

# 2023 Annual Report



Presented at the 148th Annual Parish Meeting  
January 28, 2024



**SAINT MATTHEW'S**  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

# SAINT MATTHEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

## 2023 Annual Report

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### 2024 ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA

Meeting Our Liminal Moment with Faith

1. Opening Prayer/Words of Gratitude
2. Approval of the Minutes for 147th Annual Meeting
3. Special Thanksgivings
4. Report from the Co-Treasurers
5. Election of Officers
  - Vestry Officers & Members
  - Trustees of the Endowment
  - Delegation to Annual Diocesan Convention
6. Address by the Outgoing Senior Warden
7. Address by the Incoming Senior Warden
8. Closing Prayer & Dismissal

**Welcoming all in community;  
joyfully doing God's work in the world.**

# Rector's Report

Submitted by: *The Rev. Charles A. de Kay*

Every year I'm struck at how we have just the right people in place when opportunities arise and when challenges strike. Every year it has been true. Absolutely true. God is with us, I am certain, time and again.

I am so very grateful to our leaders, both the official ones and the unofficial ones, and to all who work and give so generously of themselves to our call to follow Jesus. I am grateful for your compassion, your insight, your wisdom, and your integrity. Following Jesus has never been easy – the man himself demonstrated how difficult it could be. But as Christians we have come to realize that there is no greater, more joyful, more rewarding life. We have been weathering the multiple storms of recent years with incredible grace and truth.

Now, we have come to the long-projected "Crossroads." As we prepare for our sesquicentennial celebration – 150 years of St. Matthew's in Evanston in 2026 – we recognize that these years in which we prepare for that great celebration, these years will also determine what the next period in the history of our church will look like.

We are not, of course, starting from scratch. St. Matthew's has been in preparation mode for this moment for more than a decade with our "4-Church Conversations," our study of *Canoeing the Mountains* and *Radical Welcome*. Even before I arrived in 2011, preparations were being made for some kind of re-imagining of the multiple churches in Evanston and our immediate environs. St. Matthew's has spent years laying a foundation to meet the future that now feels imminent.

In addition to our signature partnership with St. Andrew's Pentecost Episcopal Church, St. Matthew's has built collaborative partnerships both within the Episcopal framework –

the 4-church conversations, leading to collaborative worship in the summer, over our High Holy Days, and moments when in times of crisis the larger church calls (such as following the Hamas attack on Israel), confirmation, feeding the hungry at our Wednesday Lunch Program, ministries with refugees and immigrants, support for the Race Against Hate (even as St. Matthew's has become a singular champion of that event) and the YWCA's antiracist efforts, Sacred Ground – the Episcopal Church's antiracism training program, new Cross Quarter Day Events bridging environmental sustainability with formation and fun, helping other churches develop their own Green Teams –

and the wider Interfaith Community –

responding rapidly to events impacting our community with collaborative rallies and demonstrations, particularly around violence against vulnerable populations, a tremendously successful Reparations initiative that parallels Evanston's historic municipal effort, support for Interfaith Action of Evanston (from supplying Port-o-Potties during the pandemic when libraries and other institutions were closed, to collaborative worship experiences at Thanksgiving and Martin Luther King weekend, to participating in Interfaith Action's annual fundraiser, the Vision Keeper Dinner) –



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we have been building a supportive network of relationships, where trust and reliability are paramount. As we move deeper into this challenging time, we have friends across the community that we can turn to for advice, counsel, and support. Many of them are facing identical problems. Alone we are vulnerable, together we are much stronger, much more agile.

The pandemic has been something of a perfect storm on the church. It has changed life as we know it in countless ways, both devastating and life-giving. The Church writ large, the original institution, like many institutions (including our system of government), the Church has been hit particularly hard. We don't yet know the full extent of the damage – will this be a mortal wound? – but the Church is in crisis. St. Matthew's, while not currently in imminent danger, is showing her scars. We are fewer in numbers than pre-pandemic, and that is stretching us to manage as we are accustomed to manage. We have been adapting for years – consider the introduction of adult acolytes to our primary Sunday service. Much more adaptation will be required.

Our situation while truly very serious is not dire. So, while we have lost many families to moving away, to aging and death, to changes in places in life, and most troubling to getting out of the habit of Sunday participation due to the stresses and restrictions of the pandemic, it is worth noting that we continue to draw new people to our community through our renewed emphasis on radical welcome and generous hospitality, our stances on questions of justice and liberation, our investment in ministry with those generally denied access, and our authentic and beautiful worship.

We are welcoming, baptizing, forming, confirming, marrying, reconciling, and burying members of our community with love and integrity in a way that continues to bring life and freedom in Christ. Our worship, now regularly livestreamed, provides comfort and inspiration and beauty and joy with high production value to those inside and outside our doors. We have not simply been losing our step; we have been finding new ones, too.

And still the tides continue to pull away from communities of faith. Religion is waning locally and across the country. We see the impact in the loss of respect for the dignity of others, departures from basic ethics and common decency, and the hallowing out of communities, increased isolation and mistrust, and a new embrace of the evils of selfishness and greed.

St. Matthew's offers a vital counterbalance to these impacts. We have work to do. We have been called to rise above such hard smallness with an ethic of "Love is an Action" and in our embrace of radical welcome we offer compassion and hope and community to all who recognize the hunger in their souls to reconnect with God.

We are smaller today than a decade ago. We are finding it harder to full staff the positions that used to be supported in abundance. With our smaller numbers comes less financial support. We can only ask our faithful remnant to do what they can (but we must do that – and to the fullest). Yes, we look different and it feels different to be here today.

But we have some remarkable things going for us.

# Rector's Report

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We have great people. Our folks are among the smartest, most creative, most resourceful, most reliable I've ever met. That applies both to members and to our staff. Our staff are always stretching themselves. St. Matthew's gets unprecedented value out of our staff. We will need to continue to grow the ways that we know how to tap into the gifts of the membership. That will have to be a community effort, and not simply a new expectation of the staff. I know our members are amazing people, who have more to give, we need only discern who are the right people to ask, encourage, and inspire to make St. Matthew's a center for their volunteerism.

We can do hard things. We can expand our expectations of each other and of ourselves. We can dig deep, live sacrificially to meet our call to be following Christ Jesus and bringing forth God's kingdom to light in our corner of northwest Evanston.

You can trust that Terri, Mark, Julie, Gregory, Sam, Jorge, and I are giving St. Matthew's 110 percent. You have our full commitment; you always have. If we are to bridge this liminal moment, this turning point into a bright new future – whatever that means (and looking to the past will not give us those answers) – we need the commitment of the hearts and souls of all of us. As our friend Rev. Michael Nabors of Second Baptist likes to say, we may not have it all together, but together we have it all.

We have everything we need to fulfill God's call. No effort made sincerely and faithfully is ever wasted. Let us joyfully get about doing God's will in the world. St. Matthew's is on the verge of something. I don't know what it is. I don't think anyone does. Let's find out together. And, let's make sure it's something great. Something joyful. Something we can all look upon with pride and satisfaction.

