

# 2025 Annual Report



Presented at the 150th Annual Parish Meeting  
January 25, 2026



**SAINT MATTHEW'S**  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

# SAINT MATTHEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

## 2025 Annual Report

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

|       |                                                     |
|-------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| 2     | AGENDA                                              |
| 3     | PICTURES                                            |
| 4-5   | PRIEST- IN-CHARGE'S REPORT                          |
| 6-7   | DEACON'S REPORT                                     |
| 8     | SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT                              |
| 9-10  | MUSIC PROGRAM'S REPORT                              |
| 10    | PARISH ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT                       |
| 11    | ACOLYTES                                            |
| 11    | ALTAR BREAD MINISTRY                                |
| 12    | ALTAR GUILD                                         |
| 12-13 | ANTI-RACISM                                         |
| 14    | FRIDAY NIGHT COFFEEHOUSE                            |
| 14    | GREEN TEAM                                          |
| 14-15 | LERMAN ART EXHIBIT                                  |
| 15    | MOVIE GROUP                                         |
| 15-16 | NATIVE PLANT & POLLNATOR                            |
| 16-17 | REFUGEE / UNHOUSED FAMILIES<br>RESETTLEMENT PROJECT |
| 17-18 | ST. MATTHEW'S CONSTITUENTS                          |
| 18-19 | STITCHERS AND KNITTERS                              |
| 19    | WEDNESDAY LUNCH PROGRAM                             |
| 20    | ST. MATT'S INFO                                     |

### 2026 ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA

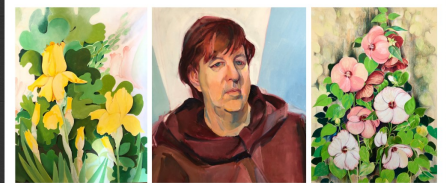
1. Opening Prayer
2. Approval of the Minutes for 148th Annual Meeting
3. Report from the Treasurer
4. Election of Officers
  - Vestry Officers & Members
  - Trustees of the Endowment
  - Delegation to Annual Diocesan Convention
5. 150th Anniversary Celebration
6. Address by the Outgoing Senior Warden
7. Address by the Incoming Senior Warden
8. Closing Prayer & Dismissal

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



# AN ART EXHIBITION

*Drawings, paintings and prints celebrating the lives and art of Jack and Elise Pike Lerman*



A BENEFIT FOR ST. MATTHEW'S

**DECEMBER 5-6**

OPENING RECEPTION:  
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5 6-7:30PM  
EXHIBIT OPEN:  
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6 10AM-4PM

# Priest-in-Charge's Report

Submitted by: *The Rt. Rev. Whayne Hougland, Jr.*

Dear Friends in Christ,

As we reflect on the life and ministry we have shared in 2025, the word that rises most naturally is *gratitude*. *Gratitude for the faithfulness of God in our midst, and gratitude for one another. This year has been marked not by flash or frenzy, but by something deeper and more enduring: a steady, Spirit-led growth in our common life that is reshaping who we are and how we live as Christ's body at St. Matthew's.*

Throughout the year, our worship, preaching, and teaching returned again and again to a simple but demanding question: *How is the risen Christ forming us now? Across the liturgical seasons, we explored resurrection not merely as a past event or future promise, but as a present, lived reality. That theological grounding has mattered. We have seen it take flesh in a congregation that is more attentive, more prayerful, and more willing to risk honesty, generosity, and compassion.*

Our vestry retreats were especially important moments of discernment. Together, your elected leaders leaned into spiritual reflection before strategic planning, grounding decision-making in prayer, Scripture, and shared values. The vestry's work this year has been marked by trust, clarity, and a growing confidence that faithful leadership begins not with anxiety about scarcity, but with attentiveness to God's abundance. That posture has shaped our priorities, strengthened our relationships, and sharpened our sense of mission as we make plans to celebrate our 150th Anniversary with a visit from Bishop Paula on September 20, 2026.

Adult formation also reflected a deepening spiritual hunger. Forums and classes drew strong participation and sustained engagement, not because they offered easy answers, but because they created space for thoughtful wrestling with faith, Scripture, tradition, and daily life. The questions people brought were real, the conversations rich, and the fruits visible in worship, pastoral conversations, and the ways members are showing up for one another beyond Sunday mornings.

One of the most hopeful developments of the year has been the strengthening of our ministry with young people. In partnership with Church of the Holy Comforter and St. Mark's, we began weekly shared youth group gatherings that have created energy, belonging, and a wider sense of Christian community for our youth. These gatherings would not be possible without the faithful, hands-on leadership of Karen Hertel. Her steady presence, care, and commitment have been a true gift to our young people and to all three congregations, and we offer her our deep and heartfelt thanks.

