



St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

Around the Church

September 20, 2026



LABORERS

This Sunday we have a special treat! We get to hear the participants in this last summer's Appalachia Service Project trip share their experiences. Over 20 teens and adults from St. Paul's and St. Matthew's went on this year's trip to Greenbrier county in West Virginia. It was an incredibly rewarding experience, even if it was difficult—sleeping on air mattresses in classrooms with not-so-great A/C, taking showers in out-side plywood stalls, eating school cafeteria food, AND best yet... crawling under houses to make repairs!

Despite the discomforts of what we were doing, the work was truly rewarding. We'll hear stories of young people (and older people) getting out of their comfort zones in lots of different ways in order to help homeowners in need and—as an added benefit, the most important one—to experience the Holy Spirit's presence in, through, and around them. Those benefits of God's grace aren't automatic and aren't necessarily a consequence of our work and effort—but are *there* when we trust God's call and follow it, *whenever* we might hear it. To be clear, the emphasis is on the Spirit's *benefits*—that sense of “reward” that comes when we heed the call and follow. The odd thing about the Spirit's benefits, even though I used the word “reward,” is that they are *gifts*, that at their deepest, we cannot earn.

That's the scandal in this Sunday's Gospel reading: Matthew 20:1-16. All the laborers get the same heavenly reward whether they work all day or just one hour. WE want to make our “spiritual lives” about us and the effort we put into it. GOD makes it about God's Love Freely Given—which is “grace”—and *that* is poured out equally on all the “laborers” who respond to God's call. God's generosity is not dependent on our notions of fairness. Sure, you'll hear stories about the hard

work our ASP laborers put in, but I hope you'll hear *even louder* God's “spiritual blessings” poured out on them. In other words, hear loudest the most important thing—God's grace and love freely given.
Peace,
Pr. Christian



RISE AGAINST HUNGER OCT. 25, REGISTER NOW!

Help us package 70,000 meals!

On Sunday, October 25, St. Matthew's Lutheran

Church will host our 5th annual Rise Against Hunger Community Meal Packaging Event—the second-largest Rise Against Hunger event in the region.

We have already raised \$15,000 toward our \$28,117 goal. After this year's event, our community will have packaged more than 280,000 meals for Rise Against Hunger!

Volunteers of all ages are welcome, including children as young as 4.

Choose one of three fun, two-hour shifts and help us feed hope together.



SCAN TO REGISTER

Sign up, volunteer or donate by clicking this QR code. The links are in this week's online ATC and on the church website!



Mission In: Next meeting **TODAY, 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.

Pints & Parables: Monday, October 5, 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, October 6. all are welcome!



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. 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 stmattssale@gmail.com

We will be accepting donations of FALL and WINTER clothing (birth through teen), as well as puzzles, books, games, toys, baby equipment, outdoor play toys, bikes and electronics. All donations must be in the garage (shed near playground) by October 13. All items must be clean (no stains please) and in working order. Dirty or broken items will be thrown away.



TRUNK OR TREAT, OCT. 24

Join us for our third annual Trunk or Treat on the Church Grounds on Saturday, October 24 from 3:00-5:00pm. Admission is FREE and open to the whole community! Put on your costumes (and your biggest 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!



YOUTH NEWS

THE FALL 2026 YOUTH EVENTS SCHEDULE IS UP and available for viewing on the church website, or by scanning 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!

YOUTH CANOE TRIP ON THE BRANDYWINE:

Sunday, Sept. 27th, Noon-3:30pm Meet at St. Paul's for pizza, then carpool to Northbrook Canoe Company near Marshallton. Sign up is now in the online ATC!

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!

Faith GROWS Here!

LUTHERAN FAITH FORMATION

for Preschoolers and Elementary Students

Help your child grow in faith, friendship, and God's love!

Our Faith Formation program offers fun, engaging, and age-appropriate learning experiences that help children know and love Jesus.



Young hearts. Strong foundation.
A faith that lasts a lifetime.



Learn
Bible stories, prayers, and God's love in fun and meaningful ways.



Grow
Build a strong faith foundation that helps children grow with confidence.



Belong
Make new friends and feel part of a caring church community.



Live
Learn how to live out faith everyday life and share God's love.

For Children Ages 3-11
Preschool classes, elementary classes, activities, music, service projects, and more!

You Belong Here!
We invite your family to be part of our Faith Formation family! Together, we will help your child believe, belong, and become the person God created them to be.

"Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it."
— Proverbs 22:6

JOIN US THIS YEAR!
We can't wait to welcome your child and walk alongside your family in faith.

Questions or Want to Register?
Contact: Beth Bilinski
610-804-8380
stmattsfaithformation@gmail.com

♥ GROWING TOGETHER IN FAITH. LOVED BY GOD. SENT TO SERVE. ♥

We Need YOU!

Become a FAITH FORMATION VOLUNTEER

Help us grow the faith of the next generation!

Our Faith Formation program is looking for caring, enthusiastic volunteers to share their time, talents, and faith with our children and families.

You don't have to be a teacher or have all the answers.
You simply need a willing heart and a desire to help others grow closer to God.

WE'RE LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS TO:

- Help teach or assist with Faith Formation classes (once per month)
- Build relationships with our children and families
- Share your faith and serve as a positive Lutheran role model
- Help with activities, events, and special programs

WHETHER YOU CAN VOLUNTEER EVERY WEEK OR HELP OCCASIONALLY, there is a place for you!

COME BE PART OF SOMETHING MEANINGFUL.
Your time can make a lasting difference in a child's faith journey.

Interested? Contact:
Beth Bilinski
610-804-8380
stmattsfaithformation@gmail.com

"Let the little children come to me."
— MARK 10:14

ST. MATTHEW'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
Joyful service in God's world

SERVE • INSPIRE • SHARE YOUR FAITH

FAITH FORMATION IS STARTING!

The 2026-27 Faith Formation Year is beginning on Sunday, Sept. 20! Faith Formation is open to any child ages 3-11 and classes are held during our Sunday 9:30am service. Children will learn Bible stories and prayers, and participate in fun activities to plant the roots of faith.

The link to Sign Up is posted on the online ATC and on the church website.

We are also in need of several volunteers to teach and to help out in our Faith Formation classes at least once per month. **IMPORTANT NOTE: All teachers and helpers will need clearances and Youth Protection Policy training.**

For more information, please contact our Faith Formation Coordinator Beth Bilinski at stmattsfaithformation@gmail.com or 610-804-8380.



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



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 **952 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.