



The GOOD NEWSLETTER

of
Saint Matthew Lutheran Church
Springfield, Pennsylvania

Volume 64, Number 4

April 2012

Internet Web Site: www.stmattspringfield.org

From Our Pastor



*"For the word of the LORD is upright,
and all his work is done in faithfulness.
He loves righteousness and justice; the
earth is full of the steadfast love of the
LORD." - Psalm 33:4-5*

The third Mark of Discipleship is "Read Scripture daily." This third mark closes out the first of Mike Foss's acronym "PoWeR" (Pray daily, Worship weekly, Read daily) SuRGe (Serve, Spiritual Relationships, Give generously.) It helps us remember that our true source of power and strength comes from living in the first of the great commandments, "Love God."

We cannot truly know God if we do not engage in the relationship God starts with us in baptism into Christ Jesus. We have reflected on how prayer is crucial, as it is the way in which we talk with God. We have been reminded how important it is to worship, and be in the presence of God with God's people. Here we are reminded that where we learn of God, and how God interacts with us, is in God's Holy Word. It is one thing to speak of another, but if we want to know what someone is truly like, we look to what they say and do. The Bible allows us this chance with God.

If you have not been a big Bible reader in the past, it can be rather intimidating to start. Reading Scripture can be intimidating even for those who have read the Bible! But there are some basics you can keep in mind as you try to grow in the spiritual discipline of Reading Scripture daily.

1. The Bible is a written account of God's interaction with the people of Faith. It is not truly a history, although there are historical events throughout. It is not a direct account of what happened, or exactly how things happened, as much as it is a record of Who made things happen (the Lord,) and how God acts on behalf of, and for the sake of those who trust in him. It is a story of faith, meant to inspire faith in those

who read its stories.

2. The Bible is not really one book. It is a library of books, written by many different people, each with a different "voice" and perspective on God. Many books themselves are combinations of stories from several writers. This is why the Bible seems to contradict itself at times. If you can see the stories as different witnesses to one divine being, it is amazing how these varied voices paint a fuller, rather consistent picture of the nature of God.
3. The Bible shows that the basic nature of God is mercy, rather than anger (even in the Old Testament!) Though there are stories of the wrath of God, generally God is a God of grace who expresses wrath only after much patience, and then most often against the enemies of his faithful people.
4. I find it nearly impossible to read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. In fact, I have never made it from front to back in one continuous effort. I would never discourage those who wish to try this discipline, but neither would I suggest it as the way in which one needs to read the Bible.

If you are new to reading Scripture, I would start with one of four books: in the Old Testament I would read the book of Genesis; and in the New Testament the Gospels of Matthew or John or the Acts of the Apostles. Each of these are books with action and narrative that is easy to read, and which give a good sense of the nature of God. Genesis shows how God first establishes a relationship with the world, and continues to call out to the world to live in relationship with him. The Gospels of Matthew and John show how God reaches out to the world by coming in the person of Jesus, bridging in his body the gap that sin continues to keep between God and humanity. The Acts of the Apostles show the work of the early church in the days after Jesus rose from the dead and ascended to Heaven.

The last note I would make is that it is good to read on

one's own, but it is important then to explore what you read with other people of faith, particularly those in the church whom you know can be trusted to help you discern what these words mean. It can be very easy to become confused, afraid, or even misguided in what certain passages mean if we try to interpret them on our own. This is why even pastors get together with others to pray over and discern the Bible together. It is a book of the People of Faith, and needs to be interpreted and implemented in the community of faith. As Jesus says in Matthew 18, wherever two or more of you are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of you.

Reading Scripture allows us to hear the story of God, and to allow ourselves to be taught by his presence. May you be blessed as you grow in the mark of Reading Scripture, daily.