With you on the journey,  
Charlie



# Senior Warden's Report

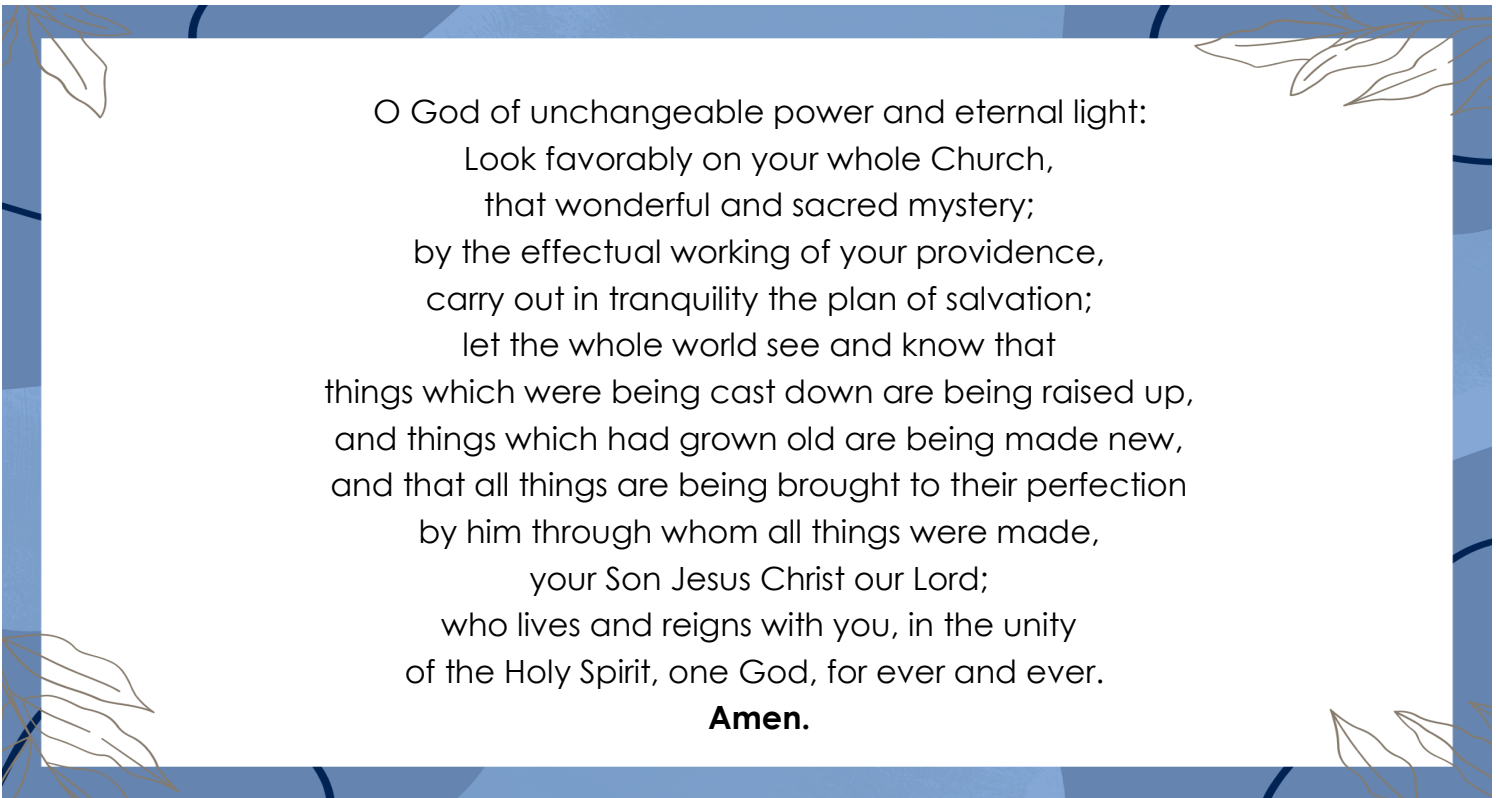
Submitted by: *Damon Doucet*

St. Matthew's has weathered many challenges in the last few years due to the Pandemic and it was my goal, as senior warden, to begin to rekindle the spirit of fellowship as we once again gather and move forward toward an unknown future. In that spirit, we held our annual Gala which featured a wonderful band from Nashville, "Six One Five Collective", with food provided by Harold's Chicken Shack together with Hyacinth Grey's wonderful Jamaican cookies and buy-in parties sponsored by members of the parish along with a fifty-fifty raffle. The event was a hit and a good time was had by all.

The second event promoting fellowship was the return of the St. Nicholas Brunch which featured scrambled eggs, sausage links (both meat and meatless), assorted fresh fruit, orange juice and coffee. The brunch was well attended and the parish hall was alive once again with the sound of conversation and the warmth of the Season with seasonal music provided by Tim Patenode, Jim Kelly, and Curt Nilsson.

Neither of these events could have happened without the generous donations of time and money provided by the members of our congregation. Thank you for the support I received while serving in my office.

Warmest Regards,  
Damon Doucet



O God of unchangeable power and eternal light:  
Look favorably on your whole Church,  
that wonderful and sacred mystery;  
by the effectual working of your providence,  
carry out in tranquility the plan of salvation;  
let the whole world see and know that  
things which were being cast down are being raised up,  
and things which had grown old are being made new,  
and that all things are being brought to their perfection  
by him through whom all things were made,  
your Son Jesus Christ our Lord;  
who lives and reigns with you, in the unity  
of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

**Amen.**

# Deacon's Report

Submitted by: *The Rev. Terri Morrissey*

*The candle that we received at our baptism is the abiding sign for us of what a life of faith is meant to be. Sometimes it burns more brightly than others, but we never see very far ahead. I believe God wants it to be like that. However frustrating it may be, God wants us to take these important steps in life, in faith and trust. It can be frightening to step out and put our hand in the hand of God.*

-Br. Geoffrey Tristram,  
Society of Saint John the Evangelist

As I read Br. Geoffrey's reflection on faith, his words seemed to echo my own journey with God. It is a journey that has been guided by the promises made in our Baptismal Covenant and the call to love one another as Christ loved us. My faith journey eventually led me to discern the call to become a deacon. My call has been clear and steadfast throughout years of discernment, study, field education, postulancy, candidacy, and ordination to the diaconate. I am thankful for all who have walked alongside me on my journey of faith.

## **What is the ministry of a deacon?**

Deacons have played a role in the life of the church from the early days of Christianity. In Chapter 6 of Acts (Acts 6:1-6), the twelve called together the whole community of disciples to select "seven men of good standing, full of the Spirit and of wisdom..." There have been many "waves" of deacons since the first seven were called. A renewal of the order of deacons began with the advent of the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer*\*. The current role of deacons continues to be interpreted and integrated into the life of the church.

Deacons have a number of roles within the church, in the community and in the diocese. One of the most visible roles that a deacon has is within the liturgy. It is the deacon who proclaims the Gospel, preaches on occasion, sets the Eucharistic table, and dismisses the gathered congregation at the end of the service. In all of these roles, the deacon serves as an icon of Christ's diaconal ministry. The deacon also serves as a bridge between the church and the world, and at the dismissal calls the people of God to a life of service in the world.

*Diakonia* is a Greek word that is defined as sacred agency, and points toward the work of deacons among the baptized. One of the roles of a deacon is to lead, equip, empower, encourage, and support Christian people in their ministry. All Christian people are called to serve Christ by virtue of their baptism and have a responsibility to share in the ministry of Christ in the world.

Deacons are also involved in pastoral care and "hold space" for others through their gift of presence, prayer and their willingness to walk alongside others on their journeys. It is a ministry of meeting people where they are, without judging them, or trying to fix them, or to influence the outcomes; recognizing that in all ministry, we are channels of God's abundant grace.

While the ministry of a deacon shines a light on the needs of God's people, it is also important to recognize that a deacon is called to serve in direct relationship to the bishop. Because of this special connection, a deacon reports annually to the bishop and on occasion serves alongside the bishop. The work of a deacon is also non-stipendiary.

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*\*The Ordination of a Deacon begins on page 537 in The Book of Common Prayer.*

## **Staff and Worship**

Throughout 2023, I served in worship, participated in staff meetings on a weekly basis and have preached somewhat regularly. I look forward to gathering for our weekly staff meetings on Zoom and other members of our staff. I am thankful for all of you and all that you share with the community at St. Matthew's. With the help of this talented staff, I have increased my knowledge of liturgy, helped plan worship, and have become comfortable with the use of livestreaming.

I had the privilege of serving as deacon alongside the Rt. Rev. Paula Clark, Bishop of the Diocese of Chicago and the Rt. Rev. Douglas Sparks, the Bishop of Indiana on Saturday, May 20<sup>th</sup> at a diocesan Confirmation Service held at St. James Cathedral. There were 60 people confirmed or received into the Episcopal Church on this occasion.

