



# St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

## Around the Church

### July 26, 2026



#### **WELCOME TO** **THE 4<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL** **GOSPEL** **BLUEGRASS** **SUNDAY!**

Back in the days of my childhood, my uncle Charlie showed me bluegrass music like a newly unearthed treasure map. Amidst 10 kids of his own I was "Cousin Dan." Somehow he'd find time on a break from work driving trains or building a deck or paving a sidewalk in the yard or whatever project had his hands cracked and black. He'd take me down the basement to his workbench where he had a boom box. "Sit down. Listen. This is Bill Monroe. Ralph Stanley. The Dillards. Hank. Johnny. Doug Kershaw." The list went on and on. What grabbed me in during those young years, was the sheer speed and raw emotion. No swagger. No chart-topping tricks or sexy image nonsense. Just grown men singing high as heck about being homesick or heartbroken. Don't forget Heaven! There was always a gospel song (or ten!)

As my long journey home continued, I found myself at age 22 'neath a hundred-year Oak on the outskirts of a fiddle fest in Lyons, PA. There I saw a group of rustic fellas standing around in a circle, sharing joy and jubilation with anyone who moseyed on by for a look. They picked and sang bluegrass!! Uncle Charlie's lesson's flooded back like a long lost letter from home. Pieces to a puzzle I didn't know was me clicked into place, like the last LEGO that'd been hiding in the cushions. I started what became The Manatawny Creek Ramblers with a promise to myself; to always have a bluegrass band. To look forward to finally fully forming into my inner Del McCoury at the tender age of 72.

I'm getting there. 25 years to go! Faith is a long journey home. Right?

In my experience, elements of faith and spirituality ring loud and clear here in the high and lonesome sounds of bluegrass: Community. Harmony. Simple kindness. Freedom. Friends. Comfort. Connection. Singing songs on Sunday...

Amen.

-Daniel S. Bower

#### **SUMMER OUTREACH** **OPPORTUNITIES**

Here are two wonderful ways you can provide hope and help to others in need this Summer...see below for full details!

- Collection for school supplies for the children at Gemma Services. Traditionally, we provide Christmas gifts to these children; our youth host a special holiday event at Elmwood Zoo; and we collect supplies for the new school year for students. This collection ends Aug. 6
- Collection for the homeless hosted by two Downingtown high school seniors. There are flyers posted around the church campus with the QR code that details desired items for the homeless. Bins will be located in the narthex, CLC, and church office porch. This collection runs through Aug. 31.

*The Outreach ministry team truly appreciates the generosity of our St. Matthew's family. In so many ways, we are the body of Christ reaching out to show God's love to others in our community. Thank you for consideration!*



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

Our Outreach team is once again sponsoring a school supplies drive to benefit Gemma Services, now through August 6. Let's help them fill new backpacks for the children and teens they serve. 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



**Coffee & Christ: Saturday, August 1, 8:30am at Starbucks in Chester Springs.**

Join us for coffee and good conversation at our next session!

**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: We are taking a break in July, see you August 9 at 10:45am**

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

**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.

**REGISTRATION IS OPEN!**  
**ANNUAL DRIVE OUT HUNGER**  
**GOLF OUTING: 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 ~  
GraceCrossing 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



**Questions?** Contact, Patrick Miller, 610-291-3002 or [pjm1198@yahoo.com](mailto:pjm1198@yahoo.com)



**St. Mary's**  
Franciscan Shelter  
*For Homeless Families*

## **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](mailto: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 **366 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! If you are interested in helping in the garden, please contact Meghan Comegys ([megcomegys@gmail.com](mailto:megcomegys@gmail.com) or 484-684-3109), Desiree Lee ([dal2123@yahoo.com](mailto:dal2123@yahoo.com) or 610-425-0484) or Jim Rutledge ([jrutman2005@yahoo.com](mailto:jrutman2005@yahoo.com) or 484-459-3255).

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### **MORE WORSHIP ASSISTANTS ARE NEEDED THIS SUMMER!**

We are in great need of more worship assistants this Summer. Our current, very faithful group of assistants will be taking some time off for vacations. It's a great time to try something out to help in the life of the church.

**We need more lectors, communion assistants, altar assistants, greeters, Audio/Visual assistants (both for the slides and for streaming), youth acolytes, and families to provide Fellowship after Worship. Training will be provided, and scheduling is flexible!**

Please contact Sara Richardson in the church office ASAP if you are interested in giving anything a try!  
[srichardson@stmatthews-church.org](mailto:srichardson@stmatthews-church.org), 610-458-5675 (9:00am-1:00pm M-F)

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### **EARLY ATC DEADLINES FOR JULY AND AUGUST**

Our Church Admin will be taking some time off over the summer, and we will

have the following early deadlines for the Around the Church print newsletters:

**August 2 and August 9:**

**Wednesday, July 29 9:30am**

*If you have any questions, please contact Sara at [srichardson@stmatthews-church.org](mailto:srichardson@stmatthews-church.org)  
Thank you for your cooperation!*