

# Matt's Media

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

Pentecost 2026



## BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

Ephesians 5:18

### FROM THE RECTOR: HEAVEN ON EARTH

As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God.  
*(Psalm 42:1)*

There is something our hearts desire but most people cannot identify. Some might call it paradise, peace, or rest (maybe even the Garden of Eden). Others may call it transcendence, holiness, or specialness. Some will call it love, belonging or intimacy, and another may call it purpose or significance. I think we must put all these ideas together and look even deeper to determine what it is. Humanity has always longed for heaven on earth: a paradise where we are more, and where we have closeness and purpose. We long for heaven on earth right now, not just after we die or in some distant future, but right now!

What if I were to tell you that you can experience it right now? What if I were to tell you that heaven has already come down? Sometimes it is hard to even imagine given the present state of the world. Yet Jesus started His ministry by proclaiming, "The Kingdom of heaven is close at hand." Heaven is right there, waiting for us to reach out and grab hold of it. On recent Sundays we have explored Easter in Paradise wherein *Genesis 1-3* lays the groundwork for Easter, and also how Easter - through the death and resurrection of Jesus - invites us back into Paradise. There are so many ways God shows us that we are already invited into heavenly realities - that we are already citizens of a different and better world.

This heaven on earth can feel incomprehensible and impossible to experience. Comparing the hope, faith, and love that we know through Jesus Christ with the current world crises can feel too stark.

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### NEXT ISSUE:

Thanksgiving: October 11  
Submissions due: September 20  
([kathie.oakden@gmail.com](mailto:kathie.oakden@gmail.com))

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## Heaven on Earth (continued)

During Pentecost season and throughout the summer, we will explore the Holy Spirit's work in Exile (through the *Book of Daniel*). We are citizens of heaven, of God's new creation living like exiles, representatives, or dignitaries in this foreign and broken land.

We do not have to walk alone. The Holy Spirit, the fullness of God, wants to move with us, guiding and protecting us, upholding us. In fact, with the Holy Spirit's presence moving and working in us we can already know heaven on earth, because he is giving us what we long for. His presence is the greatest intimacy we can know. We can rest in him, trusting that he will work beyond our capacity and need. We can find significance in him, because he gives our work significance and impact. He makes us special, because we have the holiness of God living in us.

What else is left but for us to trust this Holy Spirit more and to see heaven on earth take root for all those around us? And that is what we do see. As we trust the Holy Spirit's work in us, he shows himself to be trustworthy and we trust him more. And moving in that trust, we live out heaven on earth, so others see it, too. As Daniel and his three friends moved through exile, people observed their wisdom, their insight, their faith, their courage and therein saw who sustained and protected them. Daniel and his friends may have been exiles, but they had a heavenly impact that drastically affected international empires.

As we move forward in our Visioning process, we need to lean even more on the Holy Spirit's presence with us. Because He is God with us, He is the one we need to listen for, to follow, and to trust. He is the one

who will give our work meaning, distinctiveness, impact and even rest, so that others can meet, know and grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ. Our goal is nothing less than heaven on earth and through the Holy Spirit we have the opportunity to live in it and share it with the world.

Four practical things to think about:

- Take a moment every single day just to spend time with the Holy Spirit, resting in him.
- Write down how God made you special already (especially in ways you can share). These can be skills, gifts, relationships, opportunities, experiences, and more.
- Ask someone you know if you could share your faith story or experience with them (maybe it is a single story, or a question you have been wrestling with, or something you have been learning, seeing, praying for).
- Join a Visioning Pillar Team and put into action the hope which the Holy Spirit has given you.

The Holy Spirit is moving, and just like at the beginning of creation, He is ordering this world for life, bounty and a godly reality. Now, I invite you to join in the work He has been preparing you for from the day you were conceived.

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. (*Galatians 5:22-23*)

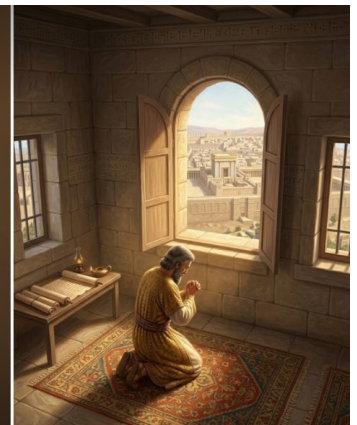
God bless you all.

*Your brother in Christ,  
Rev. Philip Stonhouse*

# The Spirit in Exile

SERMON SERIES

MAY 31 TO AUGUST 30



## Wardens' Words

Following the Joy of Easter, we now await the season of Pentecost. We wish you all a Blessed Pentecost!