Beyond St. Matthew's, I have attended monthly meetings of the Evanston Interfaith Clergy and Leaders (EICL), the Evanston Deanery, Diocesan Clergy

and Leadership calls (Zoom) and Deacons Gatherings (Zoom). I also attended our virtual Diocesan Convention on November 17 and 18. On November 17, I was a panelist at the Sanctuary Task Force Convention Workshop at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Downers Grove. I presented the work that the St. Andrew's Pentecost – St. Matthew's Partnership Team had done during our Co-Sponsorship with RefugeeOne.

## **Pastoral Care**

When the pandemic made it necessary to suspend most in-person gatherings, it did not stop the work of ministry. For more than 20 years, and as a deacon, I have been called to a ministry of pastoral care, which is about building relationships and walking the path of love with others. I have continued this work with parishioners, families, and caregivers - by phone, and whenever possible, in person. Presiding Bishop Curry would call this "navigating with God's GPS." It's a space filled with God's abundant grace and where transformation can take place.

## **Shared Ministries and Continuing Education**

I continue to lead Stephen Ministry along with Steve Steiber and coordinate our Home Communion Ministry. I am also a member of the St. Andrew's Pentecost - St. Matthew's Partnership Team, the St. Andrew's Pentecost – St. Matthew's Co-Sponsorship Team with RefugeeOne, the Co-Sponsorship Mentor Team, a member of the Antiracism Team, and a Co-facilitator for Sacred Ground. I also participated in *United Against Hate along Ridge Avenue on April 27, the Race Against Hate and the Mass on the Grass at 6:45am on June 18, and the Pet Blessing at 3:00pm on October 8*. In the fall, I joined the Green Team in their effort to begin the transformation of St. Matthew's backyard into a native plant and pollinator garden.

## **Partnership Team**

Throughout the year, my continuing education efforts have been focused on the social justice issues that have been identified by the St. Andrew's Pentecost – St. Matthew's Partnership Team, specifically immigration and refugees. Our work around immigration, asylum seekers, DACA, recipients, and



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refugees led us to a Co-Sponsorship with RefugeeOne. (See Cynthia Doucet's Reports about our Partnership Team and Co-Sponsorship). In the months leading up to the arrival of the refugee family at O'Hare on June 7, 2022, I participated in RefugeeOne training for Mentors and met with Co-Sponsorship Team members to plan for what the family would need. As a member of the Mentor Team, I have taken turns visiting Maua and her family with other team members on a regular basis. A *Prayer of St. Chrysostom* from the Book of Common Prayer states "Almighty God...you have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name you will be in the midst of them...". God's love has been in our midst and continues to light the way forward. We have been able to communicate with the help of family members who speak some English and in Swahili with the help of Google Translate. On June 2, 2023, the Partnership Team, the Mentor Team, members of St. Andrew's Pentecost, and members of St. Matthew's gathered at the Skokie Sports Park to celebrate the One Year Anniversary of the

family's arrival. It was a joyous summer evening!! I am thankful for Maua and her beautiful family, our Mentor Team, our Partnership Team, our Co-Sponsorship Team, the amazing team at RefugeeOne led by Kelli Wendt, and by the faith communities at St. Andrew's Pentecost and St. Matthew's. Thanks be to God for all of you!

## **Uncaged Art**

In November, the Partnership Team along with Open Studio in Evanston co-sponsored *UNCAGED ART*, which featured the artwork that was created by youth at the Tornillo Children's Detention Camp in West Texas. I assisted the loading in of the exhibit. The

opening reception was on November 4 and it ran through November 13. St. Matthew's member, Craige Christensen is on the diocesan Sanctuary Task Force, and she helped to facilitate our partnership with Open Studio. Thank you, Craige!

## **Sacred Ground**

The Anti-racism Team's work on the St. Matthew's Land Acknowledgement left me wanting to expand my knowledge on the topic and led to my participation in the BexleySeabury Pathways for Baptismal Living course on the Doctrine of Discovery in 2021. It was eye-opening and forever changed my perspective on history. I was also interested in learning more about racial justice on



**UNCAGED ART**  
**TORNILLO CHILDREN'S DETENTION CAMP**

Uncaged Art presents the work of youth, ages 13-17, who were detained at the Tornillo detention center in West Texas. Comprised of paintings, drawings, and handicrafts made of found materials, the work reflects the resiliency, talent, and creativity of young men and women who trekked 2000 miles from their homes in Central America to reach the United States.

**Opening Reception**  
November 4, 2023  
3-5 pm

**On Display**  
November 4 - 13, 2023

**Gallery 901 | 901 Sherman Ave Evanston, IL 60202**

St. Andrews Pentecost

**OPEN STUDIO PROJECT**

ST MATTHEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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the local level and the movement to fund reparations. All of these experiences led me to Sacred Ground. Sacred Ground is a film-based dialogue series on race and faith that shifts the way that we understand racial identity and history. Our Presiding Bishop Michael Curry believes that Sacred Ground matters to the Dream of God and is part of the Episcopal Church's ongoing commitment to becoming Beloved Community. Sacred Ground is an accessible way for us to engage in difficult conversations while being deeply grounded in love. The *Prayer for the Human Family* (BCP, p. 815) applies directly to Sacred Ground. Our current engagement with Sacred Ground began in January 2022 when Kathleen Murphy and Gaylord Brynolfson of St. Luke's reached out to members of the Antiracism Teams from St. Matthew's, St. Mark's, and St. Augustine's to see if there was interest in working together. Kristin Jacobsen and I were the representatives from St. Matthew's. After a series of virtual meetings, the group decided to pursue launching Sacred Ground and surveyed members of

our individual church communities to gauge interest. There was sufficient interest in all four churches to form Sacred Ground Circles and we had eight people who were interested in being facilitators. The facilitators met in-person over the summer to cover the curriculum and to share resources. Sacred Ground Circles – one at each of the four churches - began meeting in September 2022 and ended before Holy Week in 2023. I am co-facilitating a Sacred Ground Circle for a second year at St. Augustine's with Brenda Nielson Schumaker. We will complete the current series in March 2024.

I am thankful for the ongoing Sacred Ground Webinars which provide updates and an opportunity to share experiences. Sacred Ground helps us to turn our lives in the direction of God's love and places us on a path toward healing, wholeness, and hope. Presiding Bishop Curry is an advocate for Sacred Ground and says that it is one God's special gifts to us.

I am thankful for the many rich learning experiences that were offered through the Episcopal Church, Sacred Ground, Episcopal

Migration Ministries, RefugeeOne, the Absalom Jones Center for Racial Healing, the Diocesan Sanctuary Task Force, the Mitchell Museum of the American Indian, Trinity Wall Street, and the Church of the Heavenly Rest.

## ***My Ministry as an Artist***

Before I stepped onto the path toward ordained ministry, I spent more than 34 years as an art teacher and a lifetime as an artist. My diaconal formation left me with little time to nurture my creative spirit and even less time for creating art. Thankfully, that is changing, and I fully recognize my need to be deeply engaged in my own artwork - which includes drawing, painting, designing, and making vestments, and iconography. As a deacon, it's important for me to continually discern the gifts that I bring to my ministry, and to help others do God's creative work in the world. I have long recognized the intersection of art, faith, and prayer - and have been working to develop a number of hands-on workshops that will be accessible to artists and non-artists alike. It is my hope to joyfully share this work in small group settings when it becomes safe to do so.

# Music Program's Report

Submitted by: Mark Crayton, Music Director

*Lift every voice and sing, Till earth and heaven ring, Ring with the harmonies of Liberty; Let our rejoicing rise, High as the list'ning skies, Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.*

-James Weldon Johnson (1871-1938) (Lift Every Voice and Sing, No. 1)

We, your choir, do our best every service to lift our combined voices to our creator and thereby, change the world one note at a time. We are always recruiting. Please consider offering your time to this sacred mission remembering the phrase attributed to St. Augustine, "The one who sings, prays twice.

