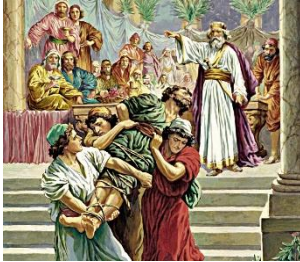




St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

Around the Church

October 11, 2026



WEDDINGS!

I love weddings. I have encountered the occasional person who doesn't, but generally speaking, weddings are pretty awesome. The fun, the food, the joy, the celebration! However, like a lot of big

family occasions that mark major life transitions, they can also bring up a lot of emotions and feelings. The things that make you *think* and *feel*. I also believe that embracing the occasion of joy can overshadow any negative sticky family dynamics. A wedding can be deep when you get past the "party."

I tell couples getting married and families planning funerals (yes, funerals) that the most common image for heaven in the Bible is a wedding banquet. I look back on my wedding and it hit me like a ton of bricks that the NEXT time all those people will *be together* at the SAME time—people that I love like my grandma, my great-aunt Mary, and now my father-in-law, my mom...—will be heaven. Like a wedding, the joy of being with loved ones in God's presence, at God's invitation, I believe, resolves and makes whole everything that is broken.

And the invitation! Back in Jesus' day, getting invited or not reflected social standing more than today. Think about the choices of who you invite to a small wedding versus a big wedding. That can be tough. This Sunday, Jesus tells a parable about a Wedding Banquet a king throws for his son, but the invitees blow it off (Matthew 22:1-14). There's some judgment there! So the King tells his slaves to work hard to invite *everyone*, "both the good and the bad" (vs. 10). That's what I hear the loudest. God's invitation to *everyone*. The "deserving" made light of it, so God brings in the "undeserving." That's GRACE.

How do you respond appropriately? This is the banquet of Christ. I think about humility and putting on my "Sunday best" clothes, behaving in a way that shows gratitude and respect. There's something about gratitude that is humbling when we let go of ourselves in the presence of the gift. Joy takes us out of ourselves—just look at a little child on the dance floor at a wedding reception! You're invited!

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.



SCAN TO REGISTER

We have already raised \$25,678 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. **We especially need help during the 1:00-3:00pm and 3:00-5:00pm shifts!**

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



DISCOVERING ST. MATTHEW'S: THREE-PART SERIES BEGINS OCT. 18

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 worshiping with us for some time, this is a wonderful opportunity to connect, ask questions, and grow.

Each session will be led by Pastor Christian and include members from the Congregational Council and feature leaders who will share about the ministries of St. Matthew's. Plenty of time will be provided for Q&A in an informal setting.

All sessions will be held in the Christian Life Center (CLC) following Sunday service and will last about an hour.

Childcare will be provided if you have young kids.

Oct. 18: Session #1 will explore what it means to be Lutheran, including our core beliefs, worship traditions, and theological foundations.

For the complete session schedule, please visit our church website under "Events."

If you have any questions about this program, please contact the church office: office@stmatthews-church.org or Pr. Christian: cmcmullan71@gmail.com



**ST.
MATTHEW'S
SCHOOL
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!



**SIGN UP NOW FOR THE ELCA YOUTH
GATHERING IN SUMMER 2027**

ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT ATTENDING THE ELCA YOUTH GATHERING NEXT SUMMER? All current 8th-12th graders are invited to take part in a once-every-three-year experience that brings together 16,000+ high school youth from Lutheran churches across the United States, to spend five days together around the theme of "Imagine More." In 2027, the Gathering will be held from June 28-July 2 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. **Interested? Registration opens in mid-October and we need to have our group together by mid-November, so let our Youth Director, Craig Miller, know as soon as possible to be included on our roster.**

Questions? Contact Craig at craigyouthmin@gmail.com, or 484-320-0785.

YOUTH NEWS



OUR NEXT HIGH SCHOOL OASIS GATHERING will be next Sunday, October 18 from 6:30-8:00pm in the downstairs lounge at St. Matthew's. This time, OASIS will be a "Deep Dive" with conversation around a deeper topic or Bible passage. This month's focus is 'Sacraments.' (There will still be sharing of highs and lows, and of course food). All 9th-12th graders are invited to join us. Advance **sign up is not necessary; just show up!**

OUR NEXT GOOD WORKS YOUTH WORK DAY will be Saturday, October 24 from 8:15am-3:45pm. Spend a Saturday helping make repairs to homes for people in need in our area. **All 10th-12th graders (note change in age range) 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 in the online ATC by Wednesday, Oct. 14 to participate!**

RISE AGAINST HUNGER IS COMING ON SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25, and once again we're going to have a special "youth shift" from 1:00-3:00pm at St.