We continue to be grateful for the spiritual guidance of Rev. Philip, Rev. Merv and Rev. James supported by our music ministry, lead by Tyler Verslius, choir members, and musicians.

St. Matthew's is most fortunate to have many volunteers who participate in so many ways, from preparing for our worship services to leading our Club Matt and Youth programs and preparing our coffee and goodies for our many informal gatherings! Thank you!

We extend a warm welcome to all our newcomers! Our prayer is that St. Matthew's will become your spiritual home where you will always feel welcome.

We acknowledge and thank our dedicated staff members, Lisa Tait, Parish Administrator, Tom Travaglini, Sexton, and Grant Dunbar, Verger, for their continued dedication to assisting in the daily tasks.

As our building continues to age, we must keep a close watch on the status of water leaks and other building aging issues. This Spring we were required to replace our main water valve system as well as repair various leaking pipes. Thanks to Legacy gifts, we were able to renovate the Ladies restroom near the gym as well as create a permanent home for our Archives.

Many thanks for your participation in our current Visioning Process. Thank you to Rev. Philip and all the team leaders for their leadership.

On June 13th we will host a Community Concert and Dinner fund raiser. The concert is at 4:30 p.m. and dinner at 5:30 p.m. Please come with your family and invite your friends and neighbours! All proceeds will go to the Organ/Music Fund.

Your Warden Team wishes you and your family an Enjoyable and Safe Summertime!

*Karen Lee, Nancy Hurn, and Paul Lorimer*

## Financial Report

Many thanks to the Parish for your continued financial support of our many ministries and operations in our parish as well as the many ways you support our community with your time and talents.

As you will see below, our expenses are greater than 2026 Budget and 2025 Actual. Our income for 2026 is also higher than 2026 Budget and 2025 Actual. Thank you.

Outlined below is the summary of our financial status as of April 30, 2026.

Operating Fund	2026 Actual	2025 Actual	2026 Budget
Income	\$ 128,386	102,013	122,168
Expenses	\$ 142,576	126,870	125,444
Net Operations	<b>\$ - 14,190</b>	<b>- 24,857</b>	<b>- 3,276</b>

## Thank You to All *Matt's Media* Contributors

Thank you to all who have contributed to this and other editions of *Matt's Media*. A special thanks to Natalie and Vanessa for providing so many wonderful photographs.

If you are interested in contributing to *Matt's Media* in any way, please contact the office or Kathie Oakden.

A BIG   
Thank  
YOU

## Visioning: 2026 Update

The Visioning Team collected all the information recorded from the Visioning Day gatherings and put together a plan based on all the discussions. The five Pillars are based on the spiritual practices for living the Christian life and the goals reflect the needs of our parish family.

**Worship** – Grow in Personal & Communal Prayer – Increase Engagement in Community Worship – Lift up and Empower Music Ministry

**Evangelism** – Increase Visibility Through Marketing and Social Media – Grow Welcoming Ministry – Create Opportunities and Boldly Invite People

**Fellowship** – Create More (and different) Opportunities for Friendship/Fellowship to Grow – Foster Cross Generational Ministries – Improve Internal Parish Communication

**Discipleship** – Create More Opportunities for People to Share Their Faith Stories – Create Opportunities for People to Commit to Faith – Add At Least One More Discipleship Group

**Outreach** – Find One Traditional Outreach for Parish to Engage in – Explore Partnerships and Discern Needs in Local Community for Where God is Calling Us to Serve – Empower Ministries that Serve Family Needs

A “Pillars and Goals” document was prepared and presented at the Vestry Meeting in February. Throughout March and April, we have asked

parishioners to pray/reflect and choose Pillars they are interested in helping to develop. Over the months of May and June we have meetings for each pillar. We are asking participants to share ideas, hopes, and dreams and to brainstorm potential action items. If you are unable to attend a meeting, please email or call to express your thoughts.

The Pillars and Goals discussions will bring forward new ideas and plans to strengthen our inward and outward parish growth. We want to encourage everyone to continue to find their place of belonging in our parish and ways to grow their faith.

If you have ideas/questions/energy please reach out to the Visioning Team:

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*Linda Harrison*



Installations - Repairs - Winterization - Exterior Lighting

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## All Ages Walk and Talk: Saturday Mornings at 9:30

Join us Saturdays for *Walk and Talk*, a new program aimed at increasing both fellowship and discipleship. It is suitable for everyone – for all ages and stages of life. We will meet each Saturday morning in May and June at 9:30 a.m. at West Deane Park, 376 Martin Grove Rd, Etobicoke, M9B 4L7. The parking lot is located on the west side of Martin Grove, north of Rathburn.