Some music ministry highlights from 2023 were:

- Broadway Goes to Church Sunday with music from Jesus Christ Superstar (March)
- Engelbert Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel*, fully staged with orchestra, presented by Evanston Chamber Opera, our opera company in residence
- The quiet, sung, Holy Week service of Tenebrae Lessons and Psalms (we will keep that service this year, too)
- Arthur Somervell's *Passion*

*of St. Mark* on Good Friday

- Richard A. Nichols' arrangement with brass quintet of "Lift High the Cross" on Easter Day
- Hollywood Goes to Church with anthems from O Brother, Where Art Thou! (April)
- Cartoons Go To Church with anthems from The Hunchback of Notre Dame and The Prince of Egypt (October)
- Our All Saints celebration with new music by Dan Forrest (November 5)
- Indigenous Peoples Celebration (October 8)
- Advent Lessons and Carols (2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent)
- An a cappella feast for the prelude for our Christmas Eve Midnight Mass

During 2023, we said a farewell to James Janssen, our organist and assistant choir director. A search committee will be formed to assess and hire his replacement. We also said goodbye to our bass section leader, Zachary Mendenhall, in Choir I, as well as Jonathan Weyant, our tenor section leader in Choir I. We welcomed Jake Engel as our new Choir I bass section leader singer.

Jake's pronouns are he/him and he holds degrees from Viterbo University and Indiana University. We also welcomed Michael Kirby as our Choir I tenor section leader. Kirby's pronouns are he/him and he holds a degree from Roosevelt University. We also welcomed Riley Brown as our Choir I staff singers. Riley's pronouns are he/him and he is a junior at Roosevelt University working toward a Bachelor of Music in Voice Performance. We welcomed Kunying Li to the Choir II soprano section. Kunying's pronouns are she/her and she is a sophomore at Roosevelt University working toward a Bachelor of Music in Voice Performance. We are anxious as the changes settle in. We pray for grace, and we look forward to 2024! We have a very rich schedule planned for the music in our worship.

A very special thank you to our amazing musicians in the choir and the parish who help us make this ministry so special for the St. Matthew's community.

Let us continue to make a joyful noise together. Alleluia, alleluia.

# Parish Administrator's Report

Submitted by: Gregory Peebles

*"Honor the space between  
'no longer' and 'not yet.'"*

-Nancy Levin

Since last January, my role has remained much the same. I answer the phone with a smile in my voice and open all the mail, making sure that the bills get to the bookkeeper. I manage the supply chain for the parish. When supplies are needed, ministry leaders or lay members alert me, and I ensure that those materials are available.

I also oversee day-to-day operations, including managing the parish calendar and keeping the parish data base (OnRealm) updated. I am also the primary interface with the community groups that meet regularly at St. Matthew's. I work with the leaders of those groups, ensuring space for their "ministries" to the community, and I provide any necessary liaison between those groups and the staff and clergy of the parish. I also work closely with Jorge, our handyman, to ensure that the physical space is functional and that any issues that parishioners notice are addressed quickly.

In addition to supporting the staff and community groups, I am also responsible for managing ministry volunteers. Previously, St Matt's had used an automated schedule generator, Ministry Scheduler Pro (MSP). However, the automation rarely worked seamlessly for the parish, and the subscription for the software was more money than I found it to be worth. Consequently, St Matt's volunteer scheduling has transitioned from automation to online sign-up sheets, group communication, and individual availability. St Matt's needs more volunteers for lay ministry, especially in the category of

Greeters and Live-Stream volunteers.

The parish church of St Matthew in Evanston has verbalized its commitment to sacred hospitality, and in my work behind the reception desk, I support that collective vocation. It doesn't matter who comes through the door – if they are a service provider, or a soul in search of comfort – they will receive RADICAL Christian hospitality. They will be welcomed *and* seen. They will be treated as if they were Christ in disguise. I offer that hospitality in-person when I am present for office hours on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, from 10 AM – 1 PM.





# Worship Report

Submitted by: *The Rev. Charles A. de Kay, Rector*

In the year since our last Annual Meeting, St. Matthew's has joyfully lived ever more deeply into our new mission to be about the business of "Welcoming All in Community; Joyfully Doing God's Work in the World." Perhaps nowhere has that been more apparent than in our worship.

From commissioning our vestry and our choir at the start of the year, to Mark Crayton's musical leadership – conducting the congregation – at the end, we are finding new ways to bring joy and meaning and welcome to our worship.

Worship in the Episcopal Church is all-encompassing work of the people, and there are simply too many people to thank (which as it's "the work of the people" that's right and proper), I'd like simply to highlight some of the memorable services that caught people's attention and that I heard were especially relevant, moving, meaningful, or valuable.

**Lent, Holy Week and Easter** are always times of great relevance – and we invariably see some folks during the season whom we haven't seen for a while. Ash Wednesday services at 8, 10 and 7:30 were each powerful and resonant. Music from Jesus Christ Superstar on Lent 3 was a balm to losing an hour for Daylight Saving Time. Palm Sunday was rich at both 8am and 10:30am in two very different versions of the service. Gregory first brought us Matins (sung morning prayer) in the Chapel Holy Week, and our descent into darkness with Evening Prayer (Monday 5:30pm, Tuesday 6pm), Tenebrae (Wednesday 6:30pm) made the Triduum (the Three Great Days – Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Vigil) all the more poignant. Maundy Thursday was held in the church with foot-washing, stripping the altar, followed by the overnight Vigil with Christ with our Chapel standing in for the Garden of Gethsemane. Good Friday featured the Stations of the Cross at noon, and the great Good Friday Service with oratorio livestreamed at 7:30pm. Our Easter Vigil drew a small but meaningful crowd at 7:30pm. Easter Sunday was, as ever, glorious at 8am and 10:30am.

Easter tide brought us the joys of special music Sunday "Hollywood Goes to Church" and services joyful and heartbreaking, including burials of the Rev. Bob Stevens (April 22); Katy Pomeroy, Millie Thompson's granddaughter (April 29); and Caitlin Westerfield, 24 (May 25); and the confirmation of the CnC Class of 2023, including Quincy Senechal, at St. James Cathedral (May 20). All of the deaths this past year were difficult in their own way. Bob Stevens' passing was a blow for many of us, and we will surely miss his great good humor, his smile, his wisdom, and his inimitable laugh.

No moment in 2023 brought the larger community together at St. Matthew's than Caitlin Westerfield's funeral. A daughter of the parish, a friend of countless people, and the child of Evan and Colleen, her service brought standing-room-only crowds to every space in the church. Many said that this was the largest service that they could ever remember at St. Matthew's ever. My thanks especially to Gregory Peebles for his help welcoming folks and to Jim Kelly in organizing greeters and parking helpers for the more than 700 mourners who came to St. Matthew's that day, shortly before her 25<sup>th</sup> birthday. We buried her ashes in the Memorial Garden a short time later.

**Pentecost** was observed, once again, in a sea of red clothes and red-ribbon flags. Maurine Bohne died the next day, Memorial Day; her life was celebrated in the church, and she was laid to rest in the Memorial Garden a few weeks later. We lost a number of beloved folks this year, including Nancy Trimble not long after Maurine. Please see the "In Memoriam" at the

# Worship Report

Submitted by: *The Rev. Charles A. de Kay, Rector*

back of this report for a complete list.

I was honored to officiate at a surprise Renewal of Wedding Vows for Karen and Gary LaBranche at a birthday party for Gary. Later in the year, after completing premarital counseling, Bill Widmer's son Will and his fiancée Samantha Nelson were married at St. Matthew's in an intimate service in the Chapel.

Our early morning, pre-Race worship the Mass on the Grass was celebrated even earlier – 6:45am – to allow runners time to prepare for the 10K at the Race Against Hate. (Our multi-church team that I organized, Episcopalians United Against Hate, was the top fundraising team of the year.)

