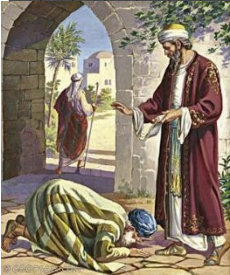




St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

Around the Church

September 13, 2026



FORGIVENESS

Last Sunday, I preached about the incredible promise Jesus offers when we can agree with those closest to us (Matthew 18:19-20). The Greek word for agreement is "symphony." So when we "symphonize" with someone Jesus promises that God will fulfill what

we ask. The opposite of agreement is obviously disagreement, which leads to the BIG topic of forgiveness. This passage then immediately continues with Peter asking, "How often should I forgive someone, seven times?" Jesus answers, "No. 70x7 times" (Matt. 18:21-22). Wow!

Jesus follows up with the parable of the Ungrateful Debtor, about a slave who was forgiven a debt he could *never repay*. This same slave, however, can't forgive his neighbor a debt that is paltry in comparison. Peter's question and the parable is the Gospel for this Sunday (Matt. 18:21-35). The big lesson is humility.

Let's be honest. We all know stories of broken hearts and the terrible hurts people do to each other. And we ask, "How do I forgive? Do I have to forgive?" Seven times is a lot! But 490 times?! I don't have easy answers to any of these questions. I know I feel that Jesus often commands us to do something we can't do; and also promises benefits we don't believe. I think we lack the self-denying will to try what he commands and the trusting imagination to see how he can fulfill his promises. NONE of that is easy, but this after all is the Jesus who promised new life and accomplished it by *dying* and being *raised*. Do we *trust* him, do we *trust* his way?

We pray every Sunday in the Lord's Prayer, "Forgive us our sins, as we *forgive those who sin against us*." It's *humbling*—what I mean is, I'm often not humble, and I need to *BE HUMBLLED*, meaning I can't do it myself; someone (the Holy Spirit) has to do that to me. The Good News is that Jesus *humbles us* with Grace and Mercy by forgiving us in ways we can *never repay*. There is judgment in the Parable of the Ungrateful Debtor and a command to forgive, but let's not lose the incredible statement—assertion even!—that *we are forgiven*!

Peace,
Pr. Christian

CHURCH PICNIC: TODAY, SEPT. 13



We are delighted to host the annual St. Matthew's Church Picnic on Sunday, September 13 following the morning worship service. Coffee and

Pastries will be available between 10:30–11:00 AM.

FUN IS GUARANTEED! Let's kickoff the fall season reconnecting with St. Matthew's friends and family. Contact Jennifer Burgess with any questions (484.744.1630, jnnfrbrgss@yahoo.com)



Also at the Church Picnic...
As a "bonus" attraction, and as a Rise Against Hunger Fundraiser, Pastor Christian has agreed to sit in the dunk tank station again at the church picnic. Only \$10.00 for the chance to hear Pastor Christian scream, and, of course, to help

feed more people in need!

St. Matthew's Lutheran Church 2026 Golf Event

Drive Out Hunger.

~ Proceeds Benefit ~
GraceCrossing Community Food Pantry,
West Chester Food Cupboard,
Coatesville Youth and Women's Alliance.

**Raffle Prizes, Mulligans, Hole Sponsors,
Fun, Food, and Music!**

Kimberlin Golf Club
\$125 Per Golfer—includes
a BBQ Lunch
\$20 Lunch Only—Children
under 10 eat Free!

September 13, 2026
7:00 am Registration
8:00 am Shotgun
Live Music



Questions? Contact: Patrick Miller: 610-291-3002 or pjm89@yahoo.com

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 still 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!)

If you haven't purchased your raffle basket tickets yet, you can

do so online through Thursday, September 17 at 8:00am

(link is in the online ATC).

Price for raffle tickets: one (1) ticket for \$10 and four (4) tickets for \$20.

Raffle tickets will also be on sale in person and all baskets will be on display TODAY in the Narthex before and after Worship.



You DO NOT have to be present at the golf outing to win. This is a great way to support the mission of Drive Out Hunger even if you don't golf or if you can't make it to the event! These wonderful baskets are packed full of items donated by our partners and local businesses.

There will also be two silent auctions that you can also enter on or before the event on September 17, including a Distillery Tour and an autographed Philadelphia Eagles Saquon Barkley jersey...to enter the silent auctions contact Patrick Miller at pjmill98@yahoo.com



RISE AGAINST HUNGER OCT. 25, REGISTER NOW!