In the Word of God,
Pastor Karl M. Richard

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Important Information from the Worship and Music Committee

We reiterate the schedule of services and events through Easter as follows:

Palm Sunday - April 1

- 8 a.m. spoken service with Eucharist and distribution of palms
- Sunday Bible School at 8:45 a.m. with distribution of palms
- 10 a.m. Festival Service with Eucharist and distribution of palms
- 6 p.m. Faith, Alive! Service with Eucharist and distribution of palms

Maundy Thursday, April 5

- Noon spoken service with Eucharist
- 7 p.m. service with Eucharist and Stripping of the Altar

Good Friday, April 6

- Noon Community service with combined choirs
- 7 p.m. service with Choir

Saturday Easter Vigil - April 7

- 7 p.m. Easter Vigil service, incorporating the Service of Light, with Eucharist, hymns and readings

Easter Sunday, April 8

- 8 a.m. Easter Breakfast in Parish Education Wing
- 9 a.m. Festival Service with Eucharist and adult choir and music ensemble
- 11 a.m. Festival Service with Eucharist and adult choir and music ensemble
- 6 p.m. Faith, Alive! Service with Eucharist
- First Communion for children who have received instruction, at all services

Please mark your calendars, and plan to be with us during these important times in your life and the life of the Church!

- Jeff Wesley

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Church Council Members for 2012

Church Council Members for the year 2012 are:

Craig Gardner
Fran Gordon, Recording Secretary
Joy Grace, Council Vice President
Meredith Harris
Barbara Kinsey
Phil Kline
Rick Link
Marti Millington
Carol Penjuka
Joe Regan
Tom Savage
Jeff Wesley

Lance Miller, Congregational Treasurer
Gary Gordon, Financial Secretary

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Christian Education

No Sunday School classes will be held on Easter. Services will be held at 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. in addition to the Faith, Alive! Service at 6:00 p.m.

On April 15 there will be a Sunday School teachers meeting at 8:45 a.m. in the Parlor. All teachers and substitute teachers are encouraged to attend. We will be discussing the six marks of discipleship as described in Michael Foss' book *Power Surge*. While the teachers are meeting, children in the Sunday School classes will be introduced to the upcoming Vacation Bible School program "SKY." A craft will also be included as part of this program. Extra hands are needed to assist the children on that day. Please contact Carol Penjuka at churchbiddy3@aol.com or Julie Cirillo at manoa1stgrade@hotmail.com if you are able to help out during the Sunday School hour.

Mark your calendars now for Vacation Bible School. The theme is "SKY" and promises to be a fun time for all. Sessions will be held from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m. Monday through Friday starting on July 30. Many adults will be needed to help supervise the children at their various stations. If you can help or have questions about the program, please contact Julie Cirillo at manoalstgrade@hotmail.com.

- Carol Penjoke

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Financial Updates

General Fund:

Thank you for your ongoing support of our ministry. Though we are a little behind income to expenses, we are off to a good start this year. It is important to remember that we continue to need your ongoing financial support in as generous a way as you are able to share it.

	February	Year to Date
Total Income:	\$34,189	\$77,515
Total Expenses	<u>39,260</u>	<u>80,600</u>
Surplus/(Deficit)	(\$5,071)	(\$3,085)

Restoration Project:

In addition to our general expenses, our Restoration Project continues, and needs your financial support. While the Heating and Air Conditioning phase is coming to an end, we are continuing to work on some plumbing issues, including storm pumps and sewer ejector pumps. We have begun to do some of the interior painting. We are getting estimates on replacing the rotting windows and doors of the parish education wing. We are getting estimates on the landscaping of the courtyard. And we have the organ repairs coming early next year which will cost \$168,000, but for which we will need a 30% down payment in the very near future.

We have been receiving steady receipts from our members toward the Restoration Project. So far, of the \$287,335 that was pledged, we have received approximately \$117,000. We have also received generous, ongoing financial support from many of our members who did not make a pledge, but who are making regular use of the almond colored "building fund" envelope in your monthly packet. This has been a huge help.

We have drawn \$877,000 of the amount available to us from our "line of credit" so far. We are hoping not to have to draw any more and, in fact, would love to be able to repay a significant portion of this "interest only" loan before it locks into a regular mortgage. This lock comes this fall. The more money we raise in offerings before that date, the better chance we have of locking in at a lower amount. At the annual meeting, we heard how each

dollar that we borrow is more than 2 dollars we will have to pay back over the life of the mortgage. \$50,000 borrowed means more than \$100,000 owed! As a result, we are counting on the generosity of our members and friends to help us keep the debt we will incur as low as possible.

