



## St. Matthew's Messenger

December 2017

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, Pennington, N.J. 08534

To receive the monthly Messenger and other announcements please contact Pam at [admin@stmatthewspennington.org](mailto:admin@stmatthewspennington.org) or phone us at 609-737-0985. *The Church is open for prayer and meditation during parish office hours (See below)*

### OFFICE HOURS

Mon 9:30-3:30  
Tue 9:30-2:30  
Wed 9:30-3:30  
Th 9:30-2:30  
Fri 9:00-12:00

THE OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED ON Monday, December 25<sup>th</sup>



The Office will be open on Tuesday, December 26<sup>th</sup>

### SUNDAY SERVICE SCHEDULE

Service times are at 8 and 10 AM for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, EXCEPT on Sunday morning, Dec 24: services at 8:00 am, 3:00pm, 10:00pm

## COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE



The Communications Committee will be publishing our Parish Directory by Sunday December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017.

The list will be available through our Parishioner Portal web page (password protected, info to be provided). We're also planning on emailing the directory to those parishioners with email addresses. For those without email, the list will be available through our church office. Thanks for your

patience, and we look forward to having the most complete St. Matthew's Parish Directory available very soon! -Your Communication's Committee

## OPTIONAL 'PERSONAL ACCESS' ONLINE ACCOUNT

A parishioner has the option to modify their personal information through your own 'personal access' online account at Fellowship One. If you receive emails from our church office, your name is already in our database. Here are the steps to create your own 'personal access' account:

1. Click on, or copy to your browser, the Parishioner Portal link:  
<https://smecpnj.infellowship.com/UserLogin>
2. Click on 'Sign Up' at the lower right on your screen. Do not click on 'Register' as you are already registered in the database if you receive emails.
3. Please fill in the requested info which provides the link to your existing information.
4. Go to your email inbox to find an email from Fellowship One and click the link to activate your 'personal access' account.
5. Return to your Parishioner Portal link to login: <https://smecpnj.infellowship.com/UserLogin>
6. From the Main screen, you can Update your Profile, Select Privacy Settings, or choose the Church Directory to see other members.
7. Note: you can also reach the portal link at <http://stmatthewspennington.org/parishioner-portal>

## LOOKING FOR LECTORS AND SUB-DEACONS

St. Matthews is in need of parishioners to serve as lectors and sub-deacons, especially at the 8 a.m. service. Lectors read the First Lesson and the Prayers of the People; sub deacons read the Psalm and the Epistle, and assist with Communion. If you have any interest in participating in this important ministry, please contact Rev. Barbara Briggs at [rector@StMatthewsPennington.org](mailto:rector@StMatthewsPennington.org) or Tom Bruhl at [tbruhl@embarqmail.com](mailto:tbruhl@embarqmail.com).

## UPCOMING EVENTS

<b>December 3</b>	<b>Confirmation Class 5:30-7:00 at the rectory with your invited guest adult Advent Evensong @ All Saints' Princeton 5pm</b>
<b>December 4</b>	<b>Lectionary Bible Study, 8:30AM and 7:30PM, chapel</b>
<b>December 6</b>	<b>Children's Advent Service 4:30pm</b>
<b>December 9</b>	<b>Christmas Bazaar, 10:00-4:00</b>
<b>December 10</b>	<b>LOGOS 5-7pm</b>
<b>December 11</b>	<b>Lectionary Bible Study, 8:30AM and 7:30PM, chapel</b>
<b>December 13</b>	<b>Luncheon</b>
<b>December 17</b>	<b>Advent Lessons &amp; Carols w/Eucharist 10am Confirmation Class 4:30-6pm, Belmont Hall</b>
<b>December 18</b>	<b>Lectionary Bible Study, 8:30AM only, chapel VESTRY 7:30PM</b>
<b>December 24</b>	<b>Christmas Eve</b>
<b>December 25</b>	<b>Christmas Day</b>
<b>December 31</b>	<b>New Year's Eve</b>

### **ADVENT—A NEW BEGINNING**

Advent is the beginning of the Christian year. December 3 is the first Sunday of the season when we prepare to welcome the birth of Jesus Christ. Every new beginning is both exciting and a little scary: what will this new year bring? Will I be true to my desire for a new start? Will I forget my resolutions and fall back into old habits? How will I truly get a fresh start for the new year?

Whether our new year is marked by the start of 2018, or with December 3, the same excitement pervades the changing of the season because, in a way, we have the impression that we get to start over with a fresh slate. “Things will be different this year”, we tell ourselves.