Our social justice-themed services: the Juneteenth service, our Indigenous Peoples Day Service, prayers offered for Transgender Awareness Week, our Thanksgiving Day service (with an American Indian focus) in which we welcomed friends from the other churches, and our Martin Luther King Jr. service were each well attended and many remarked how meaningful and moving they were.

I want to note a word of thanks to Andy Miles, a new member of the parish, who stepped up and offered to be the concierge for our Beach Church Season. He was there, making things work, every week. His service to the parish in this way was invaluable. One of the first services that Andy supported was our 5-Church Beach-a-Palooza service that, at the last minute had to be re-routed our rain plan venue, St. Luke's due to thunderstorms and heavy rain. As the designated presider, I had the joy of sharing our liturgical innovations with our fellow Episcopalians from the other churches. I was tickled when some of my clergy colleagues asked to "steal" some pieces of our liturgy.

Following the October 7<sup>th</sup> attacks by Hamas on Israel, the Primate of Jerusalem and the Middle East called for a Day of Fasting and Prayer ten days later. St. Matthew's worked with St. Luke's, St. Mark's, and St. Augustine's, Wilmette, to offer special services across Evanston, beginning with 7am Morning Prayer at St. Matthew's.

Christmas services this year displayed Mark Crayton's remarkable versatility and adaptive gifts, as he restructured the music and led the choir – and then the congregation in singing while our organist James Janssen was on leave. Mark, to a very great extent, made Christmas work this year. He has my gratitude and my very deep admiration.

James Janssen was a dedicated employee of the parish for nearly twenty years as organist and associate choir director. After careful consideration, James and St. Matthew's agreed to separate in early January 2024 to allow each to pursue other opportunities. We wish James the very best in the next chapter of his musical journey.

I believe that St. Matthew's has continued to offer meaningful and relevant worship this past year. As we move ever deeper into the liminal moment that is so challenging for communities of faith, the wardens and I agree that now is an opportune moment to stop, take stock, and ask you what you think. To that end, we will be releasing the Congregational Assessment Tool (or CAT survey) to get your feedback. We ask that you take the time to reflect on your experience with all of St. Matthew's including the worship, and provide honest answers. Your participation will be extremely important in the decisions we make moving forward.

# Formation Report

Submitted by: *The Rev. Charles A. de Kay, Rector*

## Adult Formation

St. Matthew's offered weekday **Lectio Divina** (sacred reading) weekdays on Zoom for the first half of 2023. A group of inquiring and dedicated folks gathered virtually week after week to reflect on the Gospel text of the coming Sunday. Wonderful wide-ranging conversations with laughter, insight, joy and an embrace of the Mystery of God ensued. It was a surprise that we could find such comradery, trust, and community through the somewhat artificial means of a virtual meeting, but Zoom proved to be an expectedly useful tool.

Looking ahead, the Congregational Assessment Tool (or CAT) a survey for the entire congregation will provide new insights into what St. Matthew's members would be interested in studying together, when, and how. Please look for it and respond fully when it becomes available. We look forward to a new beginning in the Fall.

Meanwhile, last year **Don Scott** continued to offer his very popular seminar of deep, academic biblical study on Sunday mornings. We hope that he will continue to find joy in teaching, as his students find joy in learning from him.

The Antiracism Team continued its sponsorship and leadership of a 4-church effort to bring **Sacred Ground** to St. Matthew's. Students and facilitators alike commented that this program developed by The Episcopal Church is one of the most effective antiracism trainings that they have ever taken (and some have taken a number). Antiracism Team chair Kristin Jacobsen and Deacon Terri Morrissey each served as co-facilitators with peers from other churches.

A second round of Sacred Ground among the same group of churches (St. Matthew's, St. Luke's, St. Mark's and St. Augustine's, Wilmette) started in the fall and continues through Lent this year. Meanwhile, a separate "clergy group" of Sacred Ground was offered in the Fall, as well, and I'm thrilled to be a participant. It's every bit as good as the press; perhaps a whole lot better. We are all interested (and hopeful) to see if a third round of Sacred Ground is called for. If so, I hope that a large group from St. Matthew's will take part!

Finally, we offered a midweek **5-part Lenten series** in 2023, in which we experimented with in-person, on Zoom, and hybrid (with limited equipment). Our focus was on the book *Radical Welcome* by Stephanie Spellers, and we spent one magical night in the middle of the series hearing from the Partnership Team about their work welcoming the refugee family from the Democratic Republic of Congo with whom we have been partnered with by RefugeeOne.

This year the Antiracism Team working with our seminarian Samuel Love are putting together a short series that helps us reflect on racism and reconciliation while providing a brief introduction to Sacred Ground. Join us Sundays in Lent immediately after the 10:30 service for a light lunch and fascinating conversations about things we never learned in school.

## Confirmation

St. Matthew's enjoyed critical mass of confirmation students with our ongoing confirmation collaboration with St. Augustine's, Wilmette; St. Luke's, Evanston; and St. Mark's Evanston. (St. Andrew's Pentecost has their own program and they have determined it's best that they keep their in-house program going.) This most recent iteration of the program was redesigned to use

# Formation Report

Submitted by: *The Rev. Charles A. de Kay, Rector*

the CnC (Confirm not Conform) program, which fully encourages the student to make the decision themselves, in a year. We gathered after church on Sunday mornings, began with a meal and provided an hour of instruction. I am grateful to the help of a number of people, especially Deacon Terri Morrissey, in providing sufficient numbers of adults to pull off the turns at St. Matthew's. It was a rich experience, jammed with a lot of material in a short period of time. As is always the case, the students had an okay time, but generally LOVED the retreat at the beginning of the program. This year 8 students, including our own Quincy Senechal, were confirmed by Bishop Paula Clark at the Cathedral. Her mentor, Karen LaBranche, who had been with her through the program, joined us at the Cathedral in sponsoring and supporting Quincy.

Given an across-the-board lack of students this past September, the leaders opted to take the 2023 – 2024 year off and reconvene in the summer of 2024 to see if there was interest and need to offer a class in September 2024.

## **Seminarian**

St. Matthew's was thrilled to welcome Samuel Love, Jr., an aspirant for Holy Orders the Priesthood from Bexley-Seabury last year. Starting with us in the summer of 2023, Sam joins us for a 2-year commitment, during which time he is preaching, teaching, organizing, and assisting in worship. Sam meets with me most Wednesday nights to review his work, to ask questions, and to plan projects, such as this year's Lenten Program. He is getting connected with a small lay team of support and encouragement, led by Sally Craige Christensen. Sam is here to learn and grow into his call. I am delighted that St. Matthew's is once again embracing our long history of being a "teaching congregation."

## **Vestry**

The new Vestry in 2023 were treated to a collaborative "**Vestry School**" formation event at North Park University, where colleagues and experts on finance, buildings, and much more provided a healthy grounding in vestry expectations. St. Matthew's vestry attendees were pleasantly surprised to discover that St. Matthew's has most, if not all, of the best practices recommended at Vestry School already in place. Further, Fr. Emeka of St. Andrew's Pentecost and I were invited to provide an introduction into how churches of difference can partner to strengthen both communities.

Put on by the Evanston Deanery with support from the Chicago North Deanery, this year the Evanston Deanery has requested the guidance and leadership of the Diocese in providing a similar event; we await to hear what might come of that request.

In 2023, I led the St. Matthew's vestry in the study and reflection of the book **Radical Welcome** by Stephanie Spellers. We took some time (anywhere from 20 to 45 minutes) of our monthly vestry meeting to reflect on a chapter of the book and to use it as a springboard for creative thinking as we embrace the notion of "adaptive change" recommended by the book *Canoeing the Mountains*.

I have not yet discerned the direction of vestry formation for 2024, but our experience of *Radical Welcome* suggests that it is time well spent, helping all of us to get our creative juices flowing and to imagine ways to bring new adaptations to our communal life.