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Educational Opportunities

New member orientation sessions will be held beginning April 22, and run for four weeks. Anyone interested in joining our membership is encouraged to attend. In these sessions we will discuss what we as a church believe, and how we are working to fulfill our calling as people of Christ. Reception into membership of those who decide they are interested would be Pentecost Sunday, May 27. We will meet in the library at 8:45 during the Sunday School hour.

Bible Study resumes on Wednesday, April 18, at 6:30 a.m and 12:00 noon. Join us as we explore together what God has to say to us today by looking at what he has said to his people in former times. We will be looking at the book of 1 Peter. Join us in the library for engaging conversation and lots of fellowship with each other and with the Lord!

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Children's Corner

Dear Children,

Have you ever been afraid of thunder, lightning, wind, or very loud noises? Well, our journey with Moses from Egypt had some unusual events - remember the burning bush, the angel, the drowning of Pharaoh's men - the rather **frightening** events have not stopped. You see, after Moses left Egypt (remember the cruel Pharaoh?) and had safely arrived in the desert near Mount Sinai, one morning the people heard a loud crash of thunder, many streaks of lightning appeared in the sky, and a deafening blast of a trumpet! Smoke poured out as the mountain shook. The people were terrified, but Moses knew that the Lord was calling him. You see, God wasn't finished with Moses just yet. Moses went up on the mountain where God talked to the people of Israel:

I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt
Do not worship any god but me.
Do not misuse my name.
Remember to keep the Sabbath holy.
Respect your mother and your father.
Do not murder.
Be faithful in marriage.
Do not steal.
Do not tell lies about others.
Do not want something that someone else has.

These are the **laws** (The Ten Commandments) that God gave to Moses and his people. Some of these laws are about our duties to God, the others are about how we should treat our neighbors. Can you ever imagine our school, our home, our city our country without any laws? It would be very chaotic; and we would never learn anything, or behave in a responsible manner.

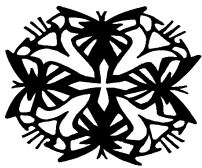
As Moses continued his journey towards the Promised Land, he encountered many obstacles, but he never stopped trusting God. I always felt sad that Moses died before he reached his journey's end, but he certainly was a good and faithful servant of the Lord.

Dear Parents,

The saga of Moses is a wonderful opportunity to teach children about following God's law, the oppression of people, and ways that God speaks to us. A map of the Mid-East would be helpful in locating Egypt, Israel, the Red Sea, and Mount Sinai. Trace the journey from Egypt to Israel reminding them of the ways of travel in those days. We have a few books published by the American Bible Society in our library and *Moses, the Deliverance of Israel and God's Commands* is an excellent resource for reading and dialogue.

- Sylvia Yost

It's Time to Order Easter Lilies



The Season of
Easter

Easter lilies that beautify our sanctuary and parlor may now be ordered by signing up in the church hallway or calling the church office. The cost of each plant is \$7.50, and it may be taken home following the 11:00 a.m. Easter service. The last day to order lilies is Sunday, April 1. Thank you.

FEDS (Seniors' Group)

The FEDS (Fellowship, Education, Devotion and Service) group has the following meetings planned for April and May:

April 5 - Ginger Mollichella, Vocalist/entertainer will dazzle us with songs, dance, silly hats, trivia questions, and prizes. "We don't sing because we're happy, we're happy because we sing."

April 19 - Change in Program - We will be entertained by the always popular Peggy Escher and her always popular Chalk Talk.

May 3 - John Engelbrecht will present a program about his recent trip to Germany to visit his ancestral homeland and relatives.

May 17 - End of the year luncheon TBA.

- John Stefl

Men's Breakfast

Our April Men's Breakfast will be held at Saint Matthew on Saturday, April 21, at 7:30 a.m. All men are invited to join us for breakfast, morning devotions, a great speaker, and good fellowship. Please come and enjoy an excellent way to start the day.

Saint Matthew Christian Nursery School News



Well, it certainly feels like spring has sprung! The children have been busy with fun activities as they await its arrival. All of our classes are hatching butterflies from larvae, they are so excited. They are well on their way to hopefully be released as butterflies the first week of April. The children will also be planting seeds to celebrate new life. Our bikes, scooters, and sand boxes are ready to go; this is an exciting time of year for our Nursery School. Our school will be closed for Spring Break the week of April 2 and reopen April 10. We wish everyone a blessed Easter. Happy Spring!