It is a beautiful park and playground with a paved path following Mimico Creek. We will walk south on the path for 20-30 minutes depending on energy levels

and then head back. Note: there are benches for resting as we go. Everyone walks at their own speed, which allows the group to start and end together and allows time for interaction with each other. There will be refreshments available before heading home. The hope is that participants build relationships and feel a greater sense of belonging to our St. Matthew's community.

For more information, please contact the church office at 416-231-4014 or [office@saintmatts.ca](mailto:office@saintmatts.ca).

## Chancel Guild

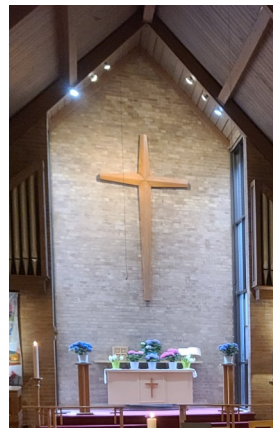
At the end of March and beginning of April the Chancel Guild was very busy. The many worship services during Lent, Palm Sunday, and Holy Week required frequent set-up for Communion and colour changes of the Hangings and Altar Frontal. We also assisted Tyler in setting up the Stations of the Cross.

Thank you to Chancel Guild members and eleven parishioners who gathered to make the Palm Crosses. We made over two hundred crosses in approximately one hour: proof that many hands make light work! Afterwards, we enjoyed a short visit, relaxing over coffee, tea, and treats. That morning was very productive and enjoyable, a get-together for us all. Come next year!

Sandra Wilson decorated the church beautifully for the Easter Season. Thanks to everyone who donated Lilies and Hydrangeas.

If any parishioners would like to provide cut flowers from their garden during the summer to beautify our church, it would be greatly appreciated. Please contact Sandra Wilson (905-624-3786).

*Pat Currie*



Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. (*Colossians 3:16, NRSVA*)

## High Tea Delights

Congratulations and great appreciation are due to Tanya Marcon Moore, Erika Versluis, and Diana Lewis for hosting the “Mad Hatters Tea Party” and Bake Sale on May 9. The Mother’s Day Celebration served a delightful *Alice-in-Wonderland*-inspired High Tea complete with fancy sandwiches, dainty cakes, and cupcakes plus scones with home-made strawberry jam and ‘clotted cream,’ all served from a three-tier cake platter. Each table received their own freshly-filled china teapot. The china tea-cups sat on intentionally mismatched saucers. The bake sale afterwards offered spectacular treats: jam tarts, lemon loaves, coconut cookies, Scotch eggs, mini apple pies, cheesecakes, cupcakes extraordinaire, pansy-topped tea biscuits filled with custard, the list went on...

Groups dining together shared one of three menus: Queen of Hearts, Mad Hatter, or Cheshire Cat.





# Can We Make Better Use of Our Worship Space?

## A Two-Week Test in June

**Before we install necessary improvements of the Sound System in the Church, for two weeks in June,** with support from the Wardens, we will experiment with a re-arrangement of “the furniture” in our worship space. We will be moving the Altar about eight feet backwards onto the higher level of the red carpet in the Chancel between the organ and the choir pews. To increase the seating capacity in the Church, we will be adding a few rows of chairs or pews at the front, extending the congregational seating forward. The choir will sit and sing in the pews in the Chancel beyond the projection screen. The communion kneelers will remain on the original level during the two-week trial period to protect people from the wooden platform. The open area for the Gathering Portion of the 9:30 a.m. service will move forward but remain on the original level.

Moving the altar (for many Anglicans) will be the hardest part of changing our worship space, so we are starting with that. Perhaps all music and the lectern might move up into the Chancel as well.

The primary reasons for these changes would be:

1. To make better use of our space
  - a. Currently the space behind the altar is little used (except for the organ). Having dead space behind our altar speaks poorly, theologically, about the connection between the cross and our communion.
  - b. We are discerning improvements to our Audio/Visual equipment with professional companies. With the current set-up it is difficult to place speakers (and get good volume), without causing feedback. Microphones need to be ‘behind’ speakers.
2. To make room for congregational growth
  - a. Currently, our church seats about 125 people, but in reality, with 70 people the church can feel full. On Easter Sunday we had 110 at the 11 a.m. service. We see newcomers walk

through our doors most Sundays and we want to make sure everyone, especially newcomers, feels that there is space for them.

