



# Matt's Media

The Newsletter of St. Matthew's Anglican Church, Islington

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## From the Pastor: Who is the *God With US*?

Rev. Philip Stonhouse

Growing up in the Anglican Church, I must admit that I knew very little about the Holy Spirit. I probably would have remembered the dove at Jesus' baptism, and I probably thought it was the same dove in the *Noah's Ark* story (they relate, but they are different). My parents are both ministers, so I could also have told you all the overly simplified analogies which people use to describe the Trinity as '3 in 1': water as liquid, solid, or gas; the sun as heat, light, and radiation; the three-leaf clover. All these images fail to express the reality that God is wholly one and yet is also three persons in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit at the same time. A beautiful mystery; our God is a loving community unto himself.

One of the ways I began to connect with the Holy Spirit was through his representations or characteristics. These are not perfect representations, but they speak to us about the reality of the Holy Spirit. I already mentioned the dove: this beautiful symbol of blessing and peace that hovers in the sky and shows such freedom and life. Then there is the air: the wind that refreshes on a hot day, the wind that carries the rain and the seed across the world, the air that we breathe out as we speak, or the breath that fills our lungs and gives us life. Take a moment now to purposefully breathe in and out so that you, too, become in tune with the life-giving reality of God's breath.

I remember also as a child receiving a set of chimes. While giving them to me, my godparents said, "You may not be able to see God, but at least now you can hear Him." I have loved chimes ever since and they constantly remind me of God's presence.

There are many other ways to ponder and experience God's presence in the Holy Spirit. You might think of the burning bush, the pillar of fire, or the tongues of fire. You might experience God through the warmth and light of a fire. Or you might watch the smoke as it rises to the sky and carries our prayers. Or you might look at an empty chair and recognize that He is there. Or you might experience the love of family, friends, or a stranger. Whatever you do, recognize that our powerful God, the Creator of everything, is with you in the Holy Spirit. He is connecting us and he is empowering us to share His love with the world.

God bless you all.

Your brother in Christ,  
Rev. Philip Stonhouse

## A Joyous Celebration

*Photos by B. Velagapalli, E. Norfolk, A. Thompson*



## Wardens' Report

*Karen Lee, Stuart Watt, Marguerite Locke, and Sharon Shao*

Welcome Spring! Such a beautiful time of year, with the return of green grass, leaves on the trees and blossoms everywhere. We do hope you have been able to be outdoors to enjoy it.

During our Lent and Easter season, we were grateful for Rev. Philip and Tyler Versluis and colleagues for their leadership. We especially thank them for the Lenten Wednesday Evening Taizé gatherings, the Organ & Piano concert, and the Tenebrae service which included Tyler's Premiere performance of his own *Stabat Mater*. We were delighted to once again join with the children in the Easter Pageant. Thanks to the Club Matt volunteers and parents for this presentation.

Late in February our Deputy Rector's Warden, Lianne Thompson, retired from the position. We are grateful for her contributions and thank her for her service during the past two years. We now welcome Sharon Shao as Deputy Rector's Warden. Welcome Aboard, Sharon!

As the COVID-19 restrictions gradually lift, we are happy to be able to welcome back many of our tenants, including the AA groups, Gamblers Anonymous and the Swansea Dog Obedience Club.

We are also delighted to welcome many newcomers to our worship and community services.

Coffee Hour following the Sunday 11:00 a.m. service will resume on June 5, 2022. Volunteers are always welcome to host a Sunday. Please contact the office for further information.

The Youth Room has been refreshed thanks to our amazing St. Matthew's Paint Team, namely Marguerite Locke, Lianne Thompson, and Stuart Watt. Thank You All!

The Clergy/Warden Team has met with the church's landscaping company and plans are underway for pruning, planting of annuals and rose bushes in the next few weeks.

Comparative Income Statement ( <b>Operating Fund</b> )			
	2022 April	2021 April	2022 Budget
Income	86,704	89,528	96,921
Expenses	95,947	102,150	100,637
Net Income	(9,243)	(12,622)	(3,716)

Thank you for your continued financial support.

As always, we give thanks to God for God's continued provision and care for St. Matthew's. Blessings to you all.

## COVID-19 Restrictions Lifted

As of June 5, 2022, on Pentecost Sunday, the Diocese is lifting all COVID-19 restrictions including mask requirements. At St. Matthew's the wearing of masks will be optional but no longer a requirement. As fans are now permitted, the floor fans will be in operation as the weather determines and the sanctuary windows will be open.



## Introducing Sharon Shao – Deputy Warden

I am a loving wife and mother of two strong, intelligent, and amazing teenage daughters. I grew up with strong faith and spirituality. Throughout my life's ups and downs, I have always known and felt assured that God's presence surrounds me daily.

