



St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

Around the Church

March 30, 2025



LESS GRUMBLING, MORE HUMBLING

(Adapted from Sundays and Seasons)

Grumbling! The crowd around Jesus—the “in” crowd, that is—was grumbling. Grumbling because Jesus welcomed those who traditionally had been set apart: tax collectors and sinners. Who are those who cause us to grumble? Whose seemingly undeserved handout or unearned status filled our hearts with resentment this week? Jesus speaks to us today because we too often see life as a game with winners and losers, points and playbooks, offense and defense. Can we open our hearts and minds to hear today's humbling good news?

Jesus responds to the “grumblers” with the parable of the Prodigal Son—one of the most beautiful and humbling in all of the Gospels. It is a parable about *reconciliation* at its deepest and the new life that results. God's love is freely shared with all: we cannot earn it, we cannot deserve it. When we attend worship, we do so out of thanksgiving and praise for God's glory, hunger and thirst for God's word and sacrament. We do not attend worship to achieve some status within God's kingdom. When we help a neighbor, share with a stranger, assist the afflicted, or acknowledge the overlooked we do so because Christ first did the same for us. We respond to God's grace and mercy with our own feeble attempts to emulate God's perfect love.

It is challenging, exhausting, never-ending, perspective-altering, radically humbling work, the work of reconciliation. It's work that is impossible to do without the inspiration of Christ, the nourishment of wine and bread—*given for you*—and the strength of the saints who have gone before us and with whom we walk Christ's path today. Let us find those in our world who teach us about Christ's unending reconciliation, so that we can all celebrate and rejoice as the family of God.

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Reflections taken from Sundays and Seasons.com*



DINNER, DEVOTIONS, DISCUSSION THURSDAYS NOW THROUGH APR. 10

We will be offering “Dinner, Devotions, Discussion” every Thursday evening during Lent through April 10, from 5:50pm-7:15pm in the CLC.

It's a great opportunity to get together, reflect on the meaning of the Lenten season with fellow church members, and share a meal! All are welcome!

We would to have love some volunteers to help set up, bring part of the meal, and/or clean up! The Sign Up Genius is located in the online ATC.



Q1 GIVING STATEMENTS

Giving statements for the first quarter of 2025 will be processed soon. **If you would like to receive your statements via e-mail instead of regular (USPS) mail, please let Sara Richardson in the office know by Friday, April 4 (srichardson@stmatthews-church.org, 610-458-5675)**



MISSION IN: CARE PACKAGES FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS

We are looking to St. Matthew's bakers (and shoppers!) to donate cookies and/or candy for care packages being sent to our college students. **The care packages will be assembled on Sunday, April 27 at 10:30am.** Everyone is invited to help the Mission In team to assemble the boxes for our students.

The sign up is now in the online ATC! No cookies or candy with peanuts please. Bakers are asked to bake at least 2 dozen cookies. Please package your cookies in zip lock bags to maintain freshness, and label bags with your name, the type of cookies, and whether they may contain nuts.

Cookies must be dropped off in the church office by Friday, April 26 between 9:00am-1:00pm or Sunday, April 27 in the CLC before 10:30am. Candy may be donated in the box on the porch of the church office or in the box in the lobby of the CLC. Please contact Louise Rutledge at larutledge51@gmail.com with any questions.



EASTER EGG HUNT, APR. 19:

ST. MATTHEW'S ANNUAL EASTER EGG HUNT will be held Saturday, April 19 at 10:00am. All kids from toddlers through 5th grade are welcome to come participate in the egg hunt and other Easter-related activities. If you know you are coming, please find the sign up in the online ATC to help us with planning the event!



EASTER CONGREGATIONAL BREAKFAST, APR. 20

We will hold our annual Easter Congregational Breakfast between the two Easter Services on Sunday, April 20. Please sign up on the link in the online ATC if you can bring a vegetarian or vegan food option to serve, if you can bring a dessert, if you'd like to volunteer to cook the breakfast, or if you'd like to help clean up after the breakfast!