This growth in spiritual depth has been accompanied by tangible signs of vitality. Attendance increased steadily through the year, including new faces and returning members who felt drawn back into the life of the parish. Financial giving followed the same trajectory. Pledges increased, participation broadened, and generosity deepened. This was not driven by pressure or fear, but by trust—trust that what we are building together is worthy of investment because it is rooted in purpose, transparency, and shared responsibility.

At the same time, St. Matthew's continued to lean into a vision that has been quietly unfolding for some time: becoming a true neighborhood arts center. This year brought several clear signs that this calling is taking shape. Our Friday Night Coffeehouse Open Mic events were a notable

# Priest-in-Charge's Report

Submitted by: *The Rt. Rev. Whayne Hougland, Jr.*

success, welcoming neighbors, artists, and first-time visitors into our space and creating evenings marked by warmth, creativity, and connection.

We were also proud to begin work on an art gallery in honor of Jack and Elise Lerman, starting with a December art show that celebrated both their legacy and the creative gifts of our wider community. The gallery has already become a place of beauty, conversation, and welcome within our campus. Big thanks to all who assisted with the sale especially, Terri Morrissey and David Parks.

Our long-standing partnerships in the arts continued to flourish. The Wiggleworms music program, shared with the Old Town School of Folk Music, remains a joyful point of entry for young families. Two Schools of Ballet, The Lincoln Street Ballet and A Fairy Tale Ballet continued to use our space, filling it with discipline, grace, and movement. Our week-long Summer Youth Theatre Camp, offered in partnership with Church of Our Savior, once again brought laughter, learning, and confidence-building to children and youth. Public concerts hosted with the Evanston Chamber Opera Company enriched our neighborhood, while our own choral program continued to deepen the beauty and prayerfulness of our worship.

Other important activities from the past year included: A successful Cleaning Day that made space and encouraged a Rummage Sale in October led by Liza Parks and the expansion of our critically important Refugee Outreach Ministry led by Judy Royal, The Motogawa's hosted another fabulous backyard party with "Oh Boys" in the Fall, our annual Animal Blessing and Halloween Candy Handout connected us to scores of our neighbors.

None of this happened in isolation. It reflects countless acts of quiet faithfulness: those who pray regularly for this parish, those who serve on committees and teams, those who show up early and stay late, those who give generously of time, talent, and treasure, and those who carry one another through seasons of joy and sorrow. This is the texture of a healthy parish, and it is something to celebrate. A special and sincere thanks to our staff: Gregory, Julie, Mark, Quinn, Jorge and Deacon Terri for their faithfulness, service and hard work supporting our ministry together and to your vestry for their dedication and commitment to God and this congregation.

As we look ahead to 2026, we do so with particular joy as we prepare to celebrate the 150th anniversary of St. Matthew's. This milestone is not simply about honoring our past, though we will do that with gratitude and care. It is also an invitation to ask who God is calling us to be now, at this moment in our life together. The faith that sustained this community across generations is still alive, still speaking, still inviting us forward.

The year ahead will call us to hold memory and imagination together—to honor what has been entrusted to us while courageously stepping into what is still unfolding. If 2025 has taught us anything, it is that when we commit ourselves to spiritual depth, honest discernment, generous love, and creative hospitality, God meets us there with more life than we can manufacture on our own.

Thank you for your faith, your trust, and your companionship on the way. It is a joy to serve as your rector, and a privilege to walk with you into this next chapter of St. Matthew's life. With gratitude and hope,

+Whayne, *Priest-in-Charge*

# Deacon's Report

Submitted by: *The Rev. Terri Morrissey*

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, 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.

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.

## **Staff and Worship**

Throughout 2025, I assisted with worship, funerals, and burials, participated in weekly staff meetings, preached somewhat regularly, attended vestry meetings, deanery meetings, and deacons' gatherings. On October 26, I attended the Interfaith Action of Evanston Vision Keepers Dinner and was honored to be St. Matthew's 2025 Vision Keeper. It was inspiring to be a part of this gathering and to hear about the significant contributions that others are making within their faith communities and throughout Evanston.

## **Pastoral Care**

An important part of my diaconal ministry is pastoral care. It is about building relationships and "holding space" for others through the gift of presence, prayer, and the willingness to walk alongside others on their journeys. It is a ministry of meeting people where they are, without judging them, trying to fix them, or to influence the outcomes; recognizing that in all ministry, we are channels of God's love. I continue this work with parishioners, families, and caregivers - by phone, and whenever possible, in person. Our former 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**

I am a member of the St. Andrew's Pentecost - St. Matthew's Partnership Team (see next page), an honorary member of the Green Team, coordinator of our Native Plant and Pollinator Garden Project (see garden report), coordinator of the Altar Bread Ministry, coordinator of the Lerman Art Exhibition, and coordinator of the Brown Bag Pageant.