- Linda M. Maylie, Director

Social Ministry

Thank you to everyone who donated items for the breakfast bags that we assembled for Aid for Friends. We were able to make 31 bags at our meeting in March.

We also want to thank those who went with Rick Link to Loaves and Fishes in March to help with the packing of the boxes of food that are distributed to the clients that use the food pantry. The next group will meet at the church on **Thursday, April 19, at 6:40** and carpool. Please contact Rick Link if you have questions or can assist with this project. We continue to collect food and kitchen items for Loaves and Fishes. The food collected for the Souper Bowl of Caring has been depleted, so please remember those less fortunate in our community when you shop.

We wish our congregation a very blessed Easter.

- Cheryl Morrell

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Welcome, Pat McHugh!

This may seem a strange thing to say to someone who has been with us for many years. Yet we say “welcome” to Pat, because she has now been appointed to be our new Organist and Choir Director.

In January, Kate Egoul had requested an unpaid leave of absence. Kate was working on some personal issues, and felt that she needed some time to work those things out so she could be fully present in her work here at Saint Matthew. After a few weeks it became apparent that returning to her position as our musician was less likely than she had planned. The concerns she was working through required more attention than time would permit her with her full-time job and this part-time position both in the mix. Consequently, we have come to an understanding that we would allow her to bow out of the role of our musician.

The Mutual Ministry Committee and the Council have agreed to offer the position to our own Pat McHugh, who has been our regular “substitute” organist for some time, and who has been filling in for these past several weeks during Kate’s unpaid sabbatical. We are delighted to report that Pat has accepted. In order to minimize some of the stressors which played a role in Kate’s need to transition out, we have redefined the position, removing some of the responsibilities previously expected.

Pat has a Bachelor of Music Education degree from Mount Mercy College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and studied organ for many years. She is a longtime Lutheran who knows our liturgical tradition very well. She brings a strong love for music and for worship, and has the respect and affection of our choir. She will be a delightful addition to our church staff, and so we say, “Welcome, Pat McHugh!”

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Thrivent Choice

You may be aware, but Thrivent has changed the way it allocates its charitable contributions. If you have a qualifying financial instrument through Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, you can decide where your portion of the distribution will go. One thing that is new is that it can now be designated for your congregation if you so choose. The program is called “Thrivent Choice,” and you can make your selection via their website Thrivent.com/ThriventChoice. The phone number for Thrivent is 1-800-847-4836. If you so choose, this is an easy way for Saint Matthew to get another few dollars each quarter from our Lutheran Fraternal organization.

Women of the ELCA News

Greetings, Sisters in Christ! This Spring-like weather is just superb, isn’t it, and to think that the Spring season begins on March 20. We have certainly been blessed with an unbelievably “less than cold” winter this year. I’m sure we welcomed it with open arms - it was a welcome treat!

We want to remind the congregation that Sister Sally from Silver Springs - Martin Luther School will be our guest speaker for our Women’s Sunday on April 15 for both services (8 a.m. and 10 a.m.) We look forward to meeting her and to hear her message for the day! There will be special envelopes to collect an offering for Silver Springs - Martin Luther School. You will not want to miss this special Sunday and to join in fellowship and friendship following the services at a “light refreshments” gathering. Both church services will have women of Saint Matthew Church serving as greeters, ushers, readers, worship assistants, communion servers, etc. This special service is held every year on the first Sunday following Easter Sunday.

On Saturday, April 21, the Delaware Conference of the Women of the ELCA will be held at Saint Matthew Lutheran Church, Woodlyn. Registration is at 10 a.m. followed by Brunch and Program. We hope there will be a good representation from our church - there will be more information and a sign-up sheet on the table in the hallway. We will be carpooling to the meeting.

On Saturday, June 9, the 18th Convention of the SE PA Women of the ELCA will be held at Saint John’s Lutheran Church in Phoenixville, PA. We are pleased that Joy Grace will be our delegate to this convention and we look forward to Joy sharing with us her experiences of the day.

