

Saint Matthew's Lutheran Church

2440 Conestoga Road, Chester Springs, Pennsylvania

Organized - January 1, 1833
A Community Church for 185 Years

ANNUAL MEETING of the CONGREGATION
 Sunday, January 29, 2023

Christian McMullan - Pastor

Daniel Bower - Director of Music

Craig Miller – Director of Youth and Family Ministries

Paula Reese - Office Administrator

Robert McDevitt - Sexton

Sandy Elkins - St. Matthew's School Director

Phone: 610-458-5675
www.stmatthews-church.org

2021 Council

President – Mary Kwiatkowski
 Vice President – Meghan Comegys
 Treasurer – Robert McDevitt
 Secretary – Eva Tietjen
 Jennifer Burgess
 Don Hummerston
 Jim Shrimp
 Troy Sisum
 Robert Unger
 Jen Williams

Ministry Team Leaders

Mission In – Desiree Lee
 Property – Patrick Miller
 Outreach – Kathy Meltzer
 Technology – John Lueders
 Finance – Robert McDevitt

St. Matthew's Mission and Vision 2023 Statements

Mission Statement

God calls St. Matthew's congregation and community to:

Be engaged in joyful service to God's world through faith in Jesus Christ.

Vision Statement

We will commit ourselves through our time, talents and financial support to:

**Put God's Word into action*

**Foster communication, in order to inform and connect people to ministry*

**Express God's love and fulfill God's mission by generously
serving one another locally & globally*

ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA

- 1) Opening Prayer
- 2) Setting a Quorum
- 3) Approval of 2022 Annual Meeting Minutes
- 4) Questions on Committee Reports
- 5) 2022 Highlights
- 6) 2022 Financial Report and 2023 Budget
- 7) Nominations and Election of 2023 Council Members
- 8) Adjournment & The Lord's Prayer

REPORT OF THE PASTOR

Dear St. Matthew's,

Well, this is my first Annual Report! It feels good to say that. I will admit, however, I have never been a fan of the “annual report” that just lists *everything* I've done in the last year. I'm much more of a big picture kind of person; you can discern a big picture from the particulars, and so I'll mention some of those, but when I think of the last year and what all I've done, I think about what I wanted to do and where God is calling us. That “call” is a thing that points to the future and, as a vision, motivates us to move forward. I try to discern that for me as your pastor.

First things first was “getting to know you.” Learning names, trying to hear stories, trying to be intentional about taking advantage of opportunities to find out who you are beyond a name and a face (even though that can be hard enough!). I am aware that that will take time and that there is still a lot of people I haven't done that with. Going into 2023 I'd like to continue doing that. There is so much potential here, and there are so many ways we as the church can make a life-giving, positive, difference in this place and time—tapping into that means tapping into *who you are as people in relationship to God*. Coming up with programs is nice—but they don't work without the motive power of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of real people (you!!). Which is why I have tried to focus on relationship-building in just about everything.

This has also been my overall approach in working with the staff (who are great by the way!). I have tried to give them the freedom to work out their vision for their ministry area in accordance with where it seems God is calling us as a congregation, taking into account (what I've perceived to be) the values of the system. I am blessed to be working with people I like and respect—even if they are a militant Eagles fan (Sandy!).

Then, there was the ending of the pandemic. This year has been a year of firsts: my first Easter, first Confirmation, first beginning of Fall programming, first Christmas. For y'all, as a congregational system, these were all also “firsts”—the first (fill-in the blank) post-pandemic with a new pastor to boot, never mind ALL the transitions the last *few years*. That being the case, for me as an outsider, it also felt like y'all were starting up ministries from scratch—there was a “past” way of doing things... but post-pandemic nothing is the same. I'm sure y'all have noticed fewer people, fewer kids in Faith Formation, one service not two, etc... Doing ministry in this “new normal” or “*now* normal” has taken up a lot of mental and spiritual bandwidth. I wouldn't say it's been difficult or stressful—but every “first” has been a new thing to think through, some more difficult than others. I am extremely grateful to have done that with y'all, and I'm grateful for y'all's patience with the “new guy” when I say “I don't know...” to a question about how to do something. And then I answer a question with a question: “How did y'all do that in the past?” All I can say is, “Thank you for your patience!”

Well, my time began with Easter plans. Not knowing what to expect, everything seems great to me! And I thought Easter was. It was very busy of course working with the Worship & Music committee for the first time planning the biggest services of the year. Easter flowed into Confirmation, again learning how I fit into the program... which then flowed into First Communion. An effect of the pandemic was that there were about two “classes” of young people who had been waiting for this important faith-step. We held them on Sunday mornings before church, which seemed to be the most effective way to get their involvement. Spring included Sunday evening services 2x/mo., connecting with the Pre-School, and trying to remember people's names.

The highlight of the Summer was the Appalachia Service Project mission trip to West Virginia. I thoroughly enjoyed getting rained on with a group of very cool teenagers and dedicated adults. Thank you to everyone who went; it was a true bonding experience. That was followed by acting out Bible stories and “hamming it up” with

Pr. Luce at Vacation Bible School at St. Paul's. With the arrival of a new pastor at St. Paul's, there are new ways to collaborate in ministry. Summer ended with a lot of travel, before figuring out how to "restart normal programs" in the Fall.

One of the most challenging was getting Faith Formation restarted. I am very grateful to the parents and volunteers who have made this happen. I appreciate their adaptability and commitment. An ongoing goal is to improve and grow this important ministry. Improving and growing ministries is the goal in a lot of ministry areas, and this is where the challenges reveal how much the church was changing before the pandemic and especially after the pandemic. I went to a recent conference that talked about all the ways in which that is the case. The challenges are real, but so are the opportunities! How is God *calling us to change* in order to grasp hold of them?