The following bible verse (*Isaiah 41:10*) resonates with me due to the reminder that God provides strength and security always:

“Do not fear, for I am with you, do not be afraid, for I am your God;  
I will strengthen you; I will help you, I will uphold you with my  
victorious right hand”

My journey at St. Matthew's church started when the girls were baptized over 11 years ago. I immediately felt welcomed by the St. Matthew's family and soon got involved in various ministries in the church.

My participation at St. Matthew's Anglican Church began as a Reader for bible and scripture readings. Very shortly thereafter I started teaching our St. Matthew's children as a Sunday school parent teacher for both junior and senior children for about five years. I have been involved with the Intercession ministry team for delivery of intercessions. In addition, I have been an active member of the Hospitality ministry and have led and co-organized the Maundy Thursday suppers as a fundraising event prior to COVID.

Now, as we develop a new normal with COVID, I welcome you to reach out to me for anything in which I myself or the parish can serve or support you in your faith or life journey. I look forward to connecting with you either in person or virtually over coffee.



## Church Records

Jack Smith  
March 16, 2022

### Deaths

Sally Martin  
April 22, 2022

Joel Easterbrook  
March 21, 2022



Sissy Reece  
April 29, 2022

Marjorie McConnell  
March 22, 2022

Irija Cook  
May 8, 2022

*Grant to them Eternal Rest, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine on them!  
May they Rest in Peace, & Rise in Glory*

## ■ The Bridegroom Cometh: The Music of Judee Sill

Tyler Versluis

In the 1960s hippie counterculture exploded in California. Millions of young people, disillusioned with the repressive culture of post-war America, sought alternative methods of living through community, music, drugs and spirituality. It was in this potent cocktail of California life that Judee Sill (1944-1979) came of age. The product of a dysfunctional household – her parents were alcoholics, and her stepfather was particularly cruel and abusive – Judee sought escape through rebellious behaviour and drug use. By the time she was 20, she had an annulled marriage behind her after impulsively marrying her boyfriend, and was shipped off to reform school. It was here that Judee led the school choir, playing Baptist hymns on the organ, and developed an appreciation for Bach that would remain the rest of her life.

After leaving the school, Judee entered the blues and jazz scene and developed a \$150-a-day heroin habit that she maintained through theft and prostitution. However, it was in this sordid part of her life that Judee had her breakthrough into the music industry, after writing a hit song in 1969 for The Turtles, **Lady O**. This generated interest in Judee's own solo career, and she was eventually signed by David Geffen's newly established music label, Asylum Records. At this time in California singer-songwriters were a dime a dozen, but Judee stuck out from the rest, for better or for worse. Shy, introverted and with a sharp tongue, she was unable to capture audiences with her presence like Joni Mitchell or other female songwriters in the California folk scene. Then there was the nature of Judee's songs, which she performed either on the guitar or piano – mystical, metaphorical, and with an almost classical sensitivity, all wrapped up in the California twang of Judee's voice. Her lyrics are full of spiritual symbols and metaphors: angels, demons, lambs, roses and crucifixes. At the centre of it all is a man and lover, who will arrive on horseback to rescue Judee from her own troubled life, a "cowboy Christ." This figure, present in dozens of Judee's songs, remains a shadowy presence throughout Judee's brief music career.

*When I was stranded at the crossroads it was dismal and grey,  
And when I asked him for directions he showed me the good way,  
And if the sky is swirlin' still his pace never swerves  
Because his heart is always faithful, reachin' higher  
Because his heart is always faithful to the captain he serves.<sup>1</sup>*

Despite the romanticism of it all, Judee's music remained distant from earthly ways and distinctly focused on a heavenly desire to transcend and connect with God. Even when Judee seems to approach the intimate in songs like **The Kiss**, we receive the impression that she is not singing about romantic love:

*Love, rising from the mists  
Promise me this and only this,  
Holy breath touching me, like a wind song  
Sweet communion of a kiss<sup>2</sup>*

Before performing this song live in 1973, Judee explains that the kiss is "a symbol of the union of opposites." The unification of lovers, or is Judee talking about something more profound, the unification of the eternal and mortal, in the incarnation of the Son of Man? Judee closes her second and final album, **Heart Food** (1973), with her most complex and perhaps overtly spiritual song, the invocatory **The Donor**.