Matthew's. Bring your family and friends! As a special treat, pizza will be provided at noon in St. Matthew's downstairs lounge for youth and their families. Even if you can't make the 1:00 shift, you can still help out at either the 11:00am or 3:00pm times. Scan the QR code in the RAH article or find the link in the online ATC to participate in a really fun event that helps feed the world.

THE "WHAT REALLY MATTERS" RETREAT FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH takes place Saturday afternoon, November 7-Sunday afternoon, November 8. All 6th-8th graders are encouraged to participate in this retreat involving Lutheran congregations from across Southeast Pennsylvania Synod, to spend 24 hours making new friends, experiencing fun activities and games, and thinking more about what is most important in life. The cost is \$80 per youth participant. **Sign up deadline is Sunday, October 18 and is located in the online ATC.**

REGISTRATION IS OPEN NOW FOR NEXT SUMMER'S APPALACHIA SERVICE PROJECT WORK WEEK! We will again be sending work crews to Central Appalachia to make homes safer, warmer, and drier for families in need of some help. Our trip will be **Saturday, July 17-Saturday, July 24, 2027.** Youth who are currently in 7th-12th grades are eligible to participate. The cost per person is \$400 with scholarships available for those who need financial assistance; fundraising events throughout the year will also provide opportunities for families to reduce their out-of-pocket costs. **To sign up, go to the ASP Online Registration Portal (located in the online ATC and church website) and enter "17700" as the group number to select our trip; if you have not participated in ASP before, you will need to create a new account in the participant's name. You will also need to pay a \$150 non-refundable deposit by December 1.** Questions about ASP? Contact Craig Miller at craigyouthmin@gmail.com, or 484-320-0785. This is an experience not to be missed!



Mission In: Next meeting **Sunday, October 11 at 10:45am in the CLC.** Hope to see you there!

Faith Discussions: Next meeting in the Lounge on **Tuesday, October 20.** all are welcome!

Pints & Parables: **Monday, November 2, 7:00pm at MaGerks in Lionville.** Come join us for stimulating conversation & fellowship, in a laid-back relaxing atmosphere.

Coffee & Christ: **Saturday, November 7, 8:30am at Starbucks in Chester Springs.**

Men's Breakfast: **Saturday, November 21.** 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



St. Mary's
Franciscan Shelter
For Homeless Families

ST. MARY'S MEAL: NEXT MEAL, OCT. 25

The next meal delivery to St. Mary's Franciscan Shelter will be on Sunday, October 25, 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

REGISTER FOR FAITH FORMATION, TEACHERS ARE ALSO NEEDED!

The 2026-27 Faith Formation Year has begun! 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.

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.



COMMUNITY GARDEN UPDATE

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, basil, chives and parsley. So far, we have harvested **1063 pounds** that we have donated to the Chester County Food Bank. If you are interested in helping in the garden, please contact Meghan Comegys megcomegys@gmail.com, Desiree Lee dal2123@yahoo.com or Jim Rutledge jrutman2005@yahoo.com



HELP THE HOMELESS:

DONATE SOCKS NOW-OCT. 31!

We are collecting new adult male socks during "Socktober." The collected items will be distributed to the homeless and less fortunate. We hope to reach over 750 people, so we will need LOTS of socks!

This movement began with one boy who you may know as the "Kid President." (Google him!) Collection bins are in the CLC lobby and the church office porch. Thanks for your support!



ORDER ONLINE

Scan the QR code or visit

<https://store.myfundraisingplace.com/a0f0bf6b-a21a-4974-bdff-682045009d9e>

Help support St. Paul's & St. Matthew's Youth raise funds.

Order by: Thu, Nov 5, 2026. Delivery is on November 12, 2026

Sellers can scan QR below to register for online store if not registered.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!
www.freckledmoose.com
info@freckledmoose.com



BUTTER BRAIDS YOUTH FUNDRAISER THROUGH NOV. 5

Our youth ministry will be holding a Freckled Moose Butter Braids fundraiser now through November 5, with proceeds benefitting our Youth Gathering and Appalachia Service Project trips this coming summer. Butter Braids are frozen pastries that can be stored and brought out to serve on special occasions, or whenever the mood hits you! *Find the link to order in the online ATC or the church website under "Events."* *Print order forms are also available on the church website!*



CHECK OUR LOST & FOUND BIN!

Now that we're getting into the cooler weather months, please check the Lost and Found bin, located on the table in the back of the Narthex. We have several items in there, including water bottles, glasses, books, clothing, keys *and even a phone!* Let's reunite some of the items back to their owners! If you have any questions about lost and/or found items, please contact Sara in the church office: srichardson@stmatthews-church.org