Meanwhile, I continued to get connected to the different ministry areas at St. Matthew's. There was the Outreach Committee's Rise Against Hunger event and the Thanksgiving Meal at Holy Communion Lutheran Church in Philadelphia... pastoral care visits aided by the prayers and network of Mission In... there was the Church Picnic... an Advent Movie Day with young kids... hanging out at the Preschool's consignment sales... participating in Property meetings and a clean-up day... baptizing babies and meeting their parents... attending the events of the Interfaith Action Committee—what a gift to the community! A big highlight in the fall was my Installation! Thank you to everyone who came out and thank you to Church Council who encouraged me to schedule it so the Bishop could come. And of course, there was Christmas!!

I want to close by thanking all y'all! I am blessed to be at St. Matthew's and am very grateful for the welcome y'all have given me and all the ways y'all have supported me. Thank you also for all the rides y'all gave me after my rotator cuff surgery. I'm excited about "what next" going into the next year. I'm looking forward especially to seeing how the Spirit will move us into a vision of what God would have us do.

**Peace in Christ,
Pr. Christian McMullan**

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13

While trust and hope have been the driving forces the last few years as we went through a pandemic and a pastoral transition, this year has been a year of excitement and joy as we welcomed Pastor Christian McMullan. The year started with a wonderful meet and greet before Christian started, which was highly attended and helped to grow the excitement for his arrival. As he has settled in, he has brought us his passion for the scripture, his ability to listen deeply, and his ability to get people working together and moving forward. The energy around Saint Matthew's is buzzing as we are once again in full gear, meeting in person for worship, spiritual growth, service projects, and fellowship.

At the beginning of the year we said good bye to Pastor Paul and thanked him for his service at Saint Matthew's. I am grateful for the guidance he gave us during our transition period.

The council worked with Saint Paul's council to draft, approve, and implement a robust Youth protection policy. Since we share a youth program, it was decided to implement a similar policy. The policy we had previously implemented no longer was up to date with state law. We take the responsibility very seriously of keeping our children and youth safe and were grateful for the help from Saint Paul's council.

The Council initiated the process of bringing the cemetery governance into compliance with the church constitution and putting a plan in place for management continuity. This effort will continue in the new year.

The council identified the need to upgrade our technology around website and streaming. We are actively forming a Website Redesign committee. In addition, we are exploring ways to economically upgrade how we stream our worship services. We were notified in January that we received a grant of \$1000 in support of this effort from the synod. Thank you to Troy Sisum for completing the grant application.

West Vincent Township continues to work on building an addition to the Fellowship Trail. This is a walking/biking trail that currently stops just at the Vineyard Church. The addition will continue the trail to Andrew Evans Park which is located behind the Saint Matthew's Cemetery. The route of the trail has been finalized with input from Saint Matthew's council and will cross Saint Matthew's property behind the garden. We are awaiting next steps from the township.

Saint Matthew's continues to be an active member of the Interfaith Action Community. Pastor Christian and Saint Matthew's members were active participants in the annual Unity Shabbat and the Unity for Diversity Walk. Pastor Christian will be the featured speaker at the March IAC event which will be held at Saint Matthew's.

I'd like to congratulate the Chatty Country Quilters on their 30th anniversary of serving our community by using their talents to create baptism quilts, prayer shawls, and most recently fidget blankets (for Alzheimer's patients). They enrich our community with their service.

Saint Matthew's is again offering many opportunities for our members to learn and grow in our understanding of God and our faith. For adults, Adventures in faith and Spirituality - A deep Dive, Woman's Retreat, Tuesday Bible Study, Pints and Parables, Coffee and Christ, and Men's breakfast are all in full swing. For children and youth, we have started Sunday Faith Formation class again and confirmation classes continue.

As I complete my final year as Council President, I want to thank everyone who has supported Saint Matthew's in the past two years. It has truly been an honor to serve in this role and I look forward to finding new ways to support Saint Matthew's in the coming years.

Mary Kwiatkowski
Council President

REPORT FROM DIRECTOR of MUSIC

2022. The year of the... tortoise? Snail? Sloth? What creature symbolizes patience? It was THAT year.

With Pandemic lingering, an end was in sight for 2022. Changes brought and adjustments made due to Covid had been not only put in place but well practiced by now. We we're used to masks, streaming church services, committee meetings on zoom & the ever fluctuating protocols seemed to have reached a predictability even in their unpredictability. You could say we were Well Practiced Pandemic Participants. Yet we remained restless and ready for a permanent pastor. After a long year (& change) in limbo with our interim boss, Pastor Paul Townshend, we finally welcomed Pastor Christian McMullan into leadership in March, mid-Lent. The timing of our new beginning offered a welcomed extra dose of re-birth symbolism to Easter.

Musically it was time to get to work on getting the band back into shape.

Timing was not optimal, heading into summer, to restart weekly rehearsals but it was the perfect timing to settle into some weekly recruitment efforts. So a date was set for the first annual "Band B Que" social where we'd welcome new candidates of all musical capabilities.

Turn out was great (20 plus!!) and we landed some great new voices and talent for the St. Matthew's Singers. Christian was kind enough to bring his grill from home in the family minivan.

He even manned it & conquered those burgers with the skill & ease of a pro. Thanks, Boss!!