I also participated in a number of events, which include but are not limited to: Led by +Whayne, a number of parishioners gathered for a Cleaning of the Church, Chapel, and some of the public spaces in the Parish House on May 31. On October 5, +Whayne and I led a Pet

# Deacon's Report

Submitted by: *The Rev. Terri Morrissey*

Blessing on the Lawn at 3:00pm. It was wonderful to greet parishioners, several of St. Matthew's neighbors, and to offer a blessing to their furry companions – mostly dogs, and one turtle. What a wonderful afternoon at the corner of Lincoln and Hartrey!! In celebration of Indigenous Peoples' Day on October 13, I attended a Powwow along with seven parishioners at Evanston Township High School that was sponsored by the Gichigamiin Indigenous Nations Museum. And, on the afternoon of October 31, +Whayne and I hosted Halloween Trick or Treat outside the Chapel doors. We welcomed about 100 of our neighbors and almost ran out of treats. Thank you to Tim Patenode and Judy Royal, Don and Nancy Churchill and others, who came to join us in the fun.

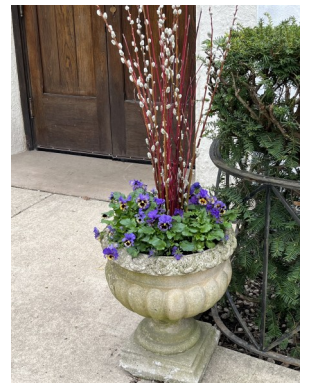
## **Partnership Team**

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 refugees led us to a Co-Sponsorship with RefugeeOne in 2022. While our formal relationship with the Congolese family has ended, I have had an opportunity to visit Maua and her family along with Roberta Buchanan, Fr. Emeka Nwachuku, and Sister Bonnie Boilini. The family is doing well, the older children are in school, and the youngest are in preschool. As a congregation, we continue to pray each week for this wonderful family.

Related to our work around immigration and refugee rights, on May 4, the Partnership Team sponsored a Know Your Rights Training at St. Andrew's Pentecost which was led by the Rev. Canon Sandra Castillo of the Diocesan Sanctuary Committee.

## **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/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.



# Senior Warden's Report

Submitted by: *Steve Carr*

One year ago, we had just finished a pivotal year, having brought in Bp. Whayne Hougland as our Priest-in-Charge and being motivated with the theme, "We begin again". Here (a bit abridged) is what happened this year:

- Sunday attendance is up a second year in a row
- There were many physical plant improvements, such as:
  - ◊ Brighter lighting in our worship spaces
  - ◊ New fire escape for parish hall
- Ways to improve accessibility of our spaces, like the main bathrooms and a lift to get to Main Floor of the Parish House, were pursued
- Strong pledging allowed for the smallest draw on the endowment in over a decade. Pledging for FY 2026 is up ~15% over last year, and the endowment is near \$10<sup>6</sup>
- New activities, including Coffeehouse, art shows, a rummage sale, a distribution hub of household items for homeless have happened
- Between-service "Sunday School" and Tuesday Bible Study conducted by Bp. Hougland are very popular
- Youth involvement has started with the group at Holy Comforter
- Our presence on Facebook and with our website are being revitalized

## **We are now really living into *beginning again*!**

It is now our Sesquicentennial Year, and I am going to continue with advancing our "Beginning again." The planned components of the Celebration will include, but not be limited to:

- Continue to make improvements to our physical facilities
- Raise our visibility in the broader community.
- Publish a new History of St. Matthew's
- Dedicate a new hymn to St. Matthew's
- Create a recognition of our long-standing role in advancing the Episcopal Church: Bishops and parochial leaders, foundational books on religious education and leadership training.
- Experiment with making our worship space have a Beach Church vibe

# Music Director's Report

Submitted by: Mark Crayton

"Let every instrument be tuned for praise! Let all rejoice who have a voice to raise!"

Hymn 1982 #420 Engelberg Music: Sir Charles Villiers Stanford; Words: Fred Pratt Green

When we look back on the past year, we see not only a calendar full of rehearsals and services, but a story—a story of voices coming together, week after week, to create something larger than any one of us could offer alone. In 2025, our choir lived out that story with grace, commitment, and joy, building a musical journey that shaped our worship and strengthened our community.

