our college students. The care packages will be assembled on Sunday, April 19 at 10:45am in the Lounge. **(Please note new date and location!)** Everyone is invited to help the Mission In team assemble the boxes for our students.

No cookies with peanuts please. Bakers are asked to bake at least 2 dozen cookies. Please package them in zip lock bags to maintain freshness, and label bags with your name, the type of cookies and whether they contain nuts.

Cookies need to be dropped off in the church office by Friday, April 17 between 9:00 am-1:00pm or on Sunday, April 19 before 10:30am in the Lounge. Candy can be dropped off in the bin on the office porch or in the lobby of the CLC.

Please add your email address and the amount of cookies you are donating when signing up for a slot. Please contact Louise Rutledge at larutledge51@gmail.com with any questions.

Have a College Student? If your son/daughter's college mailing address has changed since November 2025, please contact the church office at (610) 458-5675 or **office@stmatthews-church.org**. Please give them your college student's current mailing address, so that we can ship a package to them at school.



YOUTH CAR WASH, APR. 26

OUR ANNUAL YOUTH CAR WASH

FUNDRAISER will be held Sunday morning, April 26 from 8:00-11:00am (weather permitting). Drop your car off before worship, and our team will return it to you with a sparkling clean exterior when you come out afterward! No charge, but donations are gratefully accepted.



St. Mary's
Franciscan Shelter
For Homeless Families

ST. MARY'S MEAL: APR. 26

Special thanks to our church members who provided Gift Cards to St. Mary's Franciscan Shelter last month to cover our March meal!
The April Meal will be delivered on Sunday, April 26. Please sign up in the online ATC.

There are many options to provide a meal for at least 15 people residing at the shelter. These include 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 at m1ong1011@comcast.net



Appalachia
SERVICE PROJECT®

ENVELOPE FUNDRAISER FOR ASP

THE 'ENVELOPE' FUNDRAISER FOR APPALACHIA SERVICE PROJECT is up on the youth bulletin board in the CLC. You are invited to choose an envelope from the board to help purchase needed food and supplies, or to sponsor a youth for this summer's work week in Central Appalachia. Simply return the envelope with the indicated amount and card inside filled out. Completed envelopes can be placed in the church offering or turned in to the church office.



Faith Discussions: Tuesday, April 7 at 7:00pm in the Lounge. We will begin a discussion of a book by Martin Luther.

Mission In: Sunday, April 12 at 10:45am in the CLC. All are welcome!

Pints & Parables: Monday, April 13, 7:00pm at MaGerks in Lionville. Come join us for stimulating conversation & fellowship, in a laid-back relaxing atmosphere.

Men's Breakfast: Saturday, April 18. Please bring something to cook and share. Food prep begins at 8:00am with breakfast starting at 8:30am.

Questions? Tim Guyer: ttguyer@gmail.com

Coffee & Christ: Saturday, May 2, 8:30am at Starbucks in Chester Springs. Join us for coffee and good conversation at our next session.

End-of-Year Picnic



YOUNG FAMILIES END-OF-YEAR PICNIC, MAY 31

SAVE THE DATE - THE SECOND ANNUAL YOUNG FAMILIES END-OF-YEAR PICNIC will be held on Sunday, May 31 from 12:30pm-3:00(ish), location TBA. Burgers, hot dogs, and drinks will be provided, with participating families asked to bring a side dish, snack, or dessert to share with the group. Save the date on your calendar now!



YOUTH NEWS

OUR HIGH SCHOOL OASIS GROUP meets again on Sunday, April 12 from 6:30-8:00pm at St. Paul's, in the upstairs Youth Room. We will continue our Bible Dive series with a focus on the history of the early Christian church, from Acts up through the first three hundred years. Our first two Bible Dive sessions have had some really deep, thoughtful discussion and reflections; come and see what this

is all about. All 9th-12th graders are welcome to attend, including friends. No advance signup necessary; just show up!

APPALACHIA SERVICE PROJECT PREP SESSION #1 will take place on Sunday, April 19 from 4:00-5:30pm at St. Matthew's. All those who have signed up for our ASP week in July are asked to come to meet the rest of the group and begin making plans for our upcoming trip!

THE NEXT GOOD WORKS YOUTH WORK DAY is Saturday, April 25 from 8:15am-3:45pm (meet at the Good Works warehouse in Coatesville). Come spend the day helping fix up homes for families who don't have the means to do it themselves. Anyone in 8th-12th grade is welcome to join us, including friends. **Sign up in the online ATC by Monday, April 13 to participate.**

YOUTH AND PARENT HELP IS NEEDED WITH OUR CAR WASH FUNDRAISERS! We are holding car washes on Sunday morning, April 26 at St. Matthew's, and on Saturday morning, May 2 at St. Paul's. All 6th-12th graders are encouraged to participate in one or both events to raise money for the youth ministry. Parents are needed to help move cars around. Sign up in the online ATC to participate!

YOUTH LASER TAG AND MINI GOLF - On Sunday, April 26, all 6th-12th graders are invited to join us for an afternoon of fun at Grand Slam in Malvern! We will meet at St. Matthew's at noon for pizza (after the car wash), then carpool to Grand Slam for laser tag, mini golf, and a bit of arcade time, returning to St. Matthew's by 3:00pm. Cost is \$20 for one youth participant, or \$35 for two or more youth from the same household. Sign up in the online ATC to save your spot!



E-MAIL SCAM IS MAKING THE ROUNDS AGAIN!

We have been informed by several church members that there is an e-mail purportedly sent by Pastor Christian that asks for a brief conversation and asks to continue this over e-mail.

PLEASE DO NOT RESPOND TO THIS E-MAIL AND DELETE IT IMMEDIATELY, AND IF POSSIBLE, BLOCK THE E-MAIL!



Thank you to everyone who contributed to the beauty of our Easter Services by ordering tulips!

Madison Cabot: In memory of Harold Derrick, in honor of James Cabot.

Brian and Kristen Delin: In memory of Edwin Jensen.

Randy and Kathryn Endsley: In memory of our loved ones, in honor of God's glory.

Vicki and Al Hanna: In memory of Samuel Marks, in honor of our children and grandchildren: Josh, Matthew, Brett, Eric, Michelle, Sarah, Alex, Collin, Dylan, Luke and Hunter.

Erich and Kim Hild: In memory of our mothers, Margaret Hild and Sharron Ressler.

Bob and Harriet Johnston: In memory of Stephanie Johnston, in honor of our grandchildren.

Lydia Lieb

Kathy and Ed Meltzer: In memory of our Dads, Hugh McCann and Ben Meltzer.

Meridith Hurd Robinson: In memory of Tyler Hurd.

Chris Schiavino and Melinda Weisgal

Mark Shanely: In memory of Warren and Ruth Shanely.

John and Peggy Smith: In honor of our children and grandchildren.