The timing of Christian's arrival allowed us the space to get to know each other without the pressure of Christmas or Easter looming. We were able to meet frequently to discuss all things St. Matthew's and even get some social outings under our belts including a trip to one of our favorite Phoenixville spots, The Foodery (aka "The Daddery") where fine Belgian beers & sandwiches rule. In July we were pleased to run into each other at The Mann in Philly while attending a Phish concert. Just 2 specks in a cloud of 20,000 people and there we were standing 7 feet away from each other. It took 4 or 5 songs before we realized it. What are the odds! Bonus hang!!

Pastor McMullan and I were hitting it off & finding our groove.

All the while my trusty partner pros, my teammates, Mike B & Mike Santarelli kept showing up with their support and resources just as they had through pandemic. Mike B continued to deliver breathtaking beauty week after week on the piano for worship while Santarelli was there to preside over the technical tasks both predictable & unforeseen. Their support and professionalism is a gift for which I remain humbly grateful. I can't thank them & St. Matthew's enough for the treasure of their talents.

By October weekly band practices were back and we're up and running. Beloved band veterans Kristin & Doug Ditillo, Donna Robinson & Jeanne Maugle were back where they so rightly fit and belong; serving & singing in the band week after week. But now we were joined by some great new talent & support in The Smiths (John & Peggy), Deb Tyler (great singer AND pianist!) and Wilma Hazelwood. As always, Craig Miller (aka Amazing Bass) lent a joyful noise when his youth ministry allowed us his time and we got some special visits from our pal Pastor Paul and new friend & first lady, Stephanie McMullan. Sue Hummerston & Kathy Meltzer also joined in time to time.

Christmas Eve was an exciting, joyous ride! It was great to have the "Christmas Choir" for 3p & 5p. I especially got a kick out of 7p's makeshift candlelight status. We lost the projector due to a technical glitch (fixed now) & decided to go "old school" by retracting the screen & turning the lights down low (but bright enough to read bulletins). Make Lemonade.

Since we started streaming church back in 2020 the on going technical upgrades adventure continued. We still have some things to sort out & decisions to make around our AV equipment. Different solutions and recommendations have been brought to the table via W&M committee but we seem to be at a stand still with which way to go. A conversation w/ Bob McDevitt mentioned the formation of a Tech committee. I think this is a great idea because AV/tech is not worship & music. 2 very different things requiring very different skill sets.

Having updated AV w/ knowledgeable, trained volunteers: 2023 Goals!

It's good to be back. I'm excited for what's to come.

Let's do this, St. Matthew's!!

Much Peace,
Daniel S. Bower
Music Director

YOUTH

Before I launch into a review of the past year, I think it's important to share my philosophy of youth and family ministry, to provide some framework to what you will read about here. Briefly, here are the ideas and goals that drive what I do:

- Building and fostering youth relationships in multiple facets – with peers, with those of other generations, and most importantly, with Christ
- Helping youth feel welcomed, loved, embraced, and empowered by their congregation – providing a safe space for them
- Providing parents with the tools and encouragement to raise kids in the faith
- Finding ways for kids of all ages to be actively engaged in the life of the congregation, not simply participating in “youth group”
- Using programs to support the greater goal, not simply for the sake of providing stuff for youth to do under the banner of Christianity
- Providing experiences that open eyes to poverty and need in our community, region, nation, and world

Hopefully all of these make sense, but if it is helpful I can explain it in a different way. As I do ministry, I look to incorporate three S's into whatever programming is developed:

- Socialization (fun stuff, developing interpersonal relationships);
- Spiritual Development (growing in faith and relationship with God); and
- Servant Opportunities (helping others).

Not every activity, event, or opportunity involves all three, though I do try to involve socialization as much as possible. With all this in mind, I hope that you can get a better feel for the ‘whys’ of what is happening in the youth ministry world. On to the year in review!

For the St. Matthew's/St. Paul's Youth Ministry, much of 2022 continued to see the pandemic-induced rollercoaster of highs and lows that were so much a part of 2021. It only seems fitting, then, that I review the year using the “highs and lows” model of sharing that is a regular part of our youth activities, as well as our confirmation program! Here is a more-or-less chronological review of what happened through the course of 2022. The year started off with a low. The resurgence of COVID in January saw a postponement of several in-person events, including the first anticipated offsite event since the end of 2019. Back to the video screens for a few weeks! A high, though, was that we had nineteen youth and seven adults sign up to participate in the 2022 ELCA Youth Gathering in Minneapolis, which had been postponed from 2021.

Unfortunately, at the beginning of February, the announcement came that the Youth Gathering had been cancelled because of continuing uncertainty about whether the pandemic would be at an ebb by summer. Definite low, and a big disappointment for all of us who were eagerly anticipating this – especially the 11th graders, who would never get the chance to experience an ELCA Gathering. However, by the grace of God, we were able to quickly pivot and turn what would have been the Gathering week into a mission trip with Appalachia Service Project – and eleven youth and seven adults jumped on board for that experience. Definite high! (I’ll share more about our ASP trip in a few paragraphs.)

By March we were back to in-person gatherings. OASIS continued to be well-received by the high school youth, as an opportunity to get together and take a break from their busy lives. Sharing highs and lows, learning relaxation techniques, and hearing what Christ has to say to us about our daily struggles helped us let go of our worries for a little while. (Our group’s core scripture passage is Matthew 11:28-30, “Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”) Of course, there was also food and intense discussion around some rather silly questions. (Is *‘The Nightmare Before Christmas’* a Christmas movie, or a Halloween Movie?) Having a group like this is truly a high. The middle school youth took part in an escape room event, which had been postponed from January and marked our first official offsite event since 2019. It was a lot of fun, and another high!