...continued

## The Bridegroom Cometh: The Music of Judee Sill *(continued)*

"I thought I would take a different approach when I wrote this song, in that most of my songs, I try to write 'em to make people feel better, or make 'em feel that their warm human spirit is affirmed [...] Well, maybe I thought I'd take a different approach, and write a song, that would somehow musical induce God into giving us all a break[...] Since that time I decided that I shouldn't get any more breaks, because I already squandered them in weird places."<sup>3</sup>

*Songs from so deep*

*While I'm sleepin'*

*Seep in*

*Sweepin' over me*

*Still the echo's achin'*

*"Leave us not forsaken"*

*Kyrie eleison, kyrie eleison*

*Kyrie eleison*

*Eleison, Eleison, eleison*

*Kyrie eleison, kyrie eleison*

*So sad, and so true*

*That even shadows come*

*And hum the requiem<sup>4</sup>*

And shortly after, that was it. **Heart Food** failed to sell, and Judee became disillusioned with the music industry. She was dropped by David Geffen's label and resumed her drug habit. She attempted to record another album in 1974, but it remained unfinished at her death in 1979 from a deadly cocaine and heroin overdose. Her work remained obscure for decades until a revival of interest in the 2000s. From Judee's spiritual interests and pursuits, it was clear that she was a seeker rather than a believer. Like many of her California hippie peers, Judee pursued a patchwork spirituality of gnostic, occult and Hindu beliefs. Despite this, it is still tempting to put Judee in a long tradition of Christian female mystics, writing about Christ as a Saviour and chaste lover. Christ fulfils the longing of the heart as well as the soul. These metaphors might seem icky to the sterilized sensibilities of 21st-century Protestantism, but these depictions are as old as Christianity itself. After all, in Ephesians, Saint Paul compares the union of husband and wife to that of Christ and the church. In the same way that Judee Sill was viewing Christ through a veil – seeing the truth only partially through a blur of drugs and pretension – we also simply fail to accept our own longing to be united in Christ because of the stumbling blocks we place in front of our own path. Maybe Sill's redemption occurs because she allows us to see Christ in all good things, in her beautiful music that illuminates the darkness of her life.

Judee Sill Discography:

*Judee Sill* (1971)

*Heart Food* (1973)

*Dreams Come True* (posthumous collection, 2005)

Recommended songs:

*The Kiss*

*The Donor*

*Jesus Was A Crossmaker*

*When The Bridegroom Comes*

<sup>1</sup> Judee Sill. *The Vigilante*. CD. *Heart Food*.

<sup>2</sup> Judee Sill. *Kiss*. CD. *Ibid*.

<sup>3</sup> Judee Sill. *The Donor*. CD. *Live In London: The BBC Recordings 1972-1973*.

<sup>4</sup> Judee Sill. *The Donor*. CD. *Ibid*.

## Tenebrae Service: Available on YouTube

The Tenebrae service teaches us that the darkest hour is just before the dawn. Readings and anthems during the service are about lamenting, destruction, darkness and God's abandonment, all experiences Jesus Christ lived through during His time on earth.

As the service proceeds, candles are extinguished, until only one light remains: the Christ Candle. Even this light is eventually taken out of sight into the sacristy, to symbolize Christ in the tomb. Then a loud noise is heard – the Strepitus – representing the earthquake after Jesus' death, followed by the reappearance of the Christ candle, which leads us out to the world.

This service also features a setting of the Lenten hymn, *Stabat Mater*, composed by our organist and music director Tyler Versluis. This hymn, written in the 13th century, is most often heard at processions during Stations of the Cross or in Lenten concerts, of which musical settings by Pergolesi, Vivaldi, Poulenc, and Charpentier are the most popular.

The hymn invites us to share in the sorrow of Mary, Mother of God, as she witnesses her Son being accused, tortured, and eventually killed by His enemies. The *Stabat Mater* remains popular in Christian spheres, possibly due to its relatability, as young men die in war leaving many mothers, wives, and grandmothers to weep in despair. As war once again erupts in eastern Europe, the bitterness of this reality is once again present.

**Online now on YouTube. Please click [HERE](#) for the link.**

Psalms 69, 70, 71

*The Reproaches*, from the *Good Friday Liturgy*, C Upton

*Tenebrae of Holy Saturday*, Healey Willan

Choir:

Karen Davidson, alto

Cynthia Smithers, soprano

*Stabat Mater*, Tyler Versluis, World Première

Ensemble:

Lyndsay Promane, mezzo-soprano

Stephen Boda, organ

Michael Murphy, glockenspiel

Evan Bowen, tam-tam and chimes

Recording Engineer: Ben Ewing



## Soli Deo Gloria (Glory to God Alone) Fundraiser Concert

This glorious organ and piano recital by Damien Macedo, Organist and Tyler Versluis, Pianist was held on March 6. They performed music by Bach and Franck plus a rare performance of the solemn and epic *Concerto Gregoriano for Organ and Piano* by Pietro Yon, which was a favourite of Tyler's grandfather.

The generous proceeds will be used to improve the Audio/Visual equipment in the church.