If you have any questions, please contact Troy Sisum at tdsisum1@yahoo.com



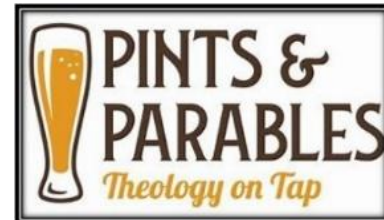
FAITH DISCUSSIONS, APR. 1

The Faith Discussion Group will meet in the Sanctuary at 7:00pm on Tuesday, April 1. We will continue our discussion on the book, *The Sin of Certainty* by Peter Enns. Hope to see you there!



COFFEE & CHRIST, APR. 5

Join us for coffee and good conversation at our next session of Coffee & Christ, Saturday, April 5 at 8:30am at Starbucks in Chester Springs!



PINTS AND PARABLES, APR. 7

Come join us for stimulating conversation & fellowship, in a laid-back relaxing atmosphere on Monday, April 7, 7:00pm, Liberty Union in Chester Springs.

The Interfaith Action Community of Chester County invites you to a lecture on When Life Begins: Protestant Traditions on Wednesday, April 9 at 7:00pm.

A circular logo for the Interfaith Action Community of Chester County, PA. It features various religious symbols: a cross, a star of David, a crescent moon, a gear, a flame, a star, and a cross with a circle around it. The text "Interfaith Action Community" and "Chester County, PA" is written inside the circle.A photograph of a small green seedling with two leaves growing out of a mound of dark brown soil.

FAITH TRADITIONS LECTURE SERIES

WHEN LIFE BEGINS

PROTESTANT TRADITIONS

Join the second lecture in the 2025 series on faith traditions and beliefs around the beginning of life and birth.

Presenters include:

- Father Kevin Dellaria, St. Francis Episcopal
- Rev. John Woodcock
- Rev. Alex Becker, Covenant Presbyterian

7:00 PM

Wednesday, April 9th

Covenant Presbyterian
400 Lancaster Ave
Malvern, PA 19355



BLUE JEAN SATURDAY, APR. 12

Spring is just around the corner, and we are planning our Blue Jean Saturday clean-up on April 12 from 9:00am-12:00 Noonish. This will make sure that our campus is looking its best for Palm Sunday. Bring yourself, your family or friends, and a pair of gloves. We will have tools for weeding and moving mulch. Lunch will be provided around 12:00 Noon! **Sign up is in the online ATC!**



ST. PAUL'S EASTER FAMILY FUN NIGHT, APR. 12

ST. PAUL'S IS HAVING AN EASTER FAMILY FUN NIGHT on Saturday, April 12 at 5:00pm. This event will have food, games, crafts, and a special glow-in-the-dark Easter egg hunt! (It's also the week before St. Matthew's egg hunt, so you can do BOTH!) Sign up in the online ATC to join the fun.



MISSION IN:

NEXT MEETING APR. 13

The next Mission In meeting will be Sunday, April 13 at 10:45am in the CLC.

The Mission In team is asking for your help. If you know of someone in the congregation who is in need of support, please let us know. Maybe we can offer a card, a phone call, a visit, a dessert, or a meal. You can reach a Mission In member by contacting the church office.



St. Mary's
Franciscan Shelter
for Homeless Families

ST. MARY'S SHELTER

NEXT MEAL PREP, APR. 27

Our next meal will be delivered on Sunday, April 27. The sign up link for the meal prep is now in the online ATC. Questions? Contact Mindy at mlong1011@comcast.net or 484-319-8998.



HELP NEEDED: HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR DINNER, MAY 2

WE NEED HELP WITH THE MAY 2 HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR DINNER! We're looking for people to take leadership roles in decoration planning and setup, as well as food planning and preparation. We also need folks to help with setup and cleanup for the event. Please sign up in the online ATC to help!



PENNY WARS ARE BACK!