Some music ministry highlights and thoughts from 2025 include:

- A wonderful, heartfelt Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration with spirited musical offerings.
- A new anthem by Karen Marroli on Ash Wednesday.
- A dramatic reading of the Passion on Palm Sunday with percussion.
- Good Friday's Passion was Joseph Martin's *Canticle of the Cross*, which uses Celtic melodies as the musical themes. We were very lucky to have Craige Christensen as our narrator, taking us through the passion story.
- On Easter, we offered the wonderful Mark Hayes *Cantate Domino* along with the Harold Friedell *King of Glory, King of Peace*. Our mass setting was the lively *Missa Festiva* by John Leavitt.
- We closed the spring season with the rousing *Short Festival Te Deum* by Gustav Holst
- We started the fall by asking the whole parish to turn in a list of their favorite hymns. We received over 400 hymns. We have started them and have included as many as we can fit into the program year. Obviously, we will include more next year as we complete this list.
- In May, due to budget concerns, we had to say goodbye to Louise Floyd, Michael Kirby, and Rachel Handrick. We wish them all the success as they seek other opportunities.
- We also said goodbye to Riley Brown, who accepted a position with the Milwaukee Repertory Theater.
- We said goodbye to Katie Meine Harstad, who is now the Company Manager for Music Theater Works.
- To round out our section leaders, we added 1<sup>st</sup> tenor Zachary Schwartz and 2<sup>nd</sup> soprano Chloe Beal. We bumped Kaylie O'Dell to 1<sup>st</sup> soprano and Jack Ellis to 1<sup>st</sup> bass. Bernadette Brockman, who had been volunteering with St. Matthews so that she could learn the repertoire and liturgy for her future endeavors, got added as the official 1<sup>st</sup> alto.
- We have a wonderful group of substitute singers who step in when someone is ill or away. We are very lucky. They are Winifer Castaeda Verastegui, Madison Holmes, Anthony Rohr, and Brian Pember.
- We celebrated St. Matthew's Day with the robust Kyrie from Haydn's *Lord Nelson Mass*.
- We have added several new works this past fall, including John Rutter's *Lord, make me an instrument of your peace*, a new arrangement of *Shall we gather at the river*, by Russell Robinson, a new arrangement of *God be with you till we meet again* by Joseph Graham, a wonderful spiritual arrangement of *Saint, are you ready to go* by Jason Max Ferdinand, and a brilliant arrangement of *People, Look East* by Howard Helvey.

# Music Director's Report

Submitted by: *Mark Crayton*

- Timothy Patenode played the prelude on Christmas Eve. I will be asking him if he is willing to play more this spring.
- We were so lucky to be joined by Ginny Voedisch, playing cello, on All Saints, playing the amazing obligato line in *Out of the Deep* from John Rutter's *Requiem*. We are looking for more pieces for Ginny to play with the choir. She is starting a cello choir, and I hope to find something for us all to do together.
- We ended the program year with George Frideric Handel's *Messiah*, Part One. We hope to make this a tradition. Mark your calendars now and don't miss it.
- We are always looking for more volunteers. We rehearse everything as much as possible so that we all feel comfortable. Please consider joining us. We hear your amazing sounds as we process.

As we pray for lots of "grace gravy" to be poured over us (ask a choir member), and we look with joyful expectation toward the music we will share in 2026. We have a wonderfully rich and inspiring musical schedule planned for the year ahead.

A heartfelt thank-you to our extraordinary musicians—both in the choir and throughout the parish—whose dedication, talent, and spirit make this ministry such a blessing to the St. Matthew's community.

May our voices continue to rise together in joyful praise. Alleluia, alleluia.

# Parish Administrator's Report

Submitted by: *Gregory Peebles*

Your St Matt's administrator is holding steady. Since the arrival of the Rev. Wayne Hougland, Jr., my role has fully stabilized. In the current model, one day at St Matt's sufficient to accomplish what is needed. In my role as parish administrator, I make sure that the materials need to keep St. Matt's running steadily remain in supply as well as being the primary interface with the community groups that meet regularly on our campus. Currently, I manage this mostly via email, calls and texts. 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 for everyone, and that any issues that parishioners notice receive attention as quickly as possible.



Another of my weekly tasks at St Matt's is to ensure that there are volunteers to help with the liturgy. I am very grateful to those who read, intercede, and bear the holy cup regularly. St Matt's can always use more volunteers, though, and the volunteers most needed are greeters and live-streamers.



## SAINT MATTHEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

# Ministry Reports

### ACOLYTES

*Submitted by Bob Purse,  
Coordinator*

The acolyte program remains small but dedicated at this time. As I continue in my 56th year of being an acolyte at St. Matthews (!), and perhaps my 40th year (at least) of running the program, I am lucky enough to have my daughter Molly continue to take part with me, once a month, despite her living nearly a half hour further away than I do (and therefore, an hour from St. Matthews). Molly has now been an acolyte for about 24 years. Thank you, Molly. In addition to the two of us, there are four other team members, all between ages eleven and fifteen.