Thank you, Tyler and Damien.

## Beyond Soup

*Deborah Hurn*

St. Matthew's supported the Toronto Urban Native Ministry (TUNM) program with the 'Soup's On' program. The program provided meals to this community on a weekly basis for more than a year during COVID. Many parishioners participated in the chopping and cooking of soups, casseroles, stews, and salads depending on the time of year. From this experience, we recognized we were not only filling a need for the homeless but also the need for fellowship within the parish. The weekly event gave us opportunity to maintain relationships and to build new ones. It was hoped that we could continue with this fellowship building.

We will be starting a new program in September to support others in need. The need may be from a parishioner or non-parishioner. Our goal is to provide a meal when someone is in need... financially, emotionally, spiritually. This gift of hospitality is meant to let the recipient know they are being thought of and that we pray this gesture will help them in some way. The recipient may be a family member, neighbour, stranger, or friend. They may have had an illness, a death in the family, just need a pick me up, or need a meal to help until pay day arrives. The gift may be a container of soup, a meal for a family of six, or anything in between. It is based on their needs, not ours.

Anyone who has a need or is aware of a need may contact the church office (416-231-4014) or Deborah Hurn (905-625-7848) to provide the necessary food to anyone. The meal will be ready for pick up at the Hurn's or an alternative arrangement may be made.

## Audio-Visual Fundraiser

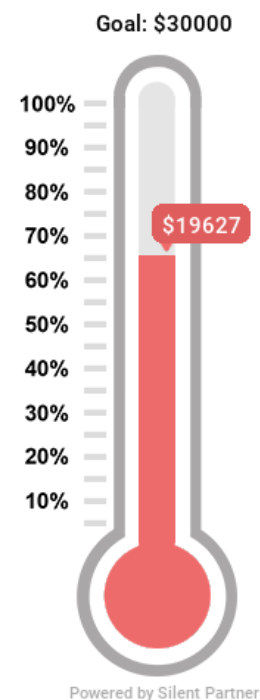
*The Warden Team*

As most parishioners are aware, there have been ongoing technical issues for audio and visual transmission during both online and in-person worship services. Interference with other transmission signals has resulted in poor sound quality, coupled with microphone problems and old wiring issues. After a very expensive proposal from an AV company, we consulted with Long and McQuade Pro and are able to source most of the equipment upgrades through them at significantly less expense. We require \$30,000 to fund this project.

Due to backlogs in shipping and delivery, the equipment will likely not be available until mid-summer.

Our team is very thankful for the generous donations made to date for our upgrades and at the time of writing this message, we are nearly 66% of the way to our goal with \$19,627 in a designated account. If you can consider a contribution of any amount to the fund, it will be gratefully received. Donations may be made via etransfer to [finance@saintmatts.ca](mailto:finance@saintmatts.ca), by cheques or by cash. Kindly note "AV fund" on your gift.

Please watch our weekly emails or the thermometer in the Narthex for our progress. Thank you again for your generous support.





## Sally's Prayer

*Sarah Martin*

Do not stand and my grave and weep.  
I am not there, I do not sleep.

I am the voice that whispers in your ear  
To tell you the right thing to do.

I am the joy in your heart whenever  
You are with a child.

I am the squeeze in your hand at the end of  
“God’s words” before the meal.

I am the unconditional love of a hug  
With a loved one.

I am who the cats look for  
And still feel around them.

I am the light when you  
Are alone in the dark.

I am the hope when you are afraid.

I am the colours in a beautiful flower  
Or in a sunset.

I am the quiet satisfaction and peace  
Of sitting in the backyard.

I am the song of the vivid red cardinal  
And the crimson flash of the red-winged blackbird.

I am the sweetness in a  
Homemade sour cherry “clobber.”

I am the “MOOOHHH-SES!” to every surprise;  
The “...than sin” to every superlative.

I am the first pink magnolia bloom  
Outside the bathroom window.

I am the kick in the pants  
When you need to get the job done.

I am the anchor when your boat  
Gets too far from shore.

I am the draft when you accidentally tuck your skirt  
Into your underwear.

I am the hope and faith that things  
Will all work out.

I am the “but I might use that” when you’re  
Trying to declutter.

I am the operatically sung, perfectly pitched note from the other room  
When you’re practicing piano and make a mistake.

I am the compassion that  
Always puts others first.

I am the love, the memories, that never end.

I am not gone. I am in your hearts, if you listen.

This only a desvio – a detour.