The schedule for the month of April is as follows:

April 8	Easter
April 11	Board Meeting - 3:30 p.m.
April 14	LWR Quilting - 10:30 a.m.
April 15	Women’s Sunday Church Services
April 18	Ronald McDonald Quilting - 10 a.m.
April 24	Sarah Circle - 7:30 p.m.
April 25	Esther Circle - 10 a.m. (New Time)

- Dee Bratz and the Executive Board

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Women’s Retreat

The Women’s Discussion Group is planning a one-day retreat for April 28. Pastor Leslie Richard will be presenting the program on Love and Friendship, based on the book *Four Loves* by C. S. Lewis. If you are interested in attending, more information will be available soon. Please contact Nancy Regan. Hope to see you then.

- Nancy Regan

Monthly Mailbag

Dear Friends at Saint Matthew Lutheran Church,



Thank you so very much for the large print Bible. I have several Bibles, but not one in large print. I have been at Saint Matthew for almost fifteen years and have been very happy here. You have made my move at an older age very easy. I love the people here very much.

Sincerely,
Bennie Lybrand

* * *

Dear Pastor Richard,

Thank you for introducing us to God's Family with such welcoming arms through holy baptism. Thank you for the precious gifts to remember this blessed day. The blankets will be used fondly and the shells will help us remember what baptism is.

Thank you again and God bless,
Adelynn and Jackson Graff

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Dear Friends at Saint Matthew,

How blessed I am to have my wonderful Saint Matthew Lutheran Church family. The phone chats with Pastor Richard, receiving the altar flowers and then the lovely planter from our choir certainly was a pleasure. I thank everyone from the bottom of my heart.

The knee surgery for the torn meniscus turned out to be more than I anticipated, but I'm doing fine.

With God's Love,
Janice Sadowski

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Dear Sarah and Esther Circles,

Yea for another delivery of sweet treats for the children in residence at Silver Springs! (And thank you also for more wrapping paper too!) We are very grateful for your kindness generosity, and faithfulness to our special boys and girls!

Fondly, as always,
Joan Plump
Silver Springs - Martin Luther School

Fellowship Ministry

The newly formed Fellowship Ministry met for the first time in early February, and we've been off and running ever since! We've hosted two successful coffee hours and a delicious Soup for the Soul luncheon. We've received lots of positive feedback, and we're looking forward to more fun events in the future.

March Madness, a good old-fashioned potluck and game night, is planned for March 24, and we're hoping to report in the next newsletter that it was a tremendous success. As of this writing we have two more events tentatively planned for April. Get ready for Pizza and Bingo on April 20 and another tasty coffee hour on Earth Day, April 22.

The Fellowship Ministry members are: Karen Allen, Helen DeMott, Karen DiSanto, Joy Grace, Beth Hale, and Jennifer Trimble with Janice Gardner assisting the group in an unofficial capacity. We're always looking for volunteers to cook, bake, and set-up or clean up events. If you're willing to help make our next event a success, please contact Helen DeMott at helendemott@gmail.com.

- Jennifer Trimble

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Vital Statistics

Baptisms: **Adelynn Claudia Graff**
Jackson Howard Graff
Children of Andrew and Michelle Graff
Born October 18, 2011
Baptized February 26, 2012

Josselyn Grace Hickey
Daughter of Jessica Hickey
Born September 15, 2011
Baptized February 26, 2012

60th Wedding

Anniversary: Mr. and Mrs. James Kerchner
April 19, 2012

Change to Directory:

Mrs. Florence Regan
Residence at Glen Riddle
Assisted Living - Rm. 252
263 Glen Riddle Road
Media, PA 19063

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Health and Healing

We ask you to remember all those who are ill, as well as those who mourn the loss of a loved one, in your thoughts and prayers. We also remember and pray for the homeless, the hungry, and all of the men and women serving in our armed forces.

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The Good Newsletter, a congregational newsletter, is published monthly, September through June by Saint Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church, 400 Lynbrooke Road, Springfield, Pennsylvania 19064-3599. Please direct all correspondence pertaining to this publication to the Editor, Dr. Carl E. Aronson, at the above address. The deadline for submitting copy is 12 noon on the 15th of each month.