3. To create better sightlines
  - a. Currently, the altar is raised about a foot off the floor, while the lectern and choir are on the main level. This is satisfactory, but the four-foot elevation would greatly improve sightlines.
4. To lift up our worship
  - a. Putting our worship team on a higher level not only improves visibility and sound but it also elevates our worship. It speaks to how important and how praiseworthy our God is.
5. To give greater honour and glory to the Altar and the Word
  - a. The altar in its current location is a reminder that God is in our midst. This reminder will continue because communion would be served on the main level and the 9:30 a.m. Gathering Time would take place on the main level.
  - b. The elevation of the altar and the lectern is a visual reminder of how important, glorious, and worthy of our honour are this table, the Word, and these moments.

This will just be a two-week trial in June of things that I think would be helpful.

If you, or anyone you talk to, has any questions about this proposal, please feel free to ask. I want to hear from you during and after the test – I welcome your feedback.

*Your brother in Christ,  
Rev. Philip Stonhouse*

## Easter Bags

A very small gift...

A very small gift but what does it mean for a person who doesn't have a bathroom counter where they can leave their toothbrush and toothpaste? Again, this year we filled 100 bags for the homeless who rely on the support from Holy Trinity Anglican Church in downtown Toronto. They provide space for Toronto Urban Native Ministry (TUNM) and Trinity CommUNITY Hub Programs enabling them to provide support, food, clothing, and a sense of community to the homeless. Once a year, we provide a gift bag with daily essentials... a toothbrush, toothpaste, comb, a clean dry pair of socks, tissues, a poncho, a bar of soap, shampoo, a pen, a \$10 Tim's card, and of course... a few chocolate Easter eggs! The children of St. Matt's made each person a cross with a pocket cross prayer. This gift helps our children experience the gift of generosity... giving freely of themselves to someone they will never know. Each bag costs us about \$15 but what is it worth to the recipient? Are we giving to people of Faith? We don't

know... but God does not direct us to give only to people who have the same belief and faith that we have. Does He not ask us to give to those in need? The people of Holy Trinity need to know that they are cared for by strangers whom they may never meet. They need to feel the sharing of the love of Jesus...

Many thanks to those who gave of themselves to help fill the bags and especially the children of Club Matt who did a great job of making a unique cross for each person.

*Deborah Hurn*



## The Food / Deacon's Cupboard

Thank you to everyone who has brought non-perishable items for the cupboard. The recipients are very grateful for your care.

We continue to give out bags of basic groceries once a month.

The items left in the Narthex food box recently haven't quite covered the need, but fortunately we have a tiny, donated cash fund with which we can

purchase items as required. This fund is, of course, diminishing as we go on.

So, we are relying on your Christian charity to keep bringing in items, as you can, and as with all food banks, cash, cheque or e-transfer donations are equally valued.

*Noel Martin, Food Cupboard Mouse*

## ***Encampment—Resistance, Grace and an Unhoused Community***

Maggie Helwig's book, *Encampment*, has won the 2026 Shaughnessy Cohen Prize for Political Writing.

The \$40,000 prize is awarded annually for a book of literary nonfiction that embodies a political subject relevant to Canadian readers and Canadian political life.

Rev. Maggie Helwig is and has been for several years

the priest at St. Stephen-in-the-Fields, on College Street between Bathurst and Spadina in Toronto. We have heard about this priest's work via *The Anglican*. Her book, *Girls Fall Down*, was selected as the One Book Toronto in 2012.

It maybe a good choice for book clubs.

*Marguerite Locke*

## What's Happening

Sun May 31	All Ages Worship: 9:30 a.m. and BAS Worship: 11:00 a.m.	In person & online
Wed June 3	BCP Worship: 10:30 a.m.	In person
Fri June 5	Youth Group: 7:00 p.m.	In person
Sat June 6	Men's Breakfast: 8:30 a.m. (Sunset Grill, 1510 Dundas St. E, Miss.)	In person
	Messy Church: 4:00 p.m.	In person
Sun June 7	Unity Worship: 10:30 a.m.	In person & online
Wed June 10	BCP Worship: 10:30 a.m.	In person
Sat June 13	Community Concert and Dinner Fundraiser: 4:30 p.m.	In person
Sun June 14	All Ages Worship: 9:30 a.m. and BCP Worship: 11:00 a.m.	In person & online
Wed June 17	BCP Worship: 10:30 a.m.	In person
Fri June 19	Club Matt Pizza Party: 5:30 p.m.	In person
Sun June 21	All Ages Worship: 9:30 a.m. and BAS Worship: 11:00 a.m. <i>National Indigenous Day of Prayer</i>	In person & online
Wed June 24	BCP Worship: 10:30 a.m.	In person
Sun June 28	Unity Worship, Graduation Sunday: 10:30 a.m. <i>Volunteer Appreciation Sunday</i>	In person & online
Sun July 5 to Sun Sept 6	Summer Worship with Communion: 10:30 a.m.	In person & online
Aug10-14	Camp Matt	In person
Aug 15	Camp Matt Sunday: 10:30 a.m.	In person & online