# Memorial for Sally Martin

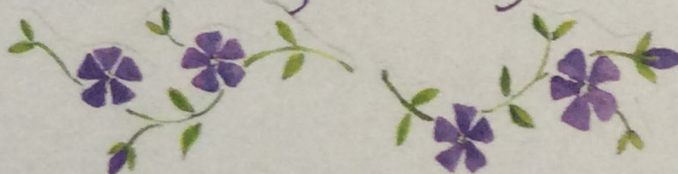
Bruce Gleeson

## Memorial For Sally

Though now beyond our sight,  
 Your gentle loving presence  
 Still encircles us to ease  
 The pain of your departure,  
 Reminding us of all  
 In which you took delight:  
 The changing round of seasons,  
 The fragile velvet of a Monarch's wing;  
 The winter-ending trilling  
 Of a red-winged blackbird's call,  
 The long awaited blooming  
 Of Spring's first daffodil,  
 Both presaging the hope of resurrection.  
 Birthday balloons for Noel, Sarah, Laura,  
 Ryan, Sadie and Marian,  
 To celebrate these precious gifts from God.  
 The joys you found in music, teaching,  
 Painting, reading, travelling with friends,  
 Were life's fulfilling harmonies  
 That taught your heart to sing.  
 Your willingness to serve  
 Where'er you saw a need,  
 Compassionately feeling others' pain,  
 Clear evidence of your steadfast faith.  
 Thus all these precious moments  
 By us so lovingly recalled,  
 Shall hold you close and prove  
 An everlasting blessing.



Bruce Gleeson  
 April 2022





## What's Happening

### Every Week

Wednesday BCP service in person at 10:30 a.m. (and posted to [St. Matthew's YouTube channel](#))

Sunday Services in person & online at 9:30 a.m. (casual) and 11:00 a.m. (classic)

Coffee Hour in person and online following the 11:00 a.m. service. Sign up in the Narthex to provide light refreshments. Thanks to Jean and Jeff Wright, who will make the coffee.

### Second Sunday of the Month

Sunday 8:00 a.m. in person BCP service

### Choir

Choir has resumed: rehearsals on Thursday evenings at 7:00 p.m., singing on Sundays at 11:00 a.m. and special services. All are welcome to join.

### Men's Breakfast

Upcoming dates: June 11, July 9, August 6, September 10, October 1

In person at Montreal Deli, 9:00 a.m. Online at 8:00 a.m. If you want to join, contact Dave Oakden ([dave.oakden@gmail.com](mailto:dave.oakden@gmail.com)) to get on his list to receive a Zoom link by email that morning.

### Club Matt & Youth Pizza Party June 24, 5:30 p.m

Celebrate the end of school with pizza in the parking lot. RSVP to the office (416-231-4014).

## Easter Sunrise Service

*Photos by Anne-Marie May*



## Club Matt

Lianne Thompson

With hope, prayer and faith, we see the world start to emerge from this long journey through COVID. And with that, Club Matt is excited to look forward to expanding a return to in-person celebration. The Club Matt community did rejoice in moments together and online during these past few months. This was most apparent during a joyous Easter Pageant that linked families at home and in person at St. Matthew's as we celebrated the risen Jesus. Hallelujah! (See photos on the next page.)

As we approach the end of the academic year, a modified Club Matt program continues at the 9:30 a.m. service each week, providing music and prayers specially designed to engage children and families. There is also a children's talk with activities, making the bible readings come to life and intended to encourage the children to discuss what they hear.

Since Easter, we journeyed *The Road In-Between*, a five-week program helping the children connect events between Easter and Ascension/Pentecost. This will be followed by a special *Journey to Practicing our Faith* – a customized program to help children, young and old, understand some of the key elements of the Christian faith: prayer, forgiveness, testimony, and song/praise.

During the Summer, we hope to refresh the Club Matt spaces as we plan for a return to full programming by the Fall. Stay tuned for details and perhaps to join a work crew!



## Kingsley School

Louisa Williams

Kingsley School has been busy this Spring. On Earth Day the children and teachers cleaned up the grounds. All the students were given gloves and bags and picked up garbage to help keep the parking lot and surrounding areas nice and clean.

By the oak tree near the St. Matthew's sign, you may have noticed a beautiful display of brightly painted rocks. The children came up with little "wishes" and positive messages for all to enjoy.







# Easter Pageant





## Messy Church

*Linda Dickson, with photos by B. Velagapalli, D. Hurn, T. Versluis*

Messy Church has been very busy this spring. With the Winter Olympics still on our mind, we chose that as our February theme, with winter activities as our focus. Our closing session used two fire pits where the children could make S'Mores and have a cup of hot chocolate. Thank you, Bruce Gleeson, for keeping our fire burning safely.