This year's event will be held on Sunday, October 25 from 11:00-5:00pm in the

CLC. Last year, 385 volunteers packaged 62,500 meals...and hopefully, we can beat that again this year!

The registration link is now live, and posted in the online ATC and on the church website!

If you are interested in helping to fundraise or help in the planning of the event from behind the scenes, please contact Troy Sisum at tdsisum1@yahoo.com.



IAC HARI OM GANESH FESTIVAL, SEPT. 17

The Interfaith Action Community cordially invites you to the Hari Om Ganesh Festival on Thursday, September 17, at 6:15-8:00 pm at Hari Om Yoga Center at 348 Boot Road, Downingtown, PA.

Join us for an evening of music, food and fellowship. The festival has always been a wonderful platform bringing together music from diverse faith traditions and cultures!



Pints & Parables: Monday, September 14, 7:00pm at MaGerks in Lionville. Come join us for stimulating conversation & fellowship, in a laid-back relaxing atmosphere.

Faith Discussions: Next meeting in the Lounge on Tuesday, Sept. 15. We will continue the discussion on the First Book of Sirach, Chapters 2-4:6, all are welcome!

Men's Breakfast: Saturday, September 19. Please bring something to cook and share. Food prep begins at 8:00am with breakfast starting at 8:30am. Questions? E-mail Tim Guyer: ttguyer@gmail.com

Mission In: Next meeting Sunday, September 20 at 10:45am in the CLC. Hope to see you there!

Coffee & Christ: Saturday, October 3, 8:30am at Starbucks in Chester Springs.



MISSION IN: CARD MAKING EVENT, OCT. 4

Mission In will be holding a card making event on Sunday, October 4 at 10:30am in the CLC. We invite everyone to join us to create general support

type cards and Thanksgiving cards to be sent to church members. We will supply materials and instructions. Hope to see you there!



St. Mary's
Franciscan Shelter
For Homeless Families

ST. MARY'S

MEAL: SEPT. 27

The next meal delivery to St.

Mary's Franciscan Shelter will be on Sunday, September 27, and the sign up is now in the online ATC.

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



ST. MATTHEW'S SCHOOL CHILDREN'S CONSIGNMENT SALE, OCT. 16 & 17

The Fall Children's Consignment Sale, benefiting St. Matthew's School, will take place on Friday and Saturday, October 16 and 17. New sellers are always welcome!

Friday, October 16:

9:00am-3:00pm SPECIAL PARENT AND CHURCH SHOPPING DAY

5:30pm-7:30pm OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Saturday, October 17:

8:00 am – 10:00 am ***50% OFF SALE***

If you would like to consign or volunteer to help, contact Chrissy Guyer at stmatssale@gmail.com



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 17-24. 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 **825 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).

CYWA FOOD PICKUP VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Help CYWA Keep the Food Pantry Stocked!

CYWA in Coatesville is looking for volunteers to pick

up food donations from local grocery stores and deliver them to the CYWA Food Pantry.

- **When: Monday–Thursday, generally 8:30 a.m.–Noon**
- **What: Drive the CYWA van or ride along with a volunteer driver**
- **Requirements: Ability to lift up to 35 pounds**
- **Schedule: Sign up for the day(s) that work best for you**

Your time can make a real difference in keeping food on the shelves for our neighbors. **We'd love to have your help!**

If you are interested in helping, please contact Patrick at pjmill98@yahoo.com or text 610-291-3002.



smiles) and trick or treat among the Trunks! We will also have a DJ, a petting zoo, a photo booth, crafts, games and prizes. Hope to see you there!

To sign up to be a trunker or to help us at the event, please find the link in the online ATC!

REJOICING SPIRITS PRESENTATION ON TANZANIA AT ST. PAUL'S SEPT. 13

Please join St. Paul's members



Tammy Swink and Susan Crawford Romano for a presentation on their invitation to launch Rejoicing Spirits in Tanzania, with pizza dinner at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Lionville on **Sunday, September 13**. The presentation will begin at 5:00pm, immediately following the monthly Rejoicing Spirits worship service at 4:00pm.

The sign-up link is located on the online ATC, the church website under "News". Please register so they can plan for your attendance and make sure they have plenty of pizza!

The full article about their experience and about the Rejoicing Spirits program is now posted on the church website and linked in this week's online ATC!