Despite this low number of team members, things are working out well at this time. All of the children seem to really enjoy the program, they are a true joy to work with, and three of them are choosing take part in services multiple times per month, and recently, they have become familiar enough with the role that I have been able to step away from participating every week. I thank these four children deeply for enriching the services and the life of St. Matthews, as well as my own life.

As always, I remain hopeful that more people will join the team, and would welcome any children (4th grade or older) or adults who are interested.

### ALTAR BREAD MINISTRY

*Submitted by Deacon Terri,  
Coordinator*

After a long hiatus during the COVID years, we are celebrating the return of our Altar Bread Ministry and homemade Altar Bread! Thank you to Ann Motogawa, Rick Worden, Larkin Myers, Jessica Swanson, and Deborah Williams for being part of this important ministry team.

If you would like to give bread baking a try, the recipe is included below. Please let Deacon Terri know if you are interested.

#### Whole Wheat Altar Bread

7/8 cup very warm (not hot) water

1/4 cup honey

1/8 cup vegetable oil

1/4 teaspoon salt

1 package yeast

2 cups whole wheat flour

2/3 cup white (all-purpose) flour

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 bit 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°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.



## SAINT MATTHEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

# Ministry Reports

### ALTAR GUILD

*Submitted by Jennie Woodring*

The altar guild ministry continues to prepare for our shared meal of 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. When you see the sanctuary transformed by poinsettias, wreaths, and the nativity at Christmas, and by Easter lilies in the spring, it's the result of planning and teamwork by the altar guild.

Altar guild continues its individual signup structure, begun in 2024 in response to reduced team membership. Each of our nine active members signs up to prepare for services on Saturdays and to serve at church on Sundays, with an average of one or two weekends each month. We are currently steered by a core of experienced members, with the hope that additional members will allow us to re-establishing a two-leader system, in which leaders will serve overlapping two-year terms.

We're grateful for the dedicated service of all who

have contributed their time and expertise to altar guild in recent years; we couldn't "do church" without this essential ministry.

Altar guild always welcomes new members. Participating in altar guild gives a sense of camaraderie serving with the group, a chance to learn about the behind-the-scenes operations of preparing for the Eucharist, and an opportunity to embrace the Benedictine philosophy of work as prayer - all with a flexible time commitment. If you hear the call to join altar guild, or would like more information, contact Jennie Woodring ([jenniewoodring@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jenniewoodring@sbcglobal.net)), Kate Lauderbaugh ([klauderbaugh@gmail.com](mailto:klauderbaugh@gmail.com)) or any altar guild member. (No ironing required!)

### ANTI-RACISM

*Submitted by Kristin Jacobsen, Leader*

Immigration was a major news story during 2025, particularly as President Donald Trump sent agents from ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) and CPB (U.S. Customs and Border Protection) for an intense and often violent immigration enforcement that was known as Operation Midway Blitz. The

Antiracism Team voted to add immigration to our work focusing on African Americans and Native Americans.

In all our antiracism work, we are guided by our baptismal promises:

- "to seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself"
- "to strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being"

In the case of racism, we love our neighbor and strive for justice by understanding the injustices suffered by people of color and helping to change and make amends for these wrongs. This work is supported by the Diocese of Chicago, which passed Resolution F-185 in 2022 requiring each parish to pursue antiracism work ([tinyurl.com/2tnce3t8](https://tinyurl.com/2tnce3t8)).

### Antiracism Activities 2025

- **Raising Awareness / Education:**
  - ◊ **Antiracism Learning** almost every week in the eblast and Sunday bulletin, including publicizing events related to race and racism.



## SAINT MATTHEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

# Ministry Reports

- ◇ **Learned about Episcopal Church** involvement in a lawsuit challenging the U.S. guidelines relating to immigration enforcement in churches and other areas.
- ◇ **Discussion of *Resurrection Hope* book** by The Rev. Canon Kelly Brown Douglas, Episcopal priest and theologian.
- ◇ **Moderated discussion on baptismal covenant** at adult education form, including what it calls us to do with relation to immigration (May).
- ◇ **Cohosted movie group discussion** of *The Six Triple Eight* movie about the 6888 Battalion of the U.S. Women's Army Corps (WAC's) in World War II that was the first battalion of African-American women (November).
- **Activities / Action:**
- ◇ **Cosponsored an immigration Know Your Rights training** with the Partnership Team and St. Andrew's Pentecost (May).
- ◇ **Race Against Hate** (June): Secured vestry approval of \$1,000 for sponsorship and set up a tent with food and St.

Matthew's pens to be a welcoming presence.

- ◇ **Participated in Indigenous Peoples' Day service** at St. Matthew's (October).
- ◇ **Collected winter clothing items for RefugeeOne** (October).
- ◇ **Assisted Judy Royal with collection for refugees** of clothing, bedding, and household items (October/November).

