



St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

Around the Church

Sunday, April 12, 2026



DOUBTING DISCIPLES

This Sunday's Gospel reading is the "Doubting Thomas" story (John 20:19-31). He's not there on that first Easter evening when Jesus appears to the disciples behind locked doors for fear. Jesus shows them his wounds, gives them his peace, breathes on them his Spirit—the Holy Spirit—and commissions them with the mission he received from God. Thomas isn't there and he doesn't believe them. He insists on touching the wounds for himself. Thomas gets singled out, but he's not the only one who doubted. Mary Magdalene encounters the Risen Lord that morning, she runs and tells the disciples... who don't believe her, even though there is some objective reality to her news—Jesus' tomb was empty.

Who do you trust? When they tell you something momentous has happened to them, do you believe them? I think most of us have people in our lives that we would believe. And there are some people we wouldn't believe. In most cases, I think, we would need to see some "evidence" of change, or some effect on them for us to believe it. Sometimes something happens *to us* and we're not sure we believe it ourselves! And we look for advice or guidance from people we trust—"This happened to me; what does it mean?" In Lutheran theology at least, there's an idea that you can "know a thing, understand a cause, by its effects." For instance, the Holy Spirit works through the Good News, because we can feel and see its "effects"—peace, joy, strength, etc. In our modern scientific age, I think we "overthink" the Bible, demanding it provide a *certain* kind of evidence, when in our lives deep things happen to us (or the ones we love) and we believe them anyway.

Jesus gives Thomas what he needs, invites him to touch the nail holes and put his hand in his side. And then Jesus says, "Blessed are those who

have not seen and yet have come to believe" (vs. 29). I think that describes the vast majority of us—certainly me. I have come to trust God in Christ and have seen and felt the effects of the Spirit in me and others. That's enough for me to listen to Christ and to follow.

Happy Easter!
Pr. Christian



BAPTISM OF **MILES GREGORY SPECA**

We will celebrate the Baptism of Miles Gregory Speca TODAY, April 12, at the 9:30am Worship Service. We warmly welcome him into our Church. May the Lord bless him and the Speca family throughout the years to come. Congratulations!



DISCOVERING ST. MATTHEW'S, **SECOND SESSION TODAY, APR. 12**

We are excited to offer a three-part class for anyone who may be new or would simply like to learn more about St. Matthew's and our Lutheran faith. Whether you are new to our congregation or have been worshipping with us for some time, this is a wonderful opportunity to connect, ask questions, and grow.

Each session will be led by Pastor Christian McMullan, include members from the Congregational Council, feature leaders who will share about the ministries of St. Matthew's, and provide time for Q&A in an informal setting. **All sessions will be held in the Lounge following the Sunday morning service.**

Session #2 on April 12 will explore what it means to be Lutheran, including our core

beliefs, worship traditions, and theological foundations.

If you have any questions about this program, please contact the church office: office@stmatthews-church.org



PENNY WARS END TODAY, APR. 12!

As of Wednesday, Pastor Christian has \$245.28 and Pastor Stuart has raised \$156.65, while in the youth competition, John Lueders from St. Matthew's has \$240.24 and Zack Heath from St. Paul's has \$175.67. 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 \$817.84; 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

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 mlong1011@comcast.net



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.



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

Faith Discussions: Tuesday, April 28 at 7:00pm in the Sanctuary. We will be discussing pages 31 - 57 in *The Freedom of a Christian*.
Coffee & Christ: Saturday, May 2, 8:30am at Starbucks in Chester Springs. Join us for coffee and good conversation at our next session.



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 sign up 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!



EASTER BREAKFAST: THANK YOU!

Thank you to everyone who came out for some good fellowship at our Easter Congregational Breakfast! Thank you to everyone who brought food to share. In particular, we also would like to thank the following volunteers that helped the event run so smoothly, particularly: John Kerrigan, Jason Cabot, Jim Rutledge, Rich Simon, Steve Cummings, Chris Schiavino, Johnny Lueders, Bob McDevitt, Bob Lee, Mark Shanely, and Carol Moore.