March also saw a renewed emphasis on our congregation’s Youth Protection Policy, which was updated this past year. Clearances were renewed and policy training was provided for our adults who work with children of all ages, in light of the revised congregational policy. One could argue that it is a low that we live in a world where this is necessary, but it is also a high in that we are committed to providing a safe environment for our youth, and that our congregational leaders and adults who work with our kids understand and value the importance of this. April, May, and June saw preparatory sessions happening for our Appalachia Service Project and Middle School Youth mission trips. We were excited about the coming summer experiences! In addition to these highs, our combined groups spent another afternoon playing laser tag and mini golf with BOTH of our new pastors – Pastor Christian at St. Matthew’s and Pastor Stuart at St. Paul’s. It was a lot of fun, and a great way for the youth to get to know them better outside of the church walls.

There were lows experienced over this time, as well. The High School Graduate celebration, which had been such a success in 2021, was cancelled in 2022 because only one family was able to attend. COVID also reared its ugly head once more, when one of our adult leaders for the Middle School Mission Trip tested positive only two days before we were supposed to leave. That trip, too, had to be cancelled, although we were able to quickly pull together several one-day service projects, plus a fun daytrip to Lake Tobias Wildlife Park as replacement events. Those proved to be highs in their own right, even though we would have preferred to be in Niagara Falls as we had originally hoped.

Summer brought some incredible highs, in the form of both the return of St. Paul’s Vacation Bible School and the High School Mission Trip. A good crew of youth and adult helpers from St. Matthew’s and St. Paul’s stepped up to make VBS a fun-filled week for the kids who attended, and it was good to see it back again. The big youth event was our work week in Logan County, West Virginia with Appalachia Service Project. Our group bonded throughout the experience, and our three work crews spent the week not only helping to make three families’ homes warmer, safer, and drier, but also developing relationships with the people who lived in those homes. In spite of the heavy rain, sometimes-uncomfortable conditions, and hard work, ALL of the youth and adults who went had an uplifting experience and made memories that will last a lifetime. This was truly a ‘mountaintop’ high for our entire group. Thanks to all at St. Matthew’s who supported us through prayer, monetary donations, and/or contributions to the care package goodies that arrived during our workweek! Thanks also go to the adult leaders who gave a week of their time to our youth: Alissa Davis, James Davis Sr., Brian Hillestad, Stephanie Kerrigan, Pastor Christian McMullan, and Jen Williams.

September brought things crashing back to earth fairly quickly. Though the kickoff events went well, both youth retreats to Bear Creek Camp at the end of the month had to be postponed because just about everyone planning to go (including me) was sick. Colds, flu, COVID – the germs were enjoying a festival of infection. So to date, other than the ASP trip, we STILL have not been able to conduct an overnight event since the start of the pandemic; hopefully in February we will finally be successful. Although that was a low to start off the year, we rebounded pretty quickly with highs in the form of some new and returning events on the youth calendars. In October we had a very strong youth and family turnout for the ‘Rise Against Hunger’ meal packaging event that was co-sponsored by St. Paul’s and held at St. Matthew’s, plus we did our first-ever “Gaming Day” at Uplink Studios for the middle school and high school groups combined. E-gaming is a growing sport, and Uplink does a great job of promoting responsible, ethical, and supportive online behavior. The event was well-received, and we are returning there at the end of January for another round. At the suggestion of one of our high school students, we held a high school brunch gathering in November, which saw a good turnout and very positive reviews. The teens have expressed a desire to make this a regular event, so we will keep it going as long as there is energy behind it. Of course, with youth, food-centered events *usually* have energy behind them.

One other new endeavor and probably the biggest high from the fall occurred in December, when a group of our high school students hosted some elementary students from the Martin Luther School on an outing to Elmwood Park Zoo’s “Wild Lights” display. The Martin Luther School is a residential facility in Plymouth Meeting that works with kids from difficult home and family situations. Both of the groups – our youth and their kids – had a wonderful time despite *really* cold and blustery weather, and we are hoping to do more events together in the coming year.

In addition to the above, there were other highs that occurred regularly throughout the year. The Peer Ministry Leaders, who were each commissioned in BOTH congregations (at their insistence) in November 2021, began to spread their wings in 2022 and take on leadership roles in Sunday School, confirmation, committee work, and other youth activities. The youth were again involved in running the October Honey Sunday event benefitting the Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch. Many of our teens stepped up in other ways to serve in worship, both visibly as communion assistants but also in behind-the-scenes ways such as running the PowerPoint on Sunday mornings and evenings. For me personally, it was always a high to see individual youth in their outside-of-church activities such as middle school and high school concerts, musicals, dance performances, and sporting events. We have some very talented young people in our congregation!

For 2023, my hope for the St. Matthew’s/St. Paul’s Youth Ministry is that it will continue to grow and evolve as it did in 2022. I’m looking forward to exciting new opportunities, new faces (youth AND adult), and new ventures, as well as the return of some old favorites that haven’t been seen since 2019 (and that will still be “new” to just about all of the youth since they haven’t happened in four years). I’m anticipating the continuation of new things from 2022, such as our partnership with Martin Luther School and our participation in Appalachia Service Project.