ST. MATTHEW'S ANGLICAN CHURCH

# Community Concert & Dinner

**SATURDAY  
JUNE 13**

4:30 pm Concert  
5:30 pm Dinner

\$25 per person  
\$60 per family

All proceeds support St. Matthew's music ministry.  
Tickets available from Tyler or the office (cash only)  
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## God Doesn't Want You to Be Happy

I am reading *Growth of the Soil* by Norwegian writer Knut Hamsun. The novel concerns a man named Isaak, living in late 19<sup>th</sup> century Norway, who boldly journeys into the hinterlands to carve out a life for himself, alone. Although Isaak is not very smart or articulate, he is hard working, and manages to build a prosperous, large farm. This is a story of perseverance and the fruits of hard labour, but along the way there are some setbacks. Isaak suffers under the stupidity and vices of his neighbours and in-laws, and even his own son, Eliseus, as he abandons the farm to freeloader in the nearby town, using his family's money. The real, sobering message of the novel is that Isaak knows deep down that life is changing, and that the satisfaction of labour and hard work of farm life is no match for the ease and comfort of city living, where one can simply buy instead of build or grow. The life of comfort and convenience supersedes the life of constant working and keeping.

Roughly summarized, the last 150 years of societal development has been dedicated to liberating us from the drudgeries of labour. In the beginning, this all seemed very benign, as cars created ease of travel, refrigerators and preservatives liberated housewives from endless cooking, and the free market and international trade provides us with round-the-clock goods and services. According to Western society, with its worldly orientation, the greatest moral imperative is that we are saved from our work, for the sake of more leisure time, which is the ultimate source of happiness.

However, at some point recently there has been a tipping point. We have passed "Peak Happiness", and now the very things that are supposed to relieve us of our hardships are the things that make us miserable. Even things like vehicles, capitalism, and conveniences of the technological age, made for our leisure and happiness, create serious problems on the other end: pollution, economic exploitation, and

crippling dopamine loops. Sadly, most people cannot imagine their lives any other way. But simply put, God's goal for us is not happiness or endless leisure of any sort. Happiness is nothing more than a spike of dopamine - and it is not something that increases or accumulates over time. Even people who win the lottery or survive serious accidents find their happiness baseline returning after several months. And although God intended us to rest, the goal was not eternal sloth but rather a sabbath rest which permits us to worship God with more energy and concentration.

God's purpose for us was laid out mere moments after He created us. "The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it." (*Genesis 2:15*)

As we study the *Epistle to Titus* in our Men's Bible Study, we learn from Saint Paul's words about what happens when men (and women) pursue their own pleasures, rather than working and taking care of those places over which we have been given dominion: our homes, jobs, and churches. For most of recorded history, humans had no choice but to work and keep, or they would starve or their homes would fall to ruin. But today we can choose, and often not choosing what God has mandated for us seems more appealing, because we would rather "check out" of the labour, like Eliseus does when he decides he no longer wants to be a farmer with his family.

This is not a call to give up your refrigerators or your cell phones, but to tilt our reasoning towards God's calling and away from the passions of the world, which often appear to us in the guise of freedom and convenience. If we are to work and take care of God's kingdom, we need to behave more like gardeners with the patience, discipline and, yes, even the mundanity that permits a garden of holiness to flourish.

*In Christ,  
Tyler Versluis*

## Lenten Season and Easter at St. Matthew's

St. Matthew's congregation is grateful for the efforts of Rev. Philip Stonhouse, Dr. Tyler Versluis, and the Chancel Guild throughout the Season of Lent and joyful Easter Celebrations.

Lent began on Ash Wednesday with a communion service of penitential worship, prayer, reflection, and learning. The quotation, "Remember you are dust and to dust you shall return," is symbolic of our cycle of life. Ashes had been prepared the day before, on Shrove Tuesday, burning some Palm Crosses saved from last year. Having those ashes spread as a cross on our forehead on Ash Wednesday made the quotation very personal.

Lenten Study focused on "The Suffering Servant" Bible passage, *Isaiah 52:13 – 53:12*. On four Tuesdays the study combined Evening Prayer from the Book of Common Prayer with Taizé music and reflective study on the "The Suffering Servant." Each week's understanding used a different 'lens' to focus our attention on four aspects: Repentance, Restored Relationships, Hope, and Praise and Worship. The questions for discussion were very thought-provoking. There was also time for personal, meditative prayer and questions for ongoing reflection at home.