## SAINT MATTHEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

# Ministry Reports

### ACOLYTES

*Submitted by Bob Purse,  
Coordinator*

The acolyte program remains small but dedicated at this time. We began the year with only five team members - and as with the past few years, a significant difference from the years before COVID was that three of those five are adults. I am very happy to say that our ranks were recently joined by two very enthusiastic new members, and that a third may be joining soon, all three of them children.

Despite this low number of team members, things are working out well at this time. The few remaining COVID alterations to the service are such that one or two people can perform the acolyting tasks currently in place, although, for the first time since COVID, there are enough roles in a Sunday service for as many as four to take part, and this will be the case in some upcoming services. I remain hopeful that more people will join the team, and would welcome any children (4th grade or older) or adults who are interested in taking part.

### ALTAR BREAD MINISTRY

*Submitted by Deborah  
Williams, Coordinator*

As we head into 2024, wafers continue to be used for communion rather than home-baked bread prepared by a member of the altar bread ministry. We look forward to resuming this ministry as soon as safety precautions allow.

Here is our delicious, foolproof communion bread recipe for those who would like to try their hand at bread baking and perhaps join the altar bread team when the ministry resumes:

#### Whole Wheat Altar Bread

7/8 cup very warm (not hot) water  
1/4 cup honey  
1/8 cup (2 tablespoons) vegetable oil  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1 package yeast  
2 cups whole wheat flour  
2/3 cup white (all-purpose) flour

In a measuring cup combine 1/2 cup water with the honey, oil, salt, and yeast. Stir until the yeast is dissolved. Check after 5 to 10 minutes to see if the yeast mixture has formed bubbles (the sign that it is active).

In a large bowl, combine the whole wheat flour, white

flour, and yeast mixture. Mix thoroughly, adding water as necessary. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface and knead for about 5 minutes, until it is smooth and elastic. If necessary, add a small amount of white flour or water.

Form the dough into a ball and place it back into the bowl. Cover with a towel and let it rise in a warm place for about 1-1/2 to 2 hours until it is doubled in size.

Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface and knead for 2 to 3 minutes. Form the dough into a ball and place it onto a lightly oiled baking sheet. Pat the dough into a circle about 1 inch thick. With a sharp knife, cut a cross into the center of the loaf.

Bake at 350 degrees F for 18 to 22 minutes. Watch carefully because whole wheat bread doesn't brown significantly. A simple test is to tap the bottom of the loaf in the center with your fingers. If it sounds hollow, it's done. If in doubt, underbake the bread slightly so it isn't crumbly. Allow the bread to cool on a wire rack.



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### ALTAR GUILD

*Submitted by Jennie Woodring*

The altar guild ministry continues to prepare for Eucharist each Sunday in the chapel and the sanctuary, on the lawn during summer beach church, and on multiple days during the busy seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Holy Week.

Historically, altar guild has been led by two people, each serving two-year overlapping terms. Members have been organized into teams, each with a team leader. While altar guild operated with (at least) five teams of four for the last decades, membership has particularly declined in recent years, making the team structure ineffective in providing coverage for altar guild duties. In response, altar guild has moved to an individual signup structure for 2024, in which each of our eleven active members will sign up to prepare for services on Saturdays and to serve at church on Sundays. We currently have one official leader, though strong leadership support continues from previous leaders.

We are grateful for the dedicated service of all who have been part of altar guild in recent years, especially those who served through 2023 as team leaders. They and others continue to contribute their time and expertise, which are crucial for the implementation of this essential work for St. Matthew's.

Altar guild welcomes all, regardless of gender, who are interested in this social yet contemplative ministry of setting the Lord's table. Contact Jennie Woodring ([jenniewoodring@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jenniewoodring@sbcglobal.net)) for more information.

### ANTI-RACISM

*Submitted by Kristin Jacobsen, Leader*

We believe that antiracism work is part of baptismal promises we make as Christians. We commit to "persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever [we] fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord." Racism is a great evil in which Christians have both knowingly and unknowingly participated, that we must actively resist. We also agree in the baptismal covenant to "seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself," and to "strive for justice and peace

among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being" (*The Book of Common Prayer*, pp.304-305). We want to love our neighbor by learning about the injustices suffered by people of color and beginning to make amends for these wrongs.

Now in our fourth year, the Antiracism Team has continued to focus on African Americans and Native Americans. As Rector Charlie de Kay put it, our country's "initial sin" is around "the twin Holocausts of the removal and extermination of Native peoples and the enslavement of Africans." Our activities in 2024 will focus on educating ourselves about African American and Native American history, developing relationships with people in these communities, and taking action to fight injustice. See the land acknowledgement below for one of these efforts.

### Antiracism Activities 2023

- **Secured vestry approval of:**
  - ◊ Mitchell Museum Partner donation of \$1,000
  - ◊ \$1,250 for Race Against Hate sponsorship



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- (Penelope Boardman's Aristotle Foundation donated an equal amount)
- ◊ \$250 to support the March antiracism bus trip sponsored by 18 Evanston congregations
  - **Antiracism Learning** every week in the eblast and Sunday bulletin, including publicizing events related to race and racism
  - **Sacred Ground** (all year): Second year of this discussion group focused on race, with teams from St. Matthew's, St. Mark's, St. Luke's, and St. Augustine's. Terri Morrissey was a facilitator and several St. Matthew's members participated in the year-long program.
  - **African American Heritage Month** (Feb.): tour of the DuSable Black History Museum and Education Center
  - **Exhibit "Negro Motorist Green Book"** (March): group tour
  - **United Against Racism** (April): several members participated
  - **Pow Wow at Northwestern University** (April): several members attended
  - **Race Against Hate** (June): In addition to securing vestry approval of a sponsorship, the Antiracism Team set up a tent and brought food and St. Matthew's stickers and pens to be a welcoming presence for runners, walkers, and their families
  - **Haitian refugee family** (Spring/Summer): raised about \$500 to give Target gift cards to a family Judy Moran knows through her work at the Moran Center
  - **Exhibit "No Rest: The Epidemic of Stolen Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirits"** (September): several members attended
  - **Indigenous Peoples' Day/Thanksgiving** (October/November)
    - Supported rector's planning and set up for the Indigenous Peoples' Day service.
    - Four-church Thanksgiving service at St. Matthew's (9 a.m., 11/23) was based on the Haudenosaunee (*hoh den uh SHOH nee*) Thanksgiving Address ([https://americanindian.si.edu/environment/pdf/01\\_02\\_Thanksgiving](https://americanindian.si.edu/environment/pdf/01_02_Thanksgiving_Address.pdf)
  - **Garden** (November): Antiracism Team members helped the Green Team begin work on what will be a garden of plants native to the area that are also used by Native Americans
  - **Uncaged Art: Tornillo Children's Detention Camp** (November): several members helped set up, bring food for the opening reception, and take down the exhibit
  - **Mitchell Museum benefit** (November): several members supported the Mitchell by buying tickets and attending the benefit
  - **Gala** (Fall): Made plans to contribute a buy-in party of tickets to the Fleetwood Jourdain Theatre performances in summer 2024
- If you're interested in learning about antiracism work, join us at our events and at our meetings (7:30 p.m. on the third Tuesday of each month). Contact Kristin Jacobsen ([kejcat@gmail.com](mailto:kejcat@gmail.com)) for the Zoom link. Also take a look at resources from the Diocese of Chicago's Antiracism Commission at <https://episcopalchicago.org/>



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[antiracism/](#) and the guide put together by the St. Matthew's Antiracism Team ([stmatthewsevanston.org](http://stmatthewsevanston.org), then select Ministries tab, then Social Justice; link to resources is at the bottom of the page).

### **St. Matthew's Land Acknowledgement**

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church sits on the traditional homelands of the people of the Council of Three Fires: the Ojibwe, Potawatomi, and Odawa nations. This land was also a place of travel and trade to many other tribes, including the Menominee, Ho-Chunk, and Miami tribes. These Native Peoples were forced off their lands with the Second Treaty of Prairie du Chien in 1829. After a series of land transfers, St. Matthew's acquired its current site within this territory in 1906. Today, Cook County is home to tens of thousands of Native Americans from many tribes. We acknowledge and respect our Indigenous neighbors, as we strive to be good stewards of this Native land.

