



St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

Around the Church

August 2, 2026



THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE...

(Reflection from *Sundays and Seasons*)

A string of parables describe the kingdom of heaven, and then we hear Jesus' question: "Have you understood all this?" The mustard seed, yeast, hidden treasure, pearls—these bring good news of growth and joy and riches. Then come the fish, the furnace of fire, and the weeping and gnashing of teeth. Once again this week we hear of a God of mercy and justice. Once again there is good news to be heard in Paul's letter to the church at Rome—nothing will ever separate us from God's love in Christ Jesus. How will we reconcile these two images of God?

"Kingdoms" are not common in our world. When most of us think about kingdoms, we call up images of British or other royalty—jeweled crowns, a palace. At the time the Gospel of Matthew was written, the people were subject to the empire, or kingdom, of Rome. Perhaps the writer wants us to contrast the oppressive rule of Rome with a vision of heaven's kingdom of love and mercy. The translation of the Greek *basileia*, a feminine word usually rendered in English as "kingdom," is difficult. The writer of Matthew may have used the expression "kingdom of heaven" instead of "kingdom of God" in order not to offend Jewish Christ-believers who honored the word for God by avoiding its use.

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Reflections adapted from *Sundays and Seasons.com*.



Today's Altar Flowers are provided by
Ken and Pat Easterday
in honor of their 61st Wedding Anniversary.
Congratulations!

*The July-August Altar Flowers Sign Up
Genius is posted in this week's online ATC!*



SCHOOL SUPPLIES DRIVE FOR GEMMA SERVICES, NOW-AUG. 6

Our Outreach team is once again sponsoring a school supplies drive to benefit Gemma Services, through August 6. They will be delivered to Gemma before the next school year begins. Supplies can be dropped off in the back of the Narthex, the CLC or in the bin on the Church Office porch.

Fill a NEW Backpack with:

- 4 Pocket Folders
- 3 Composition or Spiral Notebooks
- 1 Box of 12 Pencils
- 2 Handheld Erasers
- 2 Glue Sticks
- 1 Box Colored Pencils or Markers
- 1 Box of 24 Crayons

Contact the church office with any questions:
office@stmatthews-church.org



FOOD AND HYGIENE DRIVE NOW- AUG. 31

St. Matthew's Outreach Team is supporting two local high school seniors, Christine Wills (Downingtown East) and Diya Kondoor (Downingtown

STEM Academy), who have organized a Food and Hygiene Drive to benefit Caring for Friends!

They need the following items:

- Canned goods with pull tabs
- Trail mix
- Granola bars
- Shampoo and soap
- First Aid supplies
- Toothbrushes and Toothpaste

You can also scan the QR code to provide something on their Amazon wish list.

A collection bin is currently on the church office porch, and will also be in the CLC.

For more information, contact Christine at christinemwills21@gmail.com or Diya at diya.kondoor@gmail.com



Pints & Parables: Monday, August 3, 7:00pm at MaGerks in Lionville. Come join us for stimulating conversation & fellowship, in a laid-back relaxing atmosphere.

Mission In: Next meeting is next Sunday, August 9 at 10:45am in the CLC. Hope to see you there!

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

Coffee & Christ: Saturday, September 5 8:30am at Starbucks in Chester Springs.

Men's Breakfast: We are taking a break in August, we'll see you on Saturday, September 19!



NEXT BLOOD DRIVE: SEPT. 8

Great news...if you gave blood at our

last drive on July 14 (whole blood, not PowerRed), in most cases, you will be eligible to donate at our next Blood Drive on Sept. 8!

We will sponsor the next Red Cross Blood Drive on Tuesday, September 8 (the day after Labor Day) 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 MEAL: NEXT MEAL AUG. 23

Thanks to everyone who contributed to the July meal!

The next meal delivery to St. Mary's Franciscan Shelter will be on Sunday, August 23, 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



Highlights from Outdoor Worship & Gospel Bluegrass Sunday are now posted on the church website and Facebook page.