The Stations of the Cross experience was very meaningful. We started by writing a personal confession of our own sins on a piece of paper and carrying that paper throughout our travel. As we progressed around the church singing prayerfully, we shared the burden of carrying the cross. The stations of the cross were: the crown of thorns, the washing of hands, the acceptance of the cross and bitterness of

condemnation, the weeping of the women, the rending of the garments, the hammering of nails, praying for the people we care for, the burning of our paper record of sins, the placing of our cross at the altar and extinguishing the Christ candle. We ended with personal prayer time. The prayers and readings at each station gave us deep remembrance of Jesus during Holy Week.

The Good Friday service was reflective. The choir, augmented with extra voices, led our music from the back of the church, which was a wonderful way to hear the hymns and feel the music around us. The Good Friday story was chanted by the choir and clergy. Witnessing Reverend Philip kneeling on the floor to pray at the altar and the children bringing in the crosses they had made aroused very emotional experiences.

Easter Day Communion began at 6:00 a.m., with sunrise over Lake Ontario at Marie Curtis Park. It was cold and very peaceful. The music for our 9:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Communion services was led by an enlarged complement of singers and musicians. These were very joyful celebrations of the Resurrection of Jesus.

Our Easter Pageant a week later was a grand production by our youngest children and our youth. Reverend Philip excels at engaging with all the children. Thank you to all the adults and families for gathering to practice on Saturday and then making the Easter Story come alive on Sunday morning.

*Linda Harrison*



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# Easter Pageant





## Youth Group

The youth have been busy these past few months:

Tyler Versluis guided them through The Stations of the Cross. It was interactive, moving through different stations together, learning the story step by step and engaging through things we can hold, carry, touch, and reflect on. The learning experience we shared that evening helped us all to understand Jesus' Journey to the Cross.

We had a scavenger hunt for clues which the youth then had to put together to search for the hidden treasure. Focusing on the scriptures *Mark 16:1-10* and *John 20:11-29*, where Jesus defeats death and rises from the tomb, He shows himself to Mary Magdalene. She doesn't recognize him at first, just as the youth didn't always see the hidden clues. Then there was 'doubting Thomas' wanting proof from Jesus: Just as the youth kept asking, 'Are you sure there are more clues left?' It was a good lesson and a fun activity.

We took a few youth to the Radiate Retreat at Ontario Pioneer Camp. While it was wet and muddy, our spirits were not dampened. We had some insightful discussions by the fireplace, fun doing art, wall climbing, Nerf battles and team challenges, and fellowship during worship and game times.



Coming up, we have a movie night in the lounge, *Eddie the Eagle*, and a table tennis tournament before we break for the summer.

*Tanya Marcon Moore*



## Outreach Initiatives

The Outreach initiatives by St. Matthew's are underway and in keeping with the Visioning 2026 pillars.

Our goal is to explore a partnership with the local community for service particularly oriented toward family needs commencing in September. Our approximate geographic area is north to Rathburn, south to Dundas, east to Kipling and west to the West Mall.

Several discussions have taken place, and we are now doing more research as to the best fit for our Parish, particularly to serve families who may need assistance in communication skills in English, to complement any ESL courses in which they are or have been enrolled. We hope to locate a place where guests will

be comfortable participating in conversation, and enjoying refreshments, crafts, or cooking with others. We hope to find a meeting room in an apartment building, rather than in the church. We want to ensure some collaboration with interested clients, so that we are meeting their needs.

Lots of investigation is being done at this time and we shall keep the Parish updated on our progress so that people who have expressed an interest in participation may do so at the appropriate time.

Our team is comprised of Mary Emanuel, Sandra Watt, Nancy Hurn, Helen Prankie. and Marguerite Locke. Please be patient as we discern our next steps.

*Marguerite Locke, Mary Emanuel*

## Club Matt

The current Club Matt theme is *The Church Begins*.



Starting with the Ascension, the Club Matt curriculum for Spring 2026 includes brief looks at important leaders of the early church from Peter to Paul, Barnabas and Lydia as told by Luke in the *Book of*

*Acts*. Where possible we will use stained glass windows in the church to initiate our explorations. The children will have the opportunity to hear about the ways God used such a variety of people and events to spread the good news of Jesus throughout the Roman world of the first century. It has reached forward up to us now at St Matthew's.

The Junior Club Matt group, who meet in the room beside the washroom on the East Hall, has between

four and seven enthusiastic children who love to hear new events in the Bible and learn more about them in colouring, glueing, and creating models. Some even need persuasion to go to "Juice Time" in the gym.

The Senior Club Matt group of four to 10 children meet in the room at the foot of the stairs on the East Hall. They are beginning to learn how to find the *Book of Acts* in their Bibles and see the events recorded there. They love to think more about people and places they have heard of before and how their actions have resulted in a church that has grown and lasted for such a long time. They also love hands-on activities that help to remind them of the events.