### **FORMATION: SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY**

*Submitted by Don Scott*

The Bible Study Group remains on Zoom because more participants can be included. We meet weekly on Sunday at 8:15 a.m. The year has been spent studying Second Isaiah (Chapters 40-55) and the Psalms of Solomon. Attendance varies from 12 to 20.

### **HOME COMMUNION MINISTRY**

*Submitted by Terri Morrissey, Coordinator*

Each Sunday toward the end of our service, Home Communion Ministers are "sent forth" to bring the Eucharist to the homebound and extend the celebration of the gathered congregation. The commissioning of Home Communion Ministers each Sunday – "Go forth with these holy gifts, so that those to whom you go may share with us in Christ's body and blood." reminds us that "We who are many are one Body, because we all share One Bread, One Cup." During visits, Home Communion Ministers follow an abbreviated order of service, which includes prayers, scripture readings from the Sunday service,

and the distribution of the Eucharist. Whether for the short term or over the course of several years, it is a blessing and a privilege to be invited into the lives of our homebound parishioners.

This practice continued until the beginning of March 2020, when the pandemic made it necessary to suspend Home Communion visits. During the months that have followed, the clergy have continued to maintain contact with our homebound parishioners and/or their families.

If you know someone who would like to receive a Home Communion visit, please contact Charlie de Kay or Terri Morrissey.

### **HOSPITALITY**

*Submitted by Dorothy Wyandt*

This year our efforts have been directed toward providing or supporting families with receptions following the funerals at St. Matthew's. Our group is a loosely organized group of people **who are willing to help from time to time**. No meetings or strict schedules. Just help when you can. Please let me know if I can add you to our list.





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### **MOVIE GROUP**

*Submitted by Ann Searles*

The St. Matthew's movie group has met five times in 2023. Meetings have been held at various times of day, often late afternoon on weekends. They have been in person at member homes, or in the St. Mathew's Assembly Room. Light refreshments are served and the host or another designated person has led the discussions.

We most often discuss current movies but sometimes study older films. The movie choice is the host's. Some discussions have been centered on the technical aspects of the films or the acting performances while others have related the film's messages to our own lives in today's world. All have been enjoyable.

Some of the 2023 films we studied were Barbie, Killers of the Flower Moon, and even the new version of Pinocchio! Discussions were lively as we considered various social issues and phenomena, oppression of people of different faiths and races, and movie-making techniques.

There are no requirements to participate but it is

necessary for attendees to see the film before the meeting. Notices appear in the St. Matthew's communications and all are welcome to attend. For many of us the Movie Group has been an easy, enjoyable fellowship activity which has given us an opportunity to become better acquainted with church members and spouses whom we might not have otherwise known. Average attendance is around 12 adults.

The movie group plans to continue in its current format for the year 2024. New faces are always welcome to participate in this very enjoyable activity.

### **ST. MATTHEW'S CONSTITUENTS**

*Submitted by Gregory Peebles*

In my role as Parish Administrator, I am the primary contact for all our building users. All groups with an existing relationship with the parish continue to have access to the spaces they borrow at the rate of the donation agreed on.

### **SUPPORT GROUPS**

- AA – have returned to the building on Wednesday and Sunday evenings. Groups are

smaller and are able to distance. There is no food/drink. AA inquired regarding childcare, and they were provided with the protocols per the Episcopal Church's document "Keeping God's Children Safe." In 2023, the Sunday night AA group provided its own childcare in accordance with the bylaws of The Episcopal Church.

- OA – continues to meet on Saturday mornings, but also use Zoom, depending on COVID rates and the comfort level of the group members.

### **THE PERFORMING ARTS**

- Voice and Instrumental Studios – Ms. Judith Haddon uses the Assembly Room to teach voice on Mondays from 11 AM to 3 PM, and Lisa French used the chapel space to teach French Horn on Fridays in 2023. Choirmaster Mark Crayton also teaches from St Matthew's as needed.
- Evanston Chamber Opera Company (EChO) – After a very successful 2023 season, the company will be presenting another double bill. First, *The*



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*Chalet* by Adophe Adams, followed by *The Boor*, a new, original composition by EChO founder and St Matt's Parishioner, Francis Lynch.

- Fairytale Ballet/Lincoln Street Ballet Studio - both have returned to the building and resumed their previous schedule.
- ESIC (Imrov Group) - Peter Civetta continues to use our space for his afterschool improvisation group. His August 2023 summer camp was held for two weeks. They meet in the parish hall, and outside, weather permitting. The summer camp uses only the back yard, kitchen, and bathrooms and is always a great success. They have already reserved for Summer 2024.

### COMMUNITY GROUPS

- Boy Scouts – no change to the meeting schedule and reservation since 2022; however, packs do not regularly meet in-person at St Matt's, preferring to meet via Zoom.
- St. Matt's Stitches – This group of St Matt's parishioners gather monthly in the parlor or gallery to practice the art

of needlework.

- St Matt's Movie Group – This group of St Matt's parishioners meets in the Assembly Room to watch and discuss a movie either monthly or quarterly, depending on availability. Movies in 2023 included "Barbie" and "The Holdovers." The most recent movie group screened *Maestro*, a film concerned with the life and work of Leonard Bernstein.
- Highland Garden Club of Evanston – St Matthew's Parishioners are members of this club which meets monthly on Wednesday nights. Meetings are held either in the Parish Hall or the large room "John" on the second floor, depending on the number of expected attendees.
- Wiggleworms – Wiggleworms remains our biggest user and one that makes the largest contribution to our operating budget. In 2023, Wiggleworms provided a sessions on Wednesday and Thursday mornings, both offer in the Assembly room. In 2024, this schedule will remain unchanged.

- Yoga Studio – Patrina Dobrish, along with Jennie Woodring, uses the Assembly Room for yoga on Fridays. An additional session is offered on the third Saturday of each month in 2024.

### ST. ANDREW'S PENTECOST / ST. MATTHEW'S PARTNERSHIP, AND REFUGEEONE CO-SPONSORSHIP UPDATE

*Submitted by Cynthia Doucet*

Our Partnership with St. Andrew's Pentecost is moving into its seventh year, and it continues to be a blessing of gratitude, friendship, and care for others in the community. Here are some of our 2023 highlights:

- We completed our planned 6-months of weekly visits to Maua and her family of five daughters (they fled violence in DR Congo, lived in a refugee camp in Tanzania for many years, and arrived to Chicago in 2022 under the global Refugee Resettlement program and RefugeeOne). Given the friendships that have been built, the Core Mentor team decided to continue weekly visits for several more months and remain in touch. Special



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thanks to Roberta Buchanan, Pat Egan, Rev. Terri Morrissey, Mary Jo Deysach, Sr. Bonnie Boilini, Fr. Emeka and others, you are the heart of what the co-sponsorship is all about! Here are some thoughts from the Core Mentor team: "This co-sponsorship is more than just doing, it's a bond that will last forever", "I feel they also think of us as friends -- the adults and children in the family, including the teens!"; "At meals we continue the wonderful tradition they taught us, they wash our hands in a gesture of love and thanksgiving, and we wash theirs"; "We continue to work together, I'm so proud of Maua as she continues to get more comfortable with English understanding and speaking"; "I continue to be overwhelmed by Maua's profound hospitality, even though she may not have a lot she is so generous, everything we've experienced together speaks so highly of who they are".

Thanks to the 50+ people who attended our tent

party in June at the Skokie Sports Complex to celebrate the one-year anniversary of Maua's family's arrival!