### Plans for 2026

- **African Americans:** Raise awareness through events related to African American History Month in February, as well as other activities.
- **History:** Work on St. Matthew's history, positive and negative, concerning race.
- **Immigration:** Continue to discern how we can work on justice for immigrants and refugees.
- **Native Americans:** Raise awareness through Indigenous Peoples' Day service and other activities. Reflect more about what the land acknowledgement means to us and how we are called to help repair the immense harm done to Native Americans
- **Race Against Hate:** Continue to participate in the race, as well as

raise awareness and money for the YWCA's antiracism work

If you'd like to know more about St. Matthew's antiracism work, join us at our events and at our meetings (7:30 p.m. on the third Tuesday of each month, either at the church or on Zoom). Please contact Kristin Jacobsen ([kejcat@gmail.com](mailto:kejcat@gmail.com)) for questions.

### 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.



## SAINT MATTHEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

# Ministry Reports

### FRIDAY NIGHT COFFEEHOUSE

*Submitted by Tim Patenode*

As part of St. Matthew's effort to become a neighborhood arts center, we reinstituted the Friday Night Coffeehouse in 2025. The format consists of a short set by a local singer-songwriter, playing all original music, followed by an open mic for parishioners and non-parishioners alike, all held in the Assembly Room. We had five coffeehouses in 2025 in the months of February, April, June, September and November with attendance between 30 and 50 a night; and we are becoming known among the songwriter community as a "listening room" and a place with friendly vibes. Jim Kelly and Timothy Patenode organize and advertise the events; Diane Fairchild provides stage lighting; Julie Salako and Gregory Peebles assist with marketing; and several parishioners have performed at the open mic including Jim, Tim, Curt Nilsson, Bob Purse (with Molly holding cue cards), Steve and Ginger Carr, and Francis Lynch.



### GREEN TEAM

*Submitted by Jennie Woodring*

St. Matthew's Green Team was launched in 2012 under the passionate leadership of Christina Padilla, who led the team until early 2024. Since then, our dedicated members have committed to continuing the important work of leading St. Matthew's in enacting creation care and in setting an example for other churches.

In 2025 our members:

- Continued to collect building waste for composting in order to approach realizing a zero-waste facility -
- Maintained communication with Faith in Place, a inter-denominational green team organization
- Engaged with the congregation to provide recycling and composting education through St. Matthew's weekly newsletter
- Offered the opportunity to appreciate God's creation by co-hosting a nature walk with Faith in Place
- Assisted Terri Morrissey (honorary team member) with planting and maintaining the new

native garden in our back yard

- included St. Augustine's nascent green team at one of our meetings to provide insights into green team operations

We plan to continue action and education through 2026, and welcome new members any time. Contact Anne Branning, Roberta Buchanan, Craige Christensen, Mary Jo Deysach, Pat Egan, Karen Hertel, Mihaela Iordanova, Pete Meyer, Terri Morrissey, Ann Searles, Deborah Williams, or Jennie Woodring for more information.

### LERMAN ART EXHIBIT; A BENEFIT FOR ST. MATTHEW'S

*Submitted by The Rev. Terri Morrissey*

An Art Exhibition celebrating the life and art of Elise Pike Lerman and Jack Lerman took place at St. Matthew's on December 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025. The 200+ works represented in the show included drawings, paintings, prints, and photographs in a variety of media - and drew many friends and visitors. It was truly a celebration and tribute to both Jack and Elise. This exhibition was a benefit for St. Matthew's and raised \$5200. Thank you



## SAINT MATTHEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

# Ministry Reports

to Jack for his generosity and for donating 50% of the proceeds to St. Matthew's. It's also important to recognize the tremendous amount of time that Jack spent preparing artwork for this show. Thank you to everyone who helped make the exhibit a success – David Parks, Chris Motogawa, Tim Patenode, +Wayne Hougland, Steve Carr, Julie Salako, Gregory Peebles, Mary Clark, Karen Hertel, Roberta Buchanan, Larkin Myers, and Diane Kotin.

often late afternoon on weekends. This year they have been held in the St. Matthew's Assembly Room or Parlor. 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 2025 films we studied were Amadeus (old), Superman (new) and A Complete Unknown (the biography of Bob Dylan). The Florida Project and Six Triple Eight raised significant social issues. Discussions were lively as we considered various 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. 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 2026. New faces are always welcome to participate in this very enjoyable activity.