As with any new beginning, we need help with beginning—help in moving from the old way to our new practice. How do we get from thinking about it to actually doing it? And then, how do we sustain the new practice over time?



The wisdom of AA tells us that we are powerless to change until we recognize the power that is greater than ourselves. In fact, we cannot change until we realize that to live life to the fullest, we have to adopt a new way of living, recognizing that all we can do is live one day at a time with the grace that is given to us in the moment.

Here is how AA helps people pray according to the place in which they find themselves:

#### **Serenity Prayer**

God, grant me the Serenity, to accept the things I cannot change, Courage to change the things I can, and Wisdom to know the difference.

#### **Third Step Prayer**

God, I offer myself to You – to build with me and to do with me as You will. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do your will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of your Power, your Love, and your Way of Life. May I do your will always!

#### **Seventh Step Prayer**

My Creator, I am now willing that you should have all of me, good and bad. I pray that you now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to you and my fellows. Grant me strength, as I go out from here, to do your bidding. Amen.

#### **Eleventh Step Prayer**

Lord, make me a channel of Thy peace; that where there is hatred, I may bring love; that where there is wrong, I may bring the spirit of forgiveness; that where there is discord, I may bring harmony; that where there is error, I may bring truth; that where there is doubt, I may bring faith; that where there is despair, I may bring hope; that where there are shadows, I may bring light. that where there is sadness, I may bring joy. Lord, grant that I may seek rather to comfort, than to be comforted; to understand, than to be understood; to love, than to be loved. For it is by self-forgetting, that one finds. It is by forgiving, that one is forgiven. It is by dying, that one awakens to Eternal Life. Amen.

--The Rev. Barbara K. Briggs, Rector

## **KAIROS KORNER**

Each Sunday morning our class time begins with gathering around our Christ candle and passing our prayer heart, each person sharing something that they would like to offer in prayer. The Christ candle reminds us that God is with us in our sacred space.

This Advent season the children are decorating candles to give as one-of-a-kind Christmas gifts to a special person that they would like to share the light of Christ with. All classes will decorate candles on December 10th and 17<sup>th</sup>. The candles will be blessed during the 10am service on Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup>.

## **Kairos Calendar**

December 3: Lessons, candle decorating  
December 10: Lessons, candle decorating  
December 17: Lessons, blessing of Christ candles  
December 24: NO CLASSES  
December 31: NO CLASSES



## **CHILDREN'S ADVENT SERVICE**

Advent is a time for getting ready to celebrate the mystery of Christmas! On **Wednesday, December 6<sup>th</sup> at 4:30pm**, we invite our children (and their adults!) to our Children's Advent Service where they will have the opportunity to build our crèche; our Nativity scene. This will be a very short service (30 minutes) so we hope you will be able to join us as we remember the Reason for this season of hope and joy!

## **KAIROS OUTREACH 2017**

The children of Kairos would like to thank all of you who contributed to this year's outreach project! Your food and monetary donations allowed us to assemble **319** children's meal bags for the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen! We are grateful for your generosity without which this meaningful project would not be possible.



## **CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE AND CHRISTMAS PLAY**

Rehearsals for the Christmas Eve Play will take place on Sundays, December 3rd, 10th & 17th directly following the 10am church service. The service will take place at 3 pm on December 24th. Performers and volunteers are asked to arrive at 1pm.

**Please join us December 24th at 3pm as the children present The Story of Christmas!**

# BLOG

## The Rector's Blog?

This has been a tough month for me. We have had to say goodbye to people we love at St. Matthew's. I feel sad when people die, move, or leave, and being sad makes me tired. But, today I woke up remembering the story of Abraham bargaining with God to save the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.<sup>1</sup> Remembering that story was like a light shining into my sadness and I was surprised by a wave of joy as I realized that there are far more than ten<sup>2</sup> people here, (and far more than Jesus' original twelve disciples, from whom an entire planet of Christian communities grew up). Suddenly, my sadness was gone and my fatigue was turned to energy, enthusiasm, and curiosity about how the Holy Spirit is molding us into God's community of the beloved.



### CHURCH BAZAAR

The Knitting Table at the St. Matthews Church Bazaar needs your help. If you can knit or crochet an item for us it would be great, we would love to have your donations. You can reach out to Carol Flanders, (609-882-4915) Carol Luling, (609-737-3833) or Barbara Von Oehsen (609-737-0002) for more information. (See details, below). Thank you.