Our March Messy Church event was a Journey to Easter. With five stations we participated in making an Easter Garden which was displayed beside the outdoor tomb on Easter Morning. The children enjoyed getting their hands dirty making Holy Week handprints, a Palm Sunday Donkey, and a Heart with handprints which remind us of Jesus' commandment to Love your Neighbour. They made a cluster of grapes to represent the wine at the Last Supper. Their handprint with hand flowers on each finger was placed in the Garden of Gethsemane. They each helped to build the city of Jerusalem using blocks.



Our April event was postponed. Instead, the Rooted in Christ theme was used for our May Messy Church. We planted a tree outside, as well as things to take home. We looked at God's world and made bark and leaf rubbings. There was also a water filtration experiment.

I would like to thank the wonderful team and volunteers who help to make each Messy Church a success.



## Youth Group

*Christine Ivy*

Youth Group resumed meeting in March, online bi-weekly for about an hour. We catch up, pray together, and discuss how our faith is relevant to our lives today by looking at the Bible and learning about the character of God. We have started using *The Story Bible*, which helps to follow the entire arc of scripture. It uses the actual Biblical text but is organized to read like a novel. We are also connecting between meetings using Discord to share videos and chat.

With technology have come technical difficulties, so we are looking forward to meeting in person in our freshly painted Youth Room! Grateful thanks are extended to St. Matthew's Paint Team – Marguerite Locke, Lianne Thompson, and Stuart Watt, and to Anne-Marie May for her encouragement, support, and belief in this project from the beginning.

The journey through COVID has been long, but we hope to rebuild a sense of BELONGING within this fledgling group of five teenagers with the help and nurturing of St. Matt's adult congregation.



Painting the Youth Room

Thank you for your prayers for our leadership, our volunteer, and our teens. Please also pray for our teens' parents as they determine whether to return to in-person services and that they would feel they have a supportive community here.

## Ridwan Ali, Canadian Citizen

*Marguerite Locke*

On Wednesday May 11, 2022, a major milestone was passed in Ridwan's life as he took the oath of Canadian Citizenship.

Due to COVID, the ceremony was only on Zoom. However, Sandra and Stuart Watt and Marguerite Locke were present at Ridwan's apartment to share in the event. We were so pleased for him to have mastered his English skills to successfully study for and pass the exam (which none of us were sure we could do!) There were approximately 55 other candidates, including children with their parents, on the Zoom call so connectivity and proper screening presented challenges for the two moderators. However, once that process was completed, Judge Malloy from Nova Scotia presided over the speeches and oaths and welcomed the new citizens. Then it was most interesting to hear us all sing *O Canada* together. We attach a photo of Ridwan with his Canadian flag. In the background are two photographs of Niagara Falls given to Ridwan by the late Pat Rickards in one of their tutoring sessions which began on Ridwan's arrival five years ago.



Ridwan is looking forward to receiving his Canadian passport and considering a holiday back to Eastern Ethiopia, his homeland, perhaps next year.



## Discipleship at St Matthew's: Being Followers of Jesus

Many groups and activities at St. Matthew's provide support for us as adults to keep to our call to be followers of Jesus. Some of those opportunities for adults to grow in faith and to support sharing faith within St. Matthew's community, in our families, and in our neighbourhoods are described here.

The first is an account of the activities of the diocesan **Bishop's Committee on Discipleship** provided by **Deborah Hurn**.

In June 2020, I was invited to join a group of Clergy and Laity. I became a member of the *Bishop's Committee on Discipleship* formed by Bishop Asbil and chaired by Rev. Stephen Vail, Dean of St. James Cathedral, with a three-pronged approach of focus: evangelism (bringing in people), catechesis (engaging people), and formation. Bishop Asbil expressed his hope that this group would become a community of prayer and that we would build relationships with others, with each other, and with Jesus. Bishop Asbil emphasized the importance of building community. He suggested ensuring that we cultivate a toolbox, not for emergencies, but instead for focus on answering the question, "How does this help the kingdom of God?" Bishop Asbil quoted Bishop Michael Curry, "So many people see our baptismal vows as less of a mandate and more of a buffet." Bishop Asbil asserted that within the mixed economy of crowds to whom Jesus preached there are similarities to our modern congregations. We also needed to look at people who have lost their faith. A key question for the group to consider was whether the work we are doing is worthy of our call to be followers of Jesus Christ.