### **NATIVE PLANT AND POLLINATOR GARDEN**

*Submitted by Deacon Terri Morrissey*

In an effort to foster biodiversity and reduce our carbon footprint, the Green Team and members of our congregation gathered in the fall of 2023 to begin the transformation of St. Matthew's backyard into a native plant and pollinator garden. Led by Christina Padilla, we began the process of "removing" a large portion of the lawn. This was accomplished with layers of corrugated cardboard, topsoil, and a thick blanket of fallen leaves. The area was then left to overwinter. In April of 2024, we again gathered in the backyard to remove the piles of leaves - and with help from an anonymous donor, we were able to



### **MOVIE GROUP**

*Submitted by Ann Searles*

The St. Matthew's movie group has met six times in 2025 with another postponed to 2026 due to illness. Meetings have been held at various times of day,



## SAINT MATTHEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

# Ministry Reports

enlist the services of our landscapers to complete the next steps. The landscapers rototilled and added 6 yards of organic topsoil to what became our 21'x 28' garden space. We are thankful to the Highland Garden Club for donating the large number of plants that got us started! Thank you also to Jennie Woodring, Anne Branning, Steve Carr, Tim Patenode, Pete Meyer, Karen Hertel, and Deborah Williams for all of their help in 2025, and making our second year a success! An additional thanks to Steve Carr for purchasing the beautiful bench that graces our garden. Getting a native plant garden established is a multi-year process – we are looking forward to seeing what emerges in the spring and adding additional plant material where it's needed. 2026 will be our third growing season!!



### **REFUGEE / UNHOUSED FAMILIES RESETTLEMENT PROJECT**

*Submitted by Judy Royal*

This past summer I learned of an effort to support some unhoused refugee families move into Evanston apartments. A few local organizations were involved in this effort and requested that I keep their involvement confidential. This project involved finding the families apartments, paying rent and utilities for one year, and providing some other support but not furniture or household goods. Four families were about to move in apartments without mattresses or sheets.

At this point, I made an emergency appeal to the congregation of St. Matthew's for funding for mattresses and bedding. There was a generous response, and I was able to buy bed frames and mattresses and have them delivered to the families. There were also sheets and comforters donated. Thanks to Daisy Chaudruc for her organizational help and to Mary Jo Deysach and Francis Lynch for delivering bedding donations.

As I spent more time on this project, I learned that there are 19 families involved; and

while some families had some furniture and household goods, there was still significant need. St. Matthew's had some items left over from our last refugee project and it made sense to offer these items to the family. From our previous refugee project, we had made some contacts who could help us get donations of needed items. For example, Cynthia Rigali-Lund, the Curate at Christ Church Winnetka, offered to help us obtain items from their rummage sale, and I made contact with a woman at Our Lady at Perpetual Help Church in Glenview who wanted to offer us some of their donated furniture.

We ended up with a large amount of furniture. We have an upstairs room dedicated to displaying and storing household goods. Thanks to Kristin Jacobsen, Joyce Weber and Ginger Carr for helping organize the mountain of stuff in that room). People can arrange a day and time to come view the furniture and household goods and select what they would like. I pick them up at their apartment, drive them home with the smaller items, and arrange delivery on a later date for the heavy furniture.



## SAINT MATTHEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

# Ministry Reports

There are still families who have not yet been able to come to the church, so this process continues. I was contacted by a City of Evanston employee who helps unhoused people get an apartment. He asked whether other unhoused people in Evanston might be able to get furniture and household items from us. This is another way to help vulnerable people in our community, so I agreed and have also let two of these families "shop" at St. Matthew's. There may be a time when the refugee families have the items they need or are forced to leave this country, but there will always be people trying to start new lives and so we intend to continue this project.

Future needs:

- A few volunteers from time to time to organize new items
- Furniture donations (please text or email me a photo first because there are some items we don't need or have room for at the moment)
- Household goods such as plates, glasses, flatware, kitchen utensils, small appliances, towels, toys.
- Strong volunteers to move items up and down stairs into apartments.

- Money donations to help hire movers for the really heavy furniture or to purchase some needed items that haven't been donated.
- Coat rack to help display items.
- Used TVs - many families want them and they are a good way to learn English.
- Cardboard boxes (medium or large) for people to take their items home.

If you have non-furniture items to donate, you can bring them to the Refugee Room on the second floor of the church, leave them on the bench outside the church office (please check to make sure someone is at the church to let you in or contact me for the code to get into the building), or leave them on the front porch of our home at 2325 Hartrey and I will take them over.

### ST. MATT'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 – There are two groups that meet on Wednesday (Gallery) and Sunday evenings (Parish Hall). During 2024, the Sunday night AA group added a "book club" meeting before their regular convening.
- OA – continues to meet on Saturday mornings in the gallery three weeks per month.