### 2017 ST MATTHEWS ANNUAL CHRISTMAS BAZAAR IS THE SECOND WEEKEND OF DECEMBER!

**Bazaar Set-up:** Sunday, December 3rd 12pm in Belmont Hall, classrooms and multipurpose room (This will be going all week)

**Bazaar Date:** Saturday, December 9th, 10am-4pm

**Bazaar Post Sales and Takedown:** Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, after the 10am service and break down at 12pm

**Bazaar Contact:** Amanda Morrison, 468-3434 or [amandamorrison2008@gmail.com](mailto:amandamorrison2008@gmail.com)



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<sup>1</sup> Genesis 18:18-33

<sup>2</sup> Abraham bargains with the Lord to save the city if there are only ten righteous people left



## MUSIC

- Looking ahead to Advent & Christmas 2017...
- Sunday December 3, 2017 @ 4:00pm
- Our adult choir will combine with the adult choir of All Saints' Church, Princeton for a service of Choral Evensong for Advent. The service will be held at All Saints', and feature music of Parsons, Sanders and Dyson.
- Sunday December 17, 2017 @ 10am
- All of our choirs will offer music for our service of Lessons and Carols for Advent. Through readings and song, we tell the great story of the anticipation of the birth of Jesus. Music of Palestrina, contemporary American composer Carson Cooman and our own Jim Douglas.
- Sunday December 24, 2017 @ 3pm and 10pm
- Our choristers will offer music at the afternoon family service, and our adult and handbell choirs will offer music at the night service, with a 30 minute candlelit musical prelude prior to the start of the service.
- As we approach a new calendar year, please know that new members are always welcome in all of our choirs. Choristers (open to children in second grade and up) currently rehearse Wednesday afternoons from 4:15-5:15pm, adults (ages high school and up) who sing for Compline rehearse Wednesday nights from 7:30-8pm and adults in our adult choir (ages high school and up) rehearse Wednesday night's 8-9:30pm. Handbells (ages high school and up) rehearse every other Monday night 7-8:30pm. To learn more about our music ministry, or if you would like to try one of our choirs out, please do not hesitate to contact Director of Music Ministry Jim Douglas at [music@stmatthewspennington.org](mailto:music@stmatthewspennington.org) or speak with him at coffee hour after a 10am service on a Sunday morning. More information may also be found on the music ministry page on the church website or on the music bulletin board in the parish house (across from the bathrooms).

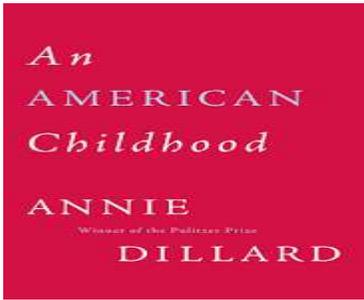
Best wishes to all this holiday season!

## ALTAR GUILD

Altar Guild is looking for new members. If you have an interest in being part of the group working "behind the scenes" to prepare the Lord's Table for our worship services, please contact Elizabeth McGuire at [609-737-1776](tel:609-737-1776), [elizabeth.davis.mcguire@gmail.com](mailto:elizabeth.davis.mcguire@gmail.com) or Sue Nelson at [609-397-9021](tel:609-397-9021), [sue.nelson929@gmail.com](mailto:sue.nelson929@gmail.com)



The Altar Guild will be having a meeting on Saturday, Dec. 2nd from 9-10:30 in Belmont Hall. We will be reviewing practices and looking ahead to our Christmas services. Please join us for snacks and conversation. If you have an interest in becoming a part of this group, this would be a perfect opportunity to learn more about what we do.



## **BOOK CLUB**

*An American Childhood* by Annie Dillard

Book Club Christmas Brunch 10:00 am, December 14  
at Christina Kales'

Dillard's luminous memoir of her childhood captures growing up in the 1950s in Pittsburg. Dillard's parents helped her acquire a love of nature and a taut sensitivity. The events of childhood often loom larger than life; the magic of Dillard's writing is that she sets down typical childhood happenings with their original immediacy and force.

## **DECEMBER LUNCHEON**

The December Ladies Luncheon will be held on Wednesday, December 13th at 12:30 in Belmont Hall. This will be a true potluck. We are also having a cookie exchange for anyone who is interested in participating. If you would like to take part in the cookie exchange, bake 2 dozen cookies and put 2 cookies per bag, having a total of 12 bags. Bring these to the luncheon and you will pick up 12 bags of assorted cookies of your choice to take home.

Please RSVP to Carol Flanders at [caf1118@aol.com](mailto:caf1118@aol.com) or 882-4915.