St. Mary's
Franciscan Shelter
For Homeless Families

IAC ST. MARY'S MEAL, AUG. 25

St. Matthew's will provide dinner for 15 residents at St. Mary's Homeless Shelter (Phoenixville) on Tuesday, August 25, as part of the Interfaith Action Community's week of meals.

We would like to prepare a home cooked meal in St. Mary's fully licensed kitchen on August 25th. We will need a team of chefs/bakers to prepare 2 entrees, a vegetable, a salad, and a dessert. St. Mary's has 2 ovens for the team to use. Please contact Louise Rutledge at larutledge51@gmail.com or 484-459-3389 if you would like to prepare part of the meal.



YOUTH NEWS

THE FALL 2026 YOUTH EVENTS

SCHEDULE IS UP and available for viewing on the church website, or by clicking on this QR code. All events are updated in real time, so this is where to find the most current information and links to event signups!

OUR OFFICIAL FALL KICKOFF LOCK-IN will be held Saturday evening, Sept. 19-Sunday morning, Sept. 20 at St. Matthew's. We will spend the overnight "locked in" at the church, and lead the 9:30am worship for St. Matthew's on Sunday. More details and signup info are in the online ATC.

GOOD WORKS YOUTH WORK DAYS will start up again on Saturday, September 26 from 8:15am to 3:45pm. Spend a Saturday helping make repairs to homes for people in need in our area. All 7th-12th graders are welcome to join us; if you're thinking about participating in Appalachia Service Project next summer, this is a great way to get some idea of what that

ministry is all about! Sign up by Wednesday, Sept. 16 to participate, link is posted in the online ATC.

SUMMER 2027 YOUTH TRIP INFO

SESSIONS (yes, already) - There are TWO big trips in the works for our youth next summer: The triennial (every-three-year) ELCA Youth Gathering June 28-July 2 in Minneapolis, MN; and our annual Appalachia Service Project Work Week July 16-23. All 7th-12th graders, and their parents, are encouraged to attend one of two information sessions to learn more about these opportunities:

- **St. Paul's Fellowship Hall on Sunday, September 13 from Noon-1:00pm; or**
- **St. Matthew's CLC on Sunday, September 13 from 4:00-5:00pm.**

Registration for both of these trips open in October, so we will need to get our groups assembled soon!

HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH PEER MINISTRY

RETREAT - If you are in 9th-12th grade and interested in being trained as a Peer Ministry Leader, reserve the weekend of November 13-15 on your calendar to attend a special retreat in Bethany Beach, DE. More information coming in early September!



COMMUNITY GARDEN UPDATE

Our summer growing season is off to a great start! This year's veggies

include several varieties of tomatoes, tomatillos, bell peppers, banana peppers, summer squash, gordini lettuce, pole beans, bush beans and cucumbers. We are also growing some herbs including papalo (a heat tolerant herb that can be used like cilantro), basil, chives and parsley.

So far, we have harvested **472 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! *Also if you have gardens at home or belong to a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) and have extra vegetables that you would like to donate we would be happy to help coordinate.*

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 (jrutman2005@yahoo.com or 484-459-3255).

REGISTRATION IS OPEN!

DRIVE OUT HUNGER: SEPT. 17

This year's proceeds will benefit Grace Crossing Food Pantry, the West Chester Food Cupboard, and the Coatesville Youth and Women's Alliance.

Registration is now open!

Check out our new registration link that makes signing up easier than ever!

<https://tithe.ly/event-registration/#/11321685>

(You can also find this link in this week's online ATC and on a button on the front page of the church website!)

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 eat 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



ANOTHER E-MAIL SCAM GOING AROUND!

Please be aware that there is a scam email going around using our Church Admin's

e-mail (srichardson@stmatthews-church.org) sending an "invitation" to what is claiming to be "Paperless Post."

This "Paperless Post" e-mail is a scam going around not just in churches, but in the general public.

PLEASE DO NOT CLICK ANYTHING IN THIS E-MAIL. If you clicked on anything and attempted to put in any information, PLEASE CHANGE YOUR PASSWORDS ASAP.

As always, if you see something that doesn't look quite right, please contact us in the Church Office, and we can confirm if it's legit.