Finally, it is extremely important that I recognize the members of the Youth Support Team and thank them for all of the time, energy, and effort that they have put forth toward the youth ministry over the course of the past year. They have been instrumental in helping make happen so many of the things that I have listed above. So many, many thanks go to Kerry Lueders, Jen Williams, and Caroline Delin (youth member) from St. Matthew’s, and Scott Heath and Will Heath (youth member) from St. Paul’s.

Respectfully submitted,

Craig Miller

Director of Youth and Family Ministries

SAINT MATTHEW'S CEMETERY

1/1/2022

Checking	3,883.50	S&T Trust	87,294.76
Transfer	5,000.00	Thrivent	21,252.87
Sale of lots	300.00	Wells Fargo	34,703.19
Income	1,015.23		
Mowing & Grounds care	9,614.00		

Checking Balance 12/31/22 584.73

Sandra E. Dewees
Secretary/Treasurer

WORSHIP AND MUSIC COMMITTEE

The Worship and Music Committee, like so many others, was negatively effected by COVID this past year and has needed to be recreated. Following Pastor Christian's installation, a new team was gathered and began by identifying new worship goals for a post covid world.

Team members include Pastor Christian, Daniel Bower, Mike Santarelli, Kristin Ditillo, Mary Kwiatkowski, Jeff Foltz, Donna Robinson, Jeanne Maugle and Sue Hummerston.

Guiding Principles for Worship and Music were thoughtfully discussed and agreed upon. The main objective of our worship experience at St Matthew's should convey/exude pervasive HOPE and unconditional JOY. When services end, this is what people should be left with. The Worship experience should be: Accessible, Friendly, Casual, Relaxed, Upbeat, Inspirational. Our Liturgy and Music should be: Informal, Contemporary, Energetic, Understandable and Engaging. We will use this as a flexible guide.

The team has dug in on the limitations of our streaming as well as the overall AV system. Professional recommendations have been made and are being evaluated with Council. The team applied for ELCA Forward Together in Faith, 2022-23 grant money available to church's looking to upgrade worship tools. We are awaiting news on who has been selected. This remains a priority for 2023 regardless of Grant money. Quality streaming is necessary in this age of choices. St. Matthew's needs to put our best foot forward to potential worshippers.

Recruiting new musicians has been successful in the past months. Daniel hosted a "Band-B-Que" which became a time for interested musicians to gather, get to know each others various talents... and eat hamburgers. We have added a number of talented volunteers and continue to welcome anyone who thinks this ministry might be calling them. Our Youth participation is also a priority for the year ahead.

The Worship and Music Team welcomes your thoughts and participation.

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Hummerston – 610-220-2476 or hummerstonsue@gmail.com.

PROPERTY REPORT

Water and Heat Systems

- A new well pump was installed after our 20 year-old pump failed.
- Boiler leaks and controls were fixed to retain our insurance.
- Water softener system was refurbished— Readings were not meeting DEP standards. Tanks, meters, valves were not functioning correctly resulting in increased water hardness.
- Chlorine treatment system—Work was done on this system to keep E-coli from our system.

New Pew Cushions

After many years of service our red pew cushions have been replaced with brand new. Generous donations were made by several members which have partially covered the cost. (We are still awaiting several cushions which are due to arrive shortly) *Note: Our old cushions are available for donation. If anyone knows a place where they could be repurposed, there are about 50+, please contact the church office. They may be good for a school, community center, camp, etc.*

Security

We added Ring security cameras and a locking mailbox. We have also been trying to keep up with making sure security lighting is always functional.

St. Matthew's Memorial Gardens

The church's cemetery is a separate entity from the church and has been managed for many decades by the Dewees family. They have done a great service to the church all these years, and are now ready to step back. We are working to identify who will manage the entity in the future.

Sexton—In 2022 Bob McDevitt began official duties as the church's sexton after the resignation of Kyle Dewees. Bob has been volunteering his time and expertise. He's an invaluable resource—taking on normal sexton tasks as well more complex issues in areas of construction, technology, and more. Please thank Bob for all he does. Also thanks go out to James Davis, Patrick Miller, Jim Rutledge and Bob Slack; members of the Property Committee.

Future Needs

After 20+ years of use, our CLC addition, and other areas are getting to the point where they require repairs and/or replacement of equipment and/or materials.

Here are some future needs:

- Parking lot repairs, sealcoating and striping
- Concrete repair work
- Window repairs and replacement, painting
- New door locking systems
- Future failures of systems and/or equipment
- Other general repairs and upkeep

Respectfully submitted,

Don Hummerston

CHATTY COUNTRY QUILTERS OF ST. MATTHEWS

Our small group meets in the CLC Building from 9:30 am to 2:30 pm the second Monday of the month. We mostly work on tied quilts. For years we have made small ones to be gifted to babies and children up to 3 years of age, being baptized at St. Matthew's. This past year there were 5 baptisms. We also make larger ones for donating to charity. Any one is welcome to join us. Contacts: Alice Friedrich 610-469-6034 and Beverly Pierce 610-469-9654.

MISSION IN TEAM

The Mission In Ministry Team was reenergized in January 2021. Together we created a mission statement which reads: This Mission In Ministry Team shall express God's love and fulfill God's mission by striving to create and maintain a caring, supportive culture for our fellow members of St. Matthew's who are in need. We will provide a network of support to those experiencing chronic illnesses, long term disabilities, emergency situations and families in need of support.

When the need arises we offer meals, visitation, cards, phone calls and prayers. Our Prayer Team has been powerful in giving strength to our members throughout the year. After our Sunday service, we deliver the flowers donated for the service to members who might need a little sunshine. Our hope is together we can bring a little joy to one another's lives.