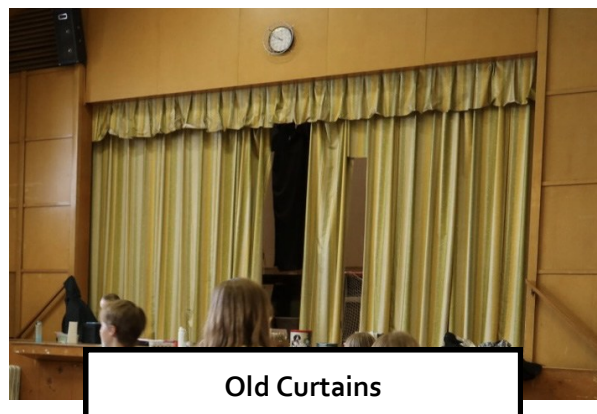
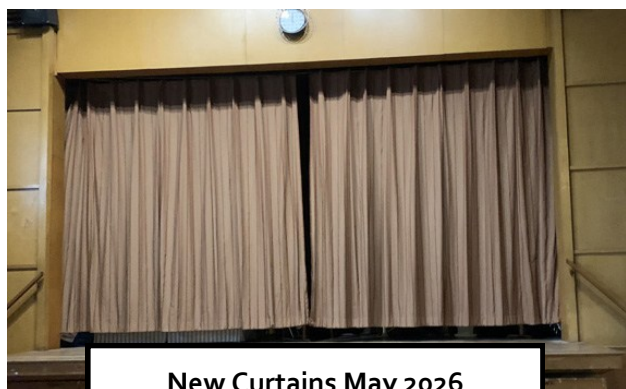
We have two (and maybe more) new people - Rogina and Cassandra - who are interested in helping and teaching in Club Matt. If that would be of interest to you, we'd love to find a place that is a fit for you on the Club Matt Team. Please tell Rev. Philip, the church office, or a member of the team. There is no better way to learn than to teach.

*Club Matt Team: Mercy Njeteneh, Jenna Wukasch, Vanessa James-Locke, Deborah Hurn, Tatiana Saliba, Ashley Vaughan, Cassandra Esser, Rogina Medford, Dawn Mercer, Rev. Philip Stonhouse.*

## Stage Curtains

"Out with the old, In with the new!" You may have noticed that we have 'new-to-us' stage curtains, thanks to the generosity of the neighbouring Anglican parish of St. John's Dixie, on Dundas Street at Cawthra in Mississauga. We are most grateful to them

for this gift. We also are grateful to Linda Dickson for her coordination in arranging this donation, and to Deborah and Nancy Hurn for the delivery of the curtains.



## Messy Church

Once again Messy Church programs have been very active. We continue to enjoy new families along with seeing familiar friendly faces return each month. Each month we strive to create an exciting theme around which we build our activities. I thank our planning team members who discuss a theme and how to word it on our invitation. Then they take on the challenge of finding activities that will reflect the theme.

Recently we have explored the following themes:

*Seeing Through the Eyes of Faith* in January

Using tea lights to see God sightings, looking at colour and pictures through Bug Eyes Glasses, and filling a bottle with water, glitter, and glue to observe how slowly the glitter moves.

*Run The Good Race: Loving our Neighbour* in February

Using Olympic activities and working together, making a medal to give to a friend, making flags from around the world, and other fun activities including a scooter board race

*Marching to the Cross* in March

Writing something important to give to God on a 'cloak-shaped' paper, making a crown (laying down

your crown before God), decorating a chair like a throne, and making a container and cup for the Last Supper.

*Healing and Helping Re-Creation* in April

Planting wheat seeds sent to us from a farm in Manitoba, lining up dominoes that push the next one down and then need to be stood up again, creating stacked cup 'buildings' that also fall down, planting the garden outside the gym doors, and the big hit was...Rev. Philip telling the story of Creation while building a Creation with mud, sand, water, animals and plants.

Again, I would like to thank all our amazing Junior Leaders. The children who come each month are building such great connections with each of you.

Remember: Messy Church takes place on the last Saturday of the month from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. in the gym. You can be reminded by letting the church office know you would like to be put on the email list.

Young or 'young-at-heart,' there is always room for more at our dinner table following the "church but not churchy" short service before the meal.

*Linda Dickson*



# Dementia Prevention

This winter, a group from St. Matthew's attended an informative presentation on Dementia Prevention at Kingsway-Lambton United Church. The session was led by Dr. Coman-Wood from Wellbrook Place Long-Term Care in Mississauga and focused on practical ways to help prevent, and even slow, early signs of dementia.