### 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. Choirmaster Mark Crayton also teaches from St Matthew's as needed.
- Fairytale Ballet/Lincoln Street Ballet Studio — Both groups continue to meet without interruption beyond occasional breaks for holidays, etc.
- Citadel Theatre — This theatre group uses St Matt's space for a couple of weeks per year for early rehearsals for a play. St Matt's hosted them for rehearsals once in 2025, with a return planned in March 2026.



## SAINT MATTHEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

# Ministry Reports

- ESIC (Improv Group) - Peter Civetta continues to use our space for his youth improvisation group. His summer camp meets in the parish hall, and outside, weather permitting. The week-long summer camp, which usually happens in August, uses only the back yard, kitchen, and bathrooms and culminates in a performance early Friday evening of the week. They have already reserved for Summer 2026.

### Community Groups

- A La Carte Catering — Owner Chrsi Di Clementi and her catering company make use of St Matt's kitchen most weekday mornings. The relationship between A La Carte and St Matt's continues to be beneficial. A La Carte is the first choice for events at St Matthew's with budget for catering (e.g., 2025 St Nicholas Brunch, Annual Meeting).
- Boy Scouts – Troup 922 has resumed meeting in the parish hall weekly on Thursday nights.
- St. Matt's Stitchers – 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 2024 included "Conclave" and "Ghostlight". The most recent movie group screened Bonhoeffer, a film concerned with the life and work of Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

- Highland Garden Club of Evanston – St Matthew's Parishioners are members of this club which meets on the first Wednesday evening of each month. Meetings occur either in the Parish Hall or in the Assembly Room, depending on the needs of the group.
- Wiggleworms – Wiggleworms remains a dedicated community group. In 2025, Wiggleworms provided sessions on Wednesday and Thursday mornings in the Assembly Room, with the added Saturday sessions (10 AM – 1 PM) from last year continuing.
- Yoga Studio – Yoga with Patrina uses the Assembly Room for yoga on Fridays

in the afternoon, serving the community and providing those interested with a space to continue to address focus, health, and flexibility.

### 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.

While we generally stitch personal projects, we stitched and collected a few dozen hats and scarves and donated them to 500 Hats for Refugees in January, 2024. Meetings take place in St. Matthew's library, where the light and seating suit our needs.



## SAINT MATTHEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

# Ministry Reports

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

*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 every Wednesday at St. Mark's to anyone who enters our doors. What began as a simple bag lunch has evolved in to a full meal service with side dishes and a warm, welcoming atmosphere. 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.

The coordinator shops for food on Tuesdays and delivers it to the St. Mark's kitchen. Volunteers prepare lunches for 60-65 and are always prepared with additional foodstuffs if the need arises. Meals usually include sandwiches, fruit, chips, tossed salad, cookie, and beverage, often with extras such as hard-boiled eggs and peanuts-in-the-

shell. From late October into April, we offer soup, or sometimes an entire hot meal, and during warmer months, we offer ice cream (always well received.) Most weeks our guests also enjoy donated items from Bennison's bakery.

We encourage our guests to remain in Cunningham Hall to eat their meals, but offer "to-go" meals to those who need them. In-house meals are served on red trays, using minimal packaging. Sandwiches are packed in compostable bags, soups ladled into ceramic bowls, and sides, fruit, and desserts are served 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 Joyce Weber, Roberta Buchanan, Deb Williams, Jennie Woodring, Judy Royal, and Harper Olsen who join with volunteers from St. Mark's and the broader community in their dedication to this ministry. Thanks to Donna Richardson

and Nancye Kirk from St. Mark's, community members Jen Kihm and Tad Petrick, who each coordinate the meals once a month along with yours truly.

This ministry continues to be a joyful experience and we encourage any parishioner who is available on Wednesdays from 10-12:30 to join us!





St. Matthew's lay leaders duly elected and appointed at  
The 149<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Parish on January 26, 2025

**St. Matthew's Vestry**

Stephen Carr, *Senior Warden*

Tim Patenode, *Junior Warden*

William Widmer, Kelsey Davies, Jim Kelly (2026)

Dudley Conley, Larkin Myers (2027)

Roberta Buchanan, Karen Hertel, David Parks (2028)

*Clerk of the Vestry*, Larkin Myers (2028)

Christopher Motogawa, *Treasurer* (2026)

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

Don Churchill (2025)    Mary Clark (2025)    Ann Searles (2026)

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

ONLINE – All Day, Saturday, November 22, 2025

Delegates: Mary Clark, Ann Searles, Julia Green

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

The Most Rev. Sean Rowe, *28<sup>th</sup> Presiding Bishop, The Episcopal Church*

The Rt. Rev. Paula E. Clark, *Thirteenth Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago*

The Rt. Rev. Wayne M. Hougland, Jr., *Priest-in-Charge*

[whayne@stmatthewsevanston.org](mailto:whayne@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*