The Mission In Ministry Team has 15 members and meets once a month on Zoom for an hour or less. The Prayer Team has 28 members and corresponds via email. We welcome anyone who would like to join us.

REPORT FROM OUTREACH MINISTRY

The Outreach Ministry continued to serve our neighbors throughout 2022 in a variety of ways:

- American Red Cross blood drive
- Community garden donations for Chester County Food Bank (CCFB)
- Multiple food drives for the CCFB
- Monthly meals for St. Mary's (excluding summer)
- Honey Fundraiser for the Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch with over \$410 in sales and \$110 for our Youth program
- Interfaith meal packaging event for Rise Against Hunger on World Food Day with nearly 300 volunteers over three shifts packaging almost 41,000 meals
- Thanksgiving for the hungry and homeless with Holy Communion Church in Philadelphia. We provided turkeys, pies, warm clothing, and many volunteers. Approximately 300 meals were prepared, packaged, and distributed.
- Christmas gifts for children at Martin Luther School

Thank you to our generous donors and volunteers who make these programs happen year after year, as well as embrace new ones. In 2023, we look forward to exploring other ways we might serve our community as we strive to profess the human value and interconnectedness of all members of our society.

If you have a suggestion for an Outreach activity and/or if you are interested in getting involved in our ministry, please contact Kathy Meltzer at kmeltzer@comcast.net

The King will reply, "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me." Matthew 25:40

Respectfully submitted for the Outreach team,
Kathy Meltzer

REPORT FROM ST. MATTHEW'S SCHOOL

St. Matthew's School has continued to flourish as an outreach of our church for the past twenty years. Our enrollment has rebounded to a more "normal" number post COVID. In 2022 we served 169 children and 147 families. We are anticipating 2023/24 school year to be back to pre-pandemic enrollment.

We employed thirty two staff members as teachers, assistants, substitutes and an administrative assistant. We continued to offer preschool classes to two, three, four and five-year-olds with a full day Kindergarten program. Our Enrichment programs continue to be a success, adding additional learning opportunities for our students.

Our goal, at all ages, to provide children with a developmentally enriching experience in a safe, nurturing Christian environment, is being reached every day. The parents are blessed with a safe, loving place to begin their child's education. The school continues to add enrichment through Music, special visitors and field trips. The school is blessed with a host of parent volunteers and hard-working staff who continue to be involved in the education of the children at St. Matthew's.

The school continues to reach out to the community in many ways. In early 2022 we were still navigating a world with many unknowns. We were keeping nonessential individuals out of the building, therefore volunteerism was very limited. We did some outreach from January to May then picked up again in September at a normal level. Here is a summary of our projects:

- In January our Kindergarten class donated \$145.00 to the Chester County SPCA along with a trunk full of towels and blankets for the animals. This money was raised during our annual sale of home-made dog treats.
- Over the winter months, we organized a food drive to benefit the Chester County Food Bank.
- May brought a return of our Spring Fair! This was an indoor / outdoor event! Our first one since shutting the doors for COVID! What a wonderful day it was.
- "Socktober" was a great month when we collected socks for those in need.
- November and December we did a food drive for the Food Bank which resulted in over 600 pounds of food being delivered.
- Thanksgiving brought our annual collection of hats, gloves and scarves to accompany our congregants to Holy Communion Lutheran Church in Philadelphia.

We are thankful for the blessing of St. Matthew's School and look forward to touching many more families in our community.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandy Elkins

Director

ST MARY'S FRANCISCAN SHELTER

St Mary's Franciscan Shelter provides temporary housing for families in Chester County for up to 8 weeks. St Mary's supports families to find stability, independence and a place to call home.

They provide personal case management and on-site coaching that includes:

- 24 hour supervision by staff members
- private rooms, communal living space and meals
- Life Skills are taught on parenting, household and time management
- They assist to find jobs, provide debt counseling, education, child care and help to secure future housing.

St. Matthews has provided a meal once a month for about the last 10 years. The 4th Sunday of the month we ask for volunteers to provide PART of meal that feeds about 15. Members can sign up to make an entree, side dish, vegetable, salad, dessert OR deliver the meal. There is a sign up genius in the ATC. Food is brought to the CLC by 10:30am and marked St Mary's so as not to be confused with other events' food, and put in disposable pans - including heating instructions if needed. The staff tell us that they love when St Matthews is providing the meal as they love our food!

Learn more at stmarysfs.org.
209 Emmett St, Phoenixville

Respectfully submitted,

Mindy Elmer

mlong1011@comcast.net or 484-319-8998

2022 FINANCE REPORT

2022 Review

St. Matthew's remains financially sound going into 2023 due to generous offerings, donations, school and trust income. Regular contributions of \$271,568 were \$1,568 above the 2022 budget of \$270,000 and \$58,959 above the 2021 contributions of \$212,609, a remarkable recovery of over 27%. Total operating expenses of \$384,036 were \$10,185 above budget and \$67,797 higher than 2021. The total operating surplus last year was \$12,696.

The Benevolence contribution of \$20,838 nearly met our budget goal for 2022 and more than doubled our previous conservative contribution of \$10,000. We've budgeted a continuance of 10% of our trailing year offerings for fiscal year 2023.