For the past two years we have been pulling documents, discussing concepts, and listening to each other. Now that the Committee is near the end of its mandate, and I am wondering about St. Matthew's. Is St. Matthew's a community where prayer, building relationships, and being followers of Jesus is what we value and is the road we are on? Is it more than just caring for an hour or two on Sunday morning? It is about caring for each other in programs like Soup's On, Beyond Soup, Christmas Gifts for Friends for Friends, the Card Ministry, Messy Church, Coffee Hour, Pastoral Care and the Welcoming Ministry team, etc. Are we a community of evangelism? What do we do to bring people in? Since the 'reopening post-COVID' we have seen new members join each week. We have watched parishioners bring in family, neighbours, and friends who are in need of our care and compassion. We are engaging long-standing members and new folks alike. Each spiritual journey is unique but something new is happening at St. Matt's. When we assess ourselves, are we worthy of calling ourselves followers of Jesus? Yes, I think we strive hard to be followers of Christ. Whether we know it or not, we are living a life of discipleship in the love of each other, the love of community, and the love of Jesus Christ. As a community, we have been building a Parish that truly walks the talk in Sharing Jesus' Love. I pray this will continue and that we are worthy of seeing ourselves as followers of Jesus Christ.

~Deborah Hurn

### Gift Groups

The regular Tuesday Gift Group, which meets to discuss and think through how to apply the texts and themes from the Sunday sermon, will end for the summer in late June. In the Fall we hope that the Tuesday Group will be replicated with more GIFT Groups – at least one additional evening group and one or two daytime groups. If you would be interested in participating in a group that explores scripture and how to make it work in your life, please pass along your interest to the office or speak with Rev. Philip or Dawn Mercer.



## Discipleship at St Matthew's: Being Followers of Jesus

### Inclusion Group

As you know, the Inclusion Working Group was never supposed to be an 'event planning group.' Instead, it was meant to be a launch pad for further involvement and ideas from the congregation as a whole. At this point the Inclusion Group is stepping back in hopes that you will step forward to offer ideas, lead a discussion, suggest book studies, or propose other initiatives that fill your heart in this work against racism and for the inclusion of all.

From the topics which were identified by the Inclusion Working Group, one theme will be pursued in the Fall: *Reconciliation*. Because 'reconciliation' is required in so many of our ongoing relationships, we will begin with at least one discussion forum in late September which may well develop into further sessions. We look forward to a healthy discussion by starting to look at examples throughout scripture.

One aspect of Inclusion that St. Matthew's has been working at for some time is our relationship with Indigenous people. The St. Matthew's Indigenous Issues Group (SMIIG) began seven years ago. **Nancy Hurn has provided a review of SMIIG activities below.**

The St. Matthew's Indigenous Issues Group was formed in 2015 in response to the Diocese of Toronto's Motion to Vestry that all Parishes learn more about the First Nations, Inuit and Métis people of Canada. A motion was also made to encourage parishes to understand the impact the Anglican Church had on the indigenous people during its operation of Residential Schools beginning in 1820. SMIIG held monthly meetings until the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many projects have been undertaken by this group since its inception.

#### Summary of SMIIG Activities:

- Support for the Clinic and Community of White Dog, Ontario, sending baby blankets and toques for newborn babies
- Christmas gifts to Toronto Urban Native Ministry (TUNM) – several years
- Clothing and coat drives in support of TUNM – several years
- Kairos Blanket Exercise to provide a deeper understanding – twice
- Talking Circle about personal indigenous experience led by Rev. Andrew and Esther Wesley
- Attended the movie, *Indian Horse*
- Attended the Premiere of the Anglican Video, *Doctrine of Discovery: Stolen Lands, Strong Hearts*
- Hosted Kairos event to acknowledge work by Anglican Church of Canada (ACC) on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission
- Discussing and implementing a project with the Kingsley School
- Outreach financial support and Coat Drive to the Anglican Church of the Ascension in Inuvik, NWT
- Creating, collecting, knitting and sending baby blankets, warm hats, mitts and prayer shawls
- Visit by three Inuit women from Kugluktuk (Coppermine), NU who showed us how to light a fire with oil, how to use an Ulu to cut meat
- Visit by Bishop Chris Harper from Diocese of Toronto Indigenous Ministries

## Discipleship at St Matthew's: Being Followers of Jesus

- Visit by Melanie Delva, Animator for Indigenous Ministries for the Anglican Church of Canada and we received an update on the Calls to Action established by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Canada
- *Soup's On* Program in support of the Holy Trinity Unity Kitchen/TUNM as COVID began
- Celebration of Indigenous Sunday (June 21) each year
- Visits by Archbishop Mark MacDonald, National Indigenous Anglican Bishop in person and online
- Online visit by Rev. Leigh Kerns and Zach Grant, co-ordinators of the Holy Trinity Unity Kitchen, expressing appreciation for *Soup's On*
- Support for the Indigenous water projects at Big Beaver House in Mishamikoweesh, the Indigenous Anglican Diocese in north-western Ontario and northern Manitoba
- Acknowledgment of the discovery of the unmarked children's graves at the Catholic residential school in Kamloops, BC. A collection of children's shoes was placed on the front steps and an Orange Shirt painting was created by Sandra Wilson and placed on permanent display in the Narthex recognizing that "Every Child Matters."