## *What Is Dementia?*

Dementia is an umbrella term used to describe a decline in cognitive function, including memory, language, and reasoning, that is severe enough to interfere with daily life. It is not a normal part of aging, but rather the result of damage to brain cells. Common symptoms include memory loss, confusion, personality changes, and difficulty completing everyday tasks.

National Institute on Aging (NIA) has a new public education campaign which highlights the power of early action, connection and real-life lived experience in reshaping how we think and act about dementia.: [smallstepsbigdifference.ca/](http://smallstepsbigdifference.ca/)

## *Ways to Help Prevent Dementia*

Dr. Coman-Wood emphasized several key lifestyle habits that support brain health:

- Eat a healthy, balanced diet
- Exercise regularly
- Stay socially connected
- Treat hearing loss and vision loss
- Continue to learn new things

Lifelong learning, in particular, plays an important role in maintaining cognitive function:

- Probus Groups
- Lifelong Learning Mississauga
- Learning Unlimited Etobicoke
- There are free or discounted learning opportunities at universities available for seniors. Cogniciti Brain Health Assessment: ([cogniciti.com/Test-Your-Brain-Health/Brain-Health-Assessment/Start-Assessment/](http://cogniciti.com/Test-Your-Brain-Health/Brain-Health-Assessment/Start-Assessment/))

## *Surprising Risk Factors*

In addition to lifestyle habits, the presentation highlighted some lesser-known risk factors. Hearing loss and vision problems can increase the risk of dementia by contributing to social isolation, increasing cognitive strain, and accelerating brain atrophy. Regular check-ups with your healthcare provider can help manage these risks.

## *Supporting a Loved One*

Sometimes the concern isn't about ourselves, but about someone we care about. It can be difficult to watch a loved one show signs of cognitive decline, especially if they are unaware or resistant to help.

Approaching these conversations with sensitivity is key. A person's personality can influence how they receive feedback, so it can help to avoid confrontation and instead share helpful information or invite them to attend a talk or appointment with you. Ask your own doctor how to begin. A valuable resource is the Alzheimer Society, which offers guidance and support: Learn about Dementia ([alz.to/learn](http://alz.to/learn))

Mississauga Alzheimer Society ([alzpeel.com/en/home.html](http://alzpeel.com/en/home.html))

## *When More Support Is Needed*

In some cases, individuals may refuse help even when their safety, or the safety of others, is at risk. In these situations, medical intervention may eventually be required. If a person is admitted to a hospital, healthcare professionals can assess their capacity and determine whether additional support, such as appointing a guardian, is necessary.

## *Planning Ahead*

Taking steps now to support brain health can make a meaningful difference over time. It's also important to plan for the future. Setting up power of attorney for yourself and your loved ones ensures that trusted individuals can make informed decisions if the need arises.

*Vanessa James-Locke*

**Pastoral Care:** Pastoral visits can be offered in person, over the phone, by email or via Zoom. 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 the church office at 416-231-4014 or [office@saintmatts.ca](mailto:office@saintmatts.ca). As need requires, renew prayer requests monthly.

**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 pray for individuals and families of St. Matthew’s in the Prayers of the People. Each week, a few names are mentioned in our prayers and we 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 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.

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### Sunday Services

9:30 a.m. Casual (in person & online)  
*followed by Coffee Hour in gym*

11:00 a.m. Classic (in person & online)  
*Followed by Coffee Hour in lounge*

10:30 a.m. Unity Worship  
*Followed by Coffee Hour in lounge*  
(Generally first Sunday of each month and replaces  
9:30 and 11:00 a.m. worship)  
Please check [saintmatts.ca](http://saintmatts.ca)

### Wednesday Service

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

### Messy Church

Last Saturday of the month  
Next Messy Church is June 6

### Growing in Faith Together (GIFT) Groups

Contact the office for information

### The Rev. Philip Stonhouse, Incumbent

416-231-3060 / [philipstonhouse@hotmail.ca](mailto:philipstonhouse@hotmail.ca)

*The Rev. Canon Dr. Merv Mercer, Honorary Assistant*

*The Rev. James Liu, Visiting Priest*

*The Rev. Morning Wang, Visiting Priest*

*Dr. Tyler Versluis, Music Director and Organist*

*Tanya Marcon Moore, Youth Ministry Associate*

*Tom Travaglini, Sexton*

*Grant Dunbar, Verger*

*Lisa Tait, Administrator*

### Office Hours & Contact Information

Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday

9:30 - 3:30

Email: [office@saintmatts.ca](mailto:office@saintmatts.ca)

Telephone: 416-231-4014

Website: [www.saintmatts.ca](http://www.saintmatts.ca)

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