The Finance Committee is responsible for monitoring the Woodland and Bertolet Trusts. The combined value of the trusts is \$781,972.91 and the overall asset allocation is 51% stocks, 44% fixed income, 3% alternatives, and 2% cash. The Bertolet and Woodland Trusts ended the year at \$322,968 and \$459,526, respectively, \$169,331 lower than last year's ending balances. 2022 was a particularly bad year for investments with the S&P 500 down over 19% and US Core Bond Index down nearly 13%. Our investment returns, net of distributions, fell within this range. 2023 may be more of the same but we've rebalanced for long term growth and income. The Woodland Trust is restricted to withdrawals from income and capital gains for edifice expenses. A distribution of \$24,361 was made from the Woodland Trust while income of \$7,222 was distributed from the Bertolet trust to help pay for facility maintenance and repairs including replacement of our water softener, expansion tank, well pump, pew cushions, and ongoing HVAC maintenance.

We liquidated the Morgan Stanley stock transfer accounts resulting in a distribution of \$27,454 to our main operating account. A new brokerage account to receive stock gifts was opened at Vanguard to reduce expenses and consolidate our recordkeepers. Drew Aramany kindly provided a presentation to the congregation on charitable stock donations as well as the merits of Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCD) for those 70 ½ and older.

The primary checking account year-end value was \$127,734, the year-end value of 2021 was \$111,267. The Congregation Cares Fund had a cash balance of \$8,615, the Outreach Fund had a cash balance of \$6,565, while the Youth Fund held \$17,296 at the end of 2022.

At the end of the year, the Savings, Gifts, and Memorial account had a balance of \$50,757, the balance at the end of 2020 was \$50,763. In 2023 we intend to explore moving our savings account to a higher earning FDIC savings account.

2023 Budget

Our 2023 budgeted operating income of \$402,000 is \$12,958 higher than operating income received in 2022. Our 2023 annual offering budget of \$297,000 is a 10% increase from last year's offering budget as we work to continue our recovery post-pandemic. School income, trust income distributions, and charitable stock donations will offer additional income support.

A concentrated effort will be made to receive charitable stock donations in 2023. Charitable stock donations will help St. Matthew's meet its cash flow budgetary goals.

Preschool income of \$48,000 is budgeted for 2023, which is \$10,362 lower than 2022 preschool income received. The reason for this drop is twofold: 2022 school income was positively impacted by the second round of the Payroll Protection Plan (PPP2) and the school board has increased salaries for teachers to offset inflationary pressures and ensure that we continue to attract and retain excellent educators. Preschool income received in 2022 of \$58,362 is \$3,362 higher than preschool income budgeted for 2022.

Budgeted expenses for 2023 are \$27,913 higher than budgeted expenses for 2022 and reflect inflated energy costs, a new budget line item for Technology to cover a new web presence (funded by a \$5,000 carry over from 2022), staff salary increases and full year pastor salary and benefits.

Due to significant balances in our various individual ministry accounts (Congregation Cares, Outreach, and Youth) we've continued to suspend additional annual contributions until they are restored to typical historic balances. This is not intended to diminish their critical importance in the life of our congregation.

Respectfully Submitted
Robert McDevitt, Treasurer

	2021 Actual	2022 Budget	2022 Actual	2023 Proposed Budget
Income				
Offerings	\$212,609	\$270,000	\$271,568	\$297,000
Donations	\$9,900	\$20,000	\$27,454	\$30,000
School	\$48,389	\$55,000	\$58,362	\$48,000
Woodland Trust - S&T Bank	\$ -	\$7,289	\$31,659	\$12,000
Payroll Protection Program Loan	\$58,038	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Bertolet Trust - Vanguard		\$ -	\$ -	\$10,000
Savings Account Withdrawals	\$ -	\$22,000	\$ -	\$5,000
Total Income	\$328,936	\$374,289	\$389,042	\$402,000
Expenses				
Benevolence	\$10,000	\$21,260	\$20,838	\$27,157
Capital Improvements	\$5,500	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$12,000
Community Life	\$3,268	\$4,000	\$3,191	\$3,000
Congregation Cares Contribution	\$500	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Education/Faith Formation	\$1,701	\$4,000	\$1,901	\$3,000
Local Ministry Support	\$ -	\$ -	\$8,400	\$ -
Miscellaneous	\$1,309	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Mortgage	\$11,957	\$12,760	\$12,760	\$12,760
Office	\$21,918	\$21,000	\$19,772	\$21,000
Outreach Ministry Contribution	\$1,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Payroll	\$172,982	\$191,831	\$183,554	\$192,847
Property	\$36,629	\$30,000	\$39,714	\$30,000
Staff Benefits	\$1,036	\$36,000	\$37,064	\$45,000
Technology	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$5,000
Utilities	\$28,922	\$30,000	\$40,787	\$40,000
Worship & Music	\$12,268	\$13,000	\$6,054	\$10,000
Youth Ministry Contribution	\$7,250	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Expenses	\$316,239	\$373,851	\$384,036	\$401,764
Income – Expenses	\$12,696	\$438	\$5,006	\$236

Net Worth Statement – 12/31/2021

Assets	Amount
Investment Accounts	
Bertolet Trust - The Vanguard Group	\$390,371
Woodland Trust - S&T Wealth Management	\$560,933
Morgan Stanley - Stock Donation Account	\$25,533
Morgan Stanley - Operating Account	\$1,373
Checking and Savings	
S&T Bank	
Main Account	\$111,267
Savings, Gifts, Memorials	\$50,757
Congregation Cares	\$10,488
Outreach	\$8,655
Youth	\$22,462
Total Assets	\$1,181,838
Liabilities	
Mortgage	
S&T Bank Mortgage	\$(100,059)
Total Liabilities	\$(100,059)