At each meeting many topics were discussed, and we often had indigenous people come and share information about the healing and resilience of the people who have occupied the land of Canada for more than 10,000 years. Now that we are open to having in-person meetings in the church, it is important that we look for ways to continue our understanding of the colonization of the indigenous people and communities in Canada and around the world. ~ Nancy Hurn

In September we will continue to explore ways to be in reconciliation with Indigenous people and to build our relationship. The Anglican Church of Canada film, "*Doctrine of Discovery: Stolen Lands, Strong Hearts*" will be shown at St. Matthew's. That will be followed by one or more discussion opportunities to explore our calling to reconciliation.

Future potential projects include:

1. Arrange monthly meetings for SMIIG Members.
2. Arrange Mapping exercise offered by PWRDF.
3. Assist Clergy in planning the Indigenous Sunday Service (June 21).
4. Consider joint events with other churches on this topic.
5. Participate in Indigenous working group (ISWG) and Indigenous Justice Coalition.
6. Visit and tour to Mohawk Institute and Chapel in Brantford, ON.
7. Presentation on Indigenous Racism to help understand the personal and systemic concerns.
8. Many more group opportunities to see plays, speakers, walks, etc. to support this work.

Watch for notices of upcoming meetings.

## More Recent Events



Praise Music was led by Michelle (guitar), Joseph (cello) and Sophia (keys) Lorimer on Sunday, May 22 at 11:00 a.m.

- We watched *Encanto*, a Disney animated movie, then discussed the representation of faith and Christian community within
- A presentation and discussion was held to discuss “Broken Church Leaders” and included questions such as “Does God choose broken people?” and “How does Jesus make a difference?”
- A clothing drive to benefit TUMN took place on April 6
- Lenten Taizé services followed by Lenten Study (Re-Turning to Jesus: Building on a Firm Foundation) were held weekly
- World Day of Prayer Service, written by the women in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, was held online by ‘Zoom link’ on March 5, led by St. Gregory’s Catholic Church on Rathburn Rd.



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We acknowledge that we are in the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, the Anishnabe peoples, on whose land and by whose waters we gather to talk, listen, learn, worship, share and heal together in the name of our Creator, the Holy One of Blessing.

**Pastoral Care:** Pastoral visits can be offered over the phone, by email or via Zoom. Due to current pandemic restrictions, we cannot offer visits. Please contact the office at 416-231-4014 or [office@saintmatts.ca](mailto:office@saintmatts.ca).

**Partners in Prayer:** Should you desire prayer for yourself or for another person, please make details known to Bob Holloway at 416-253-4909 or [rholloway@sympatico.ca](mailto:rholloway@sympatico.ca). If necessary, the request can be transmitted through the church office.

**Cycle of Prayer:** “Beloved, pray for us.” This is Paul’s way of asking the Thessalonians to pray for him (5:25) and it expresses the genuine need for believers to support one another through prayer. Each Sunday, we will be praying for individuals and families of St. Matthew’s in the Prayers of the People. Each week, a few names will be mentioned in our prayers and we will have the opportunity to support one another through prayer. Please take the time to remember these people during the week in your own prayers as well. If you do not wish to be included in our “Cycle of Prayer” please let the office know and we will be sure to keep your name off the list.

**Prayer Shawl Ministry:** Prayer Shawls are provided to those who need the warmth and comfort of God and St. Matthew’s. If you would like a shawl for someone, please contact the office at 416-231-4014 or [office@saintmatts.ca](mailto:office@saintmatts.ca). If you are knitting shawls for this ministry, please contact the office to arrange to drop them off.

### Join Us

**Wednesday**  
10:30 a.m. BCP Service  
(Posted on YouTube afterward)

**Messy Church**  
Last Saturday of the month  
Next Messy Church is September 24

### GIFT Groups

**The Rev. Philip Stonhouse, Incumbent**  
416-231-3060 / [philipstonhouse@hotmail.ca](mailto:philipstonhouse@hotmail.ca)

*The Rev. Gail Marshall, Deacon*  
*The Rev. Merv Mercer, Honorary Assistant*  
*Christine Ivy, Youth & Discipleship Assoc. Pastor*  
*Tyler Versluis, Music Director and Organist*  
*Tom Travaglini, Sexton/Verger*  
*Lisa Tait, Parish Administrator*



### Office Hours

Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday  
9:30 - 3:30

The office is operating remotely.  
Telephone and email messages will  
be checked and returned during  
office hours.

### Sunday Services

8:00 a.m. Quiet (in person)  
*2nd Sunday of each month*  
9:30 a.m. Casual (in person & online)  
11:00 a.m. Classic (in person & online)  
*12:10 p.m. Coffee Hour ((in person & online)*



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