## **FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE:**

Pledge statements for the nine months ended September 30<sup>th</sup> were mailed out during the week of October 15<sup>th</sup>. Please review your statement to see if it matches your records and if you have questions or comments about the status of your payments email or call John Eckel our Recording Clerk ([n60aj@yahoo.com](mailto:n60aj@yahoo.com)) 609-737-8591. Although many pledgors are either ahead of their payment plan or on plan for the nine months, overall our pledge payments for the period ended September were significantly under our budget. If you are behind we would appreciate you meeting your full pledge during the last month of this year. If you have any questions about St. Matthew's finances contact Kevin Margiatto, Treasurer ([kmargiatto@withum.com](mailto:kmargiatto@withum.com)) or Bruce Weise, Vestry Member/Finance Chair ([finance@stmatthewspennington.org](mailto:finance@stmatthewspennington.org)) 609-737-1064.

## **DID YOU KNOW?**

- Instead of writing a check for your pledge payment or regular offering which is not a pledge many banks offer the service of mailing a check to St. Matthew's for a recurring amount on the frequency that you request. No check writing and you won't forget your pledge payment or regular offering! Contact your bank.
- Our Parish Life Guild is providing \$20,000 to our Operating Fund budget for 2017 and the primary source of their fund raising are the Spring and Fall Rummage Sales and the Christmas Bazaar. Please be generous in your support of Time, Treasure and Talent to these events.
- The flower arrangements each Sunday on our altar and for Christmas and Easter are funded by flower memorial donations in the name of family and friends made by parishioners prior to

Christmas and Easter. Look for instructions in the monthly newsletter and in the Sunday bulletin insert leading up to Christmas and Easter on how to make a flower memorial donation.

- That you may donate appreciated stock and not pay the capital gains tax? St. Matthew's gets the full market value of the stock and you get the full charitable deduction and meet your pledge or donation without paying the capital gains tax on the shares. Remember that the shares must have been held long term or greater than one year to qualify. Just send a letter of instructions to your broker specifying the specific shares and the date of purchase so you gift the most highly appreciated shares in your account. Contact your tax advisor for specific advice regarding your tax situation and deductions and contact John Eckel regarding your contribution and for instructions on where to have the stock sent.

### **PASTORAL CARE**

At some point everyone experiences difficult times in their lives. If you, your family or friends are going through a challenging time and need support please reach out to the pastoral care team. There are a number of ways in which the team can help - these include prayer, visits, providing prepared meals and/or driving assistance. These services could help provide a temporary bridge over a tough time. Please contact the parish office at [\(609\) 737-0985](tel:6097370985) to be put in touch with Rev. Barbara Briggs or other members of our pastoral care team - Sally Burkman, Linda Bucher, Lily Horsman, Dabby Palmer, Eleanor Pennington, Sally Barber or Anne Birkett.

**PRAYER CHAIN**--If you are in need of prayers, or maybe a Special Thanksgiving, call the Prayer Chain. This quiet ministry at St. Matthew's complimenting the bulletin listing and the Sunday Prayer Partners, is ready to offer immediate and confidential prayers for your intention. If this is something you ever need, please contact The Rev. Barbara Briggs, (609) 737-0985, Pam Worthington (609) 737-0985 or Sally Burkman at (609) 737-9495.

### **St. Matthew's Messenger in images?**

Our Newsletter is full of information about things to come. We would also like to include photos of things we have done together. Have you been involved in something exciting or meaningful through St. Matthew's? Do you have photos of the event? If so, please submit to Pam a photo with a caption for inclusion in the Newsletter. Thank-you!

### **Music Ministry**

A look back at the fall of 2017...



The chancel just prior to the start of Evening Candlelit Compline (last Wednesdays of the month during program year @ 7:30pm).



Parishioner Dr. Nora Sirbaugh, music professor at TCNJ, leading a group voice lesson with members of our adult choir during their fall retreat, September 2017.



Members of our adult choir along with choir members from St. Stephen's Pro-Cathedral, Wilkes-Barre, PA and the Church of the Holy Spirit, Harleysville, PA, following a service of Choral Evensong at the Cathedral



**LOGOS** gratitude celebration and session with trivia game, Bible study and prayer on the theme of being thankful. November, 2017



**GRATEFUL GIVING  
SUNDAY BRUNCH  
CELEBRATION**

prepared by the Lorenz family and served by parish leaders, including wardens, former wardens, vestry members, and stewardship team members



**New this Fall:** Guests and newcomers to St. Matthew's have been receiving a gift mug with a contact card and a brief introduction to our parish. Thank-you, welcome team!