Net Worth **\$1,081,779**

Net Worth Statement – 12/31/2022

Assets	Amount
Investment Accounts	
Bertolet Trust - The Vanguard Group	\$322,968
Woodland Trust - S&T Wealth Management	\$459,526
Vanguard - Stock Donation Account	\$ -
Checking and Savings	
S&T Bank	
Main Account	\$127,734
Savings, Gifts, Memorials	\$50,763
Congregation Cares	\$8,615
Outreach	\$6,565
Youth	\$17,296
Total Assets	\$993,469
Liabilities	
Mortgage	
S&T Bank Mortgage	\$(91,880)
Total Liabilities	\$(91,880)

Net Worth **\$901,589**

2022 STATISTICS**Adults and Children received – 9****Youth Confirmed – 6****Members transferred or moved from area - 4****Deaths - 3****Baptisms - 5**

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION
Annual Meeting Minutes
January 30, 2022 – 10:30 a.m. (In Church and Zoom)

God calls St. Matthew's congregation and community to: Worship, Learn, Serve.

Welcome and Opening Prayer

Council President, Mary Kwiatkowski welcomed the congregation present in the church and on line in zoom to the annual meeting. She also opened the meeting with a prayer.

Setting a Quorum

There were twenty eight (28) congregation members present in church and eleven (11) congregation members on line in zoom. Total in attendance was thirty-nine members.

Mary Kwiatkowski confirmed that a quorum had been reached. (At least 20 members are required for a quorum). She called the meeting to order.

Approval of 2020 Annual Meeting Minutes

The congregation was asked to review the meeting minutes from the 2021 annual meeting. No questions were asked. No comments were made. Mary asked the congregation for the approval of the minutes. Patrick Miller made the motion to approve. Tim Guyer seconded the motion. All were in favor, none opposed. The 2021 minutes were approved as drafted.

Questions on Committee Reports

There were no questions on the committee reports.

2021 Financial Report and 2022 Budget

2021 Review

Mary introduced the Council Treasurer, Bob McDevitt who reviewed the 2021 Report. He indicated that 2021 continued to be a challenging year due to the pandemic. He reviewed the details of his written report. He indicated that we will increase visibility of our progress toward meeting our offering budget by publishing updates in the ATC.

Overall, Bob reported that St. Matthew's remains financially sound going into 2022. This is largely due to our participation in the second round of the Payroll Protection Plan, continuing offerings, recovering school income and generous stock donations. The Benevolence contribution of \$10,000 was met and we will be returning to the 10% of our 2021 offerings for 2022.

Total 2021 actual income was \$328,936, which came in below the 2021 budgeted income of \$373,210. Total actual expenses came in \$316,239, which resulted in a net income of \$12,696 for 2021.

There were no questions from the congregation on 2021 Finance review.

2022 Budget

Bob reviewed the proposed 2022 budget.

The 2022 budget reflects a prorated ministry expense with the new pastor and a 5% increase in salary for staff. We are hoping to have a level of normalcy with a new pastor in place. Charitable stock donation to church is an area that we intend to provide information sessions to the congregation. We are returning to tithing benevolence goal to the synod. Due to the pandemic our individual ministry bank accounts have accrued significant balances so we'll be suspending further contributions to them in 2022 until they are spent down to historic appropriate levels. We will offset some costs to youth for their youth trip.

We have refinanced the mortgage.

Under Property Committee, we have separated capital improvements from daily operational costs. Note that as part of the call process, St. Matthew's was required to complete a full audit of the books of both the church and school by the synod. These audits were both successfully completed with no material findings.

Questions on 2022 Budget

1. Tim Guyer asked if we don't make the offerings amount in the budget, what will we do?

Bob replied that we have savings and Bertolet Trust that we can use.

2. Birgit Hof-Werth asked a clarification on the youth accounts.

Bob replied that the ministry accounts (Congregation Cares, Outreach Ministry and Youth) are carrying significant balances. We need to use this balance to support the ministries. Our intent is not to diminish their importance in the life of our congregation and once this balance is used, we will restore the contributions that we make to these accounts.

3. Sue Hummerston asked to clarify the Worship/Music budget of \$13,000. What does this account cover?

Bob replied that this covers the music expenses through the year, supplies (communion), music performances, palms, flowers for Easter, etc.

There were no other questions.

Sue Hummerston made a motion to approve the 2022 budget. Sandy Elkins seconded.

All in favor. None opposed. 2022 Budget is passed.

Nominations and Election of 2022 Council Members

Mary Kwiatkowski thanked Desiree Lee who served on Council for one term of three years. Desiree will now focus on her work with Mission In and the Garden.

To fill this vacancy, Jen Williams was nominated to join Council. Jenn Williams served in the Transition and Call committees. Jen Williams has accepted her nomination.

Don Hummerston, who has just completed his first 3year term has decided to continue to serve in council for a second term. Don has been working with the Property Committee.

Mary asked for a motion to accept the new council member and approve the council member's second term. Patrick Miller made the motion. Kristin Ditulo seconded the motion. All were in favor, none opposed. Both Jen Williams and Don Hummerston have been unanimously elected.

Mary thanked everyone for participating. She also thanked Sandy Elkins and staff for all their work, the committee chairs, members and volunteers. Mary also acknowledged and thanked Bob McDevitt who has volunteered to perform sexton's duties at this time, along with all the work he does as treasurer in council.

Adjournment and Lord's Prayer

Mary asked if there were any other questions. No other questions.

Jenn Williams made a motion to adjourn the meeting @ 10:59 am. Sandy Elkins seconded.

The 2022 congregational meeting was adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.