What are penny wars? We are competing with St. Paul's to see who can score the most points as we raise money for our shared youth ministry. Two jars will be in the gathering area; one for pennies and paper money (which are counted positively toward St. Matthew's total) and one for silver coins (which are counted NEGATIVELY toward ST. PAUL'S total). Points are determined by the value of the coin or bill (pennies are one point, dollar bills are 100, dimes are -10 points for the other congregation, etc.) **When the money is counted after Easter Sunday, the pastor of the losing congregation will be involved in a "special" presentation, and it WILL be memorable! AND, if we raise a combined \$1,000 or more between the two congregations, our Youth Director Craig Miller will ALSO be involved in the event!**



YOUTH NEWS

OUR FIRST APPALACHIA SERVICE PROJECT PREP SESSION will be held on Sunday, March 30 from 4:00-5:30pm at St. Matthew's. Come meet the other members of our group and begin our preparations for our July 12-19 trip to Central Appalachia!

CALLING ALL YOUTH - HELP NEEDED WITH OUR EASTER EGG HUNTS! We need 6th-12th graders who can help hide eggs and run events for both congregations' Easter family events. **Helpers are needed on Saturday, April 12 from 3:00-7:30pm at St.**

Paul's, and on Saturday, April 19 from 8:30-11:00am at St. Matthew's. Both sign up links can be found in the online ATC. Sign up for one, or sign up for both - the more help we get, the better the events will be for our younger kids!

HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS - SAVE THE DATE! We will be having a special celebration and dinner of our 2025 high school graduates on Friday, May 2 from 6:30-9:00pm at St. Matthew's. Further information is coming, but hold the spot on your calendar now!



OUTREACH LENTEN PROJECT FOR GRACE CROSSING

Our Outreach team is organizing this year's Lenten Project to benefit the Grace Crossing Food Pantry!

We will be collecting their most-needed items, including:

- Canned carrots
- Canned beets
- Salad dressings
- Jelly/jam flavors other than grape (glass containers are OK)
- Cereal (all varieties welcome)
- Boxed instant mashed potatoes
- Baked beans
- Pancake mix (preferably mix w/ water only)
- Peanut butter
- Canned tuna fish
- Canned chicken
- Ramen noodles
- Reusable shopping bags*

**bags are needed by April 9 for their Easter Dinner distribution.*

You can drop off these items anytime during Lent in the Narthex, CLC, or outside of the Church Office!



ST. PAUL'S LENTEN FLANNEL SHEETS COLLECTION

St. Paul's is collecting gently used, flat or fitted flannel sheets during Lent. They will be used for baby care kits and quilts sent to Lutheran World Relief and will be distributed to people in crisis around the world. Recently, the quilts and kits were distributed to the California wildfire victims. Specifically, they use the flat sheets for the backs of the adult quilts and the flannel sheets to make diapers for the baby care kits. **Please drop off any donations in the back of the CLC, Narthex or Church office at St. Matthew's.**



2025 WOMEN'S RETREAT, OCT. 17-19

All women are invited to join us in a peaceful and prayerful weekend in beautiful Rehoboth Beach, Delaware from October 17-19. For more information and registration/payment instructions, please scan the QR code, or go to the link posted in the online ATC. Hope to see you there!



FAMILY MINISTRY TEAM: SAVE THE DATE, JUN. 8

OUR FAMILY MINISTRY TEAM'S NEXT EVENT FOR YOUNGER FAMILIES will be an end-of-school-year playtime and celebration on Sunday afternoon, June 8 at a local park! Specific details will be shared in April, but hold open this date on your family calendar so you can join us for a fun afternoon!



COMMUNITY GARDEN: JOIN US!

Spring will be here before we know it and the Garden Committee is already preparing for another successful growing season in our Community Garden. Last year we grew, harvested, and donated **over 1,300 pounds** of fresh vegetables to the Chester County Food Bank! The garden is in great shape following our complete renovation last season. This year we are dedicating five of our sixteen beds solely to growing for the food bank. Even if you are not renting a bed, we would love to have some new faces join us in helping plant, maintain and harvest the vegetables for the food bank. No experience is necessary! Our growing season is generally from April-October.

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) Hope you will join us this year!