- We led and participated in events to communicate the challenges of refugees and asylum seekers, including a Lenten session about "Radical Welcome in Action" (recording available), a Diocesan Sanctuary Task Force event called Hosting Refugees and Asylum Seekers: Inspiring Stories of Love in Action (recording available), and hosting the "Uncaged Art" exhibition which highlighted powerful and touching art by asylum seekers.
- We spearheaded several donation drives, including DACA renewal fees, rolling pins to help welcome Ukrainian families with a feeling of home after fleeing the war, calendars for refugee families adapting to new schedules, and coats/ winter clothing for arriving asylum seekers.
- Team members participated on multi-

church and ecumenical committees in the community, including the Diocese Sanctuary Task Force, Interfaith Action Evanston Refugee and Immigrant subcommittee, and many others. Through these committees we have learned and shared best practices, and gained inspiration and supportive friends for our own efforts.

Many thanks to everyone who participated and supported our Partnership and Co-Sponsorship work, it makes a world of difference that you are there. 2024 plans include securing funding and bringing the St. Andrew's Pentecost Rectory building (currently unused) up to code and ready to be a safe and welcoming refuge for up to 10 asylum seekers who would otherwise be unhomed. If you would like to join in these vital, challenging and heartwarming efforts please let us know, all are welcome!

### **STEPHEN MINISTRY**

*Submitted by Terri Morrissey and Steven Steiber*

Stephen Ministry at St. Matthew's, now in its eleventh year, has been somewhat restrained by the pandemic. Stephen



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Ministry has been a way for our congregation to provide confidential, high quality, ongoing one-on-one care to people experiencing the difficult times in life.

Stephen Ministers care for individuals experiencing grief, divorce, job loss, chronic or terminal illness, relocation, hospitalization, and many other crises. Stephen Ministers are congregation members who have gone through 50 hours of training to provide Christ-centered care to people in time of need.

Both Charlie and Terri took part in Stephen Ministry Leadership Training in 2013. Steve Steiber was subsequently added to the leadership team following his leadership training. Our first group of Stephen Ministers were trained in 2013 and commissioned in early 2014. A second group of Stephen Ministers was trained and commissioned in 2015.

If you have questions about the Stephen Ministry or feel that you or someone you know would benefit from an empathetic ear, please

contact Charlie de Kay, Terri Morrissey, or Steve Steiber.

### **STITCHERS AND KNITTERS**

*Submitted by Ginger Carr & Jennie Woodring*

The Stitchers' Group is a social group open to anyone who does needlecrafts of any kind – knitting, crocheting, embroidering, or just plain mending. The group was conceived at a St. Matthew's Super Bowl party in the early 2000's, and now gathers about once a month at St. Matthew's on an irregular schedule to socialize, share stitching tips, and enjoy light snacks. There are roughly 20 members and about 6 to 8 of us come to any given gathering, determined by members' availabilities.

We have embraced St. Matthew's relationship with St. Andrew's Pentecost by inviting their members to our gatherings. While we generally stitch personal projects, we are currently stitching and collecting hats and scarves to donate to *500 Hats for Refugees* in January, 2024. We resumed our regular meetings mid-2023, after COVID-19 schedule disruptions over the last few years.

The stitchers' group always welcomes new members. For more information contact Ginger Carr (v-carr@northwestern.edu) or Jennie Woodring (jenniewoodring@sbcglobal.net).

### **WEDNESDAY LUNCH PROGRAM**

*Submitted by Kati Olsen*

Since February 1, 2015, the faith communities of St. Matthew's and St. Mark's Episcopal Churches of Evanston have served lunch each Wednesday at St. Mark's to anyone who enters our doors. For the most part, our guests are homeless, at risk of being homeless, or those who have lost their jobs. Many of our guests attend weekly, while others attend at the end of the month when money is tight or during a period of financial strain. We serve 45-65 individuals each week and have seen many new faces during 2023.

Volunteers currently prepare the meal on Wednesday mornings. The coordinator shops for food on Tuesdays and delivers it to the St. Mark's kitchen. We prepare lunches for 60-65 and are always prepared with additional foodstuffs if the need arises. Meals usually include sandwiches, fruit,



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chips, cookie, and beverage, often with extras such as hard-boiled eggs, tossed salad, peanuts-in-the-shell. During the cold months, we offer soup, or sometimes an entire hot meal, and during warm months, we offer ice cream (which is always well received.) Most weeks our guests also enjoy donated items from Bennison's bakery.

We offer a hybrid service, encouraging our guests to remain in Cunningham Hall to eat their meals, but offering "to-go" meals to those who couldn't. In-house meals are served on red trays, using a minimal amount of packaging. Our sandwiches are packed in compostable bags, soups ladled into ceramic bowls, and volunteers serve sides, fruit, and desserts directly onto the trays, as opposed to using individually packaged servings. Juice and water are served in glasses and coffee in ceramic cups. Eliminating the packaging from 75% of the meals served has been gratifying.

Many thanks to Kate Lauderbaugh, Joyce Weber, Roberta Buchanan, Deb Williams, and Dorothy Wyandt, who join with members of St. Mark's and

other volunteers from the community in their stalwart dedication to this ministry. Thanks also to Nancye Kirk from St. Mark's who is now coordinating meals once a month.

Kudos and extra thanks go to Donna Richardson, Co-Coordinator and St. Mark's parishioner, whose contributions and guidance continue to be invaluable.

If you are interested in assisting with this rewarding ministry, either in person or with in-kind donations, please do not hesitate to contact me at [kati2219@gmail.com](mailto:kati2219@gmail.com).







# In Memoriam

Judy Ostrow  
Jane Weis  
Sam Lovering  
Stephen Fry  
William E. Brennen, Jr.  
Maurine Bohne  
Nancy Trimble  
Caitlin Margaret Westerfield  
The Rev. Robert Ellsworth Stevens  
Katherine Grace Pomeroy  
Margo Shuldiner  
Anne Moore  
Frank Crayton, Jr.  
Terry Ling  
Gloria Janssen  
Sharon Marie Wagner  
William Brennen  
Sam Lovering  
Frances Cothran  
Mary Buckmaster  
The Very Rev. Jack Potter  
Donna "Meme" Mazure

We wish to keep our dearest brothers and sisters  
in our hearts and prayers.



St. Matthew's lay leaders duly elected and appointed at  
The 147<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Parish on January 29, 2023

**St. Matthew's Vestry**

Damon Doucet, *Senior Warden*  
Christopher Motogawa, *Junior Warden*  
Robert McSweeney, William Siegfriedt, Penelope Whiteside (2024)  
Curtis Nilsson, William Widmer, Deborah Williams (2025)  
Stephen Carr, Kelsey Davies, Jim Kelly (2026)  
Christopher Motogawa and Rick Worden, *Co-Treasurer* (2024)

**Trustees of St. Matthew's Endowment**

Damon Doucet (2024)      Stephen Carr (2025)      Ann Searles (2026)

**St. Matthew's Lay Delegation to the  
186<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the Diocese of Chicago**

Westin, Lombard, IL November 17-18, 2023

**Delegates**

Kristin Jacobsen  
Stephen Carr  
Mary Clark

**Alternate**

Sally Craige Christensen

**Clergy and St. Matthew's Staff**

The Most Rev. Michael B. Curry, *27<sup>th</sup> Presiding Bishop, The Episcopal Church*  
The Rt. Rev. Paula E. Clark, *Thirteenth Bishop of the Diocese of Chicago*  
The Rev. Charles A. de Kay, *Rector* | [charlie@stmatthewsevanston.org](mailto:charlie@stmatthewsevanston.org)  
The Rev. Terri J. Morrissey, *Deacon* | [terri@stmatthewsevanston.org](mailto:terri@stmatthewsevanston.org)  
Mark Crayton, *Music Director* | [mark@stmatthewsevanston.org](mailto:mark@stmatthewsevanston.org)  
Julie Salako, *Communications Director* | [julie@stmatthewsevanston.org](mailto:julie@stmatthewsevanston.org)  
Gregory Peebles, *Parish Administrator* | [gregory@stmatthewsevanston.org](mailto:gregory@stmatthewsevanston.org)  
Jorge Lopez, *Handyman*