



St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

Around the Church

April 26, 2026



DON'T TELL MY WIFE!

April 22nd was Earth Day. I've mentioned before that I have a "green streak," and it's gotten stronger over the years. So when a bird makes a nest in my garage, perched on my

step ladder, I'm going to leave it alone. Even if it means I can't use that ladder for a few months. And it means the birds poop on my wife's car. Which she hates. But I'm all for letting Mother Nature adapt to my garage which means I need to learn to adapt to Her as well. I haven't told her we have a nest in the garage or she'd try to "relocate" it. That never ends well... for the birds. Which is why I haven't told her. So please don't tell her. [If you want to know how the story ends... read to the end.]

In our Gospel this Sunday (John 10:1-10), Jesus says that he came to be the Gate for the sheepfold and to be our Good Shepherd so that we "may have life and have it abundantly" (vs. 10). More and more, I find joy in nature and feel a need to be more mindful of it in my decisions and behavior—hence letting birds nest in my garage. I'll never be a green thumb, but I'll try to plant as many native growing things in my yard to beautify it and benefit all of God's creatures that depend on *me* being "ecologically conscious." Why? Because it contributes to me feeling that "abundant life" that Jesus promises. And that "abundant life" also *means* not being selfish towards God's World.

A lot of Jesus' incredible, grace-full, loving promises come with an implicit judgment—which we don't like. Who wants to be judged? But Jesus' way of being the Gate and the Shepherd *judge* all the other ways we try to have "life and have it abundantly" without

Him. It's not hard to see the effects of those other "ways" that we think will promise life but end up being false promises. LIFE, that *really is life* (I Timothy 6:19) is a GIFT—that's worth a little inconvenience for the sake of the environment. LIFE—in relationship with others—*will mean* some flexibility and selflessness on my part, to not always insist on my own way. There will always be a need for boundaries; Stephanie drew one with birds in the garage. And I know better than to insist.

By the way, yesterday after work, she grabbed that stepladder to clean out some gutters. So much for the nest....

**Peace,
Pr. Christian**



YOUTH CAR WASH TODAY, WEATHER PERMITTING!

OUR ANNUAL YOUTH CAR WASH FUNDRAISER will be held this 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.



**TWIN VALLEY COFFEE FOR
ST. MATTHEW'S SCHOOL,
NOW-APR. 27**

We are having a fundraiser with Twin Valley Coffee. You can purchase coffee, drink cards, and apparel. **Orders will be delivered directly to your home, and St Matthew's School will get a percentage of the sales. The items are available now through Monday, April 27.** Stock up for the summer! Ordering link is located in the online ATC and on the church website under "Events."



**PENNY WARS 2026:
FINAL RESULTS!**

We raised a total of \$1,184 in our Penny Wars fundraiser. The tallies are in, and the "winners" of the Penny Wars competition are John Lueders in the youth category, and Pastor Stuart in the Pastors' contest! Both will have the privilege of being doused by a bucket of ice water! **Because we raised more than \$1,000, Craig Miller will ALSO be getting cold and damp!** Thank you to everyone who contributed toward this fun competition, and supported our youth ministry!



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.

Pints & Parables: Monday, May 4, 7:00pm at MaGerks in Lionville. Come join us for stimulating conversation & fellowship, in a laid-back relaxing atmosphere.

Men's Breakfast: Saturday, May 16. 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

Mission In: Sunday, May 17 at 10:45am in the CLC. All are welcome!



**DISCOVERING ST. MATTHEW'S,
LAST SESSION MAY 3**

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 #3 on May 3 will focus on living out your faith at St. Matthew's — an overview of membership, spiritual growth opportunities (worship, small groups, Bible study), serving opportunities, and how to get connected.

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



EXTON-LIONVILLE MINISTERIUM HYGIENE KIT PROJECT, MAY 16

The churches of the Exton-Lionville Ministerium are very excited to offer this cooperative event to bless our community! We are collecting funds which will purchase hygiene kit supplies in bulk. Those in need are not able to purchase hygiene products with Food Stamps, so this collection will fill that gap. We will be purchasing toothbrushes and toothpaste, washcloths, travel shampoo, lotion, deodorant, nail clippers, soap, combs and bags to put them in. You can make a donation at www.paypal.com/ncp/payment/5CTTHDSGJMPNS, or scan the QR code (Each kit costs about \$5, link is also in the online ATC). We will gather on Saturday, May 16 from 10:00am-Noon at Exton UMC to organize and assemble the kits which will be distributed to numerous local ministries. We will be supporting the Honeybrook Food Pantry, Better Tomorrows, St. Agnes Day Room, The Care Center Foundation, The Lord's Pantry and others as we have ability! To volunteer to assemble the kits, please click on the link located on the church website (under Events) or in the online ATC!



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.



ST. MARY'S MEAL: NEXT MEAL MAY 24

The May Meal will be delivered on Sunday, May 24. 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: mlong1011@comcast.net

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!



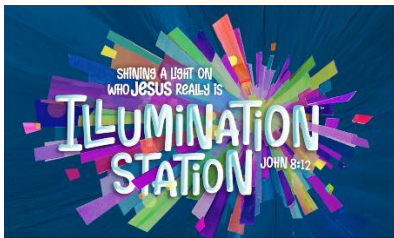
YOUTH NEWS

APPALACHIA SERVICE PROJECT PREP SESSION #2 will take place on Sunday, May 3 from 4:00-5:30 pm at St. Paul'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!

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!

OUR HIGH SCHOOL OASIS GROUP meets again on Sunday, May 17 from 6:30-8:00pm at St. Matthew's, either at the fire pit (weather permitting) or in the downstairs lounge. We will continue our Bible Dive series and also take some time to send off our graduating seniors. All 9th-12th graders are welcome to attend, including friends. No advance signup necessary; just show up!



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2026:
CAMPER & VOLUNTEER
REGISTRATIONS ARE OPEN!

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.



THANK YOU TO OUR
SPRING CLEANERS!

A sincere **THANK YOU** to all who participated on April 18 for our Clean Up Day! We were able to purge, reorganize and generally get our beautiful Campus in shape. Special thanks to all the Gardeners who planted, weeded and mulched. *Please take note of a variety of donation items along the front wall of the CLC. These items will be donated, however, if you or anyone you know can use them, please help yourself. To see more photos, check the church website or Facebook group!*



TEXT THANK YOUS FROM
OUR COLLEGE STUDENTS

Two of our college students received the care packages that the Mission In team and helpers assembled last weekend. Caroline McMullan (in white) and Bradley Roseborough (in black) sent text messages of appreciation to St. Matthew's!