



**Reaching out  
Reaching within  
Proclaiming God's Love**

**St. Matthew's Episcopal Church**

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# *The Messenger*

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## From the Interim Pastor

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Allow me to share with you some of what I have learned over the past few months that I have been at St. Matthew's.

I have met with several church leaders and non-profit institutions serving our community. There are some areas where we might cooperate in common ministry with each other. There are some challenges to be sure, but there are many exciting opportunities for ministry together.

I have had the advantage of hearing from our very capable Vestry members, led by our Senior Warden and Deacon. We don't claim to have all the answers, but we have hit the ground running and have gleaned a lot of good information by asking a lot of questions of one another.

If I could offer some simple advice as we begin our discernment phase it would be this, be excited and encouraged! Don't let the unknown become a source of fear. We are entering a new era for St. Matthew's! We are not alone. Not only is God with us but He goes before us to lead the way. Indeed, as we travel this road together I hope you will find cause for optimism and encouragement. My hopeful attitude is based on two realities. First and foremost, none of this – the pandemic, the post-quarantine period or the change in leadership of our church has caught God by surprise. He has a plan ready and waiting for our congregation.

Second, we are already seeing our church adapt

and adjust to this season of change in ways that are very encouraging. We have ample support from our church core leadership and the support and backing of our Bishop Cathleen and her Diocesan staff.

We now have an opportunity to make the necessary positive changes to move our church forward in ministry.

Get ready to begin the journey. From my perspective, St. Matthew's is entering the most amazing and exciting days it has seen in decades. Even though the path is challenging, we can expect future days filled with great opportunities. So, it is time for us to enter this new period of possibilities with hope and enthusiasm.

We hope you will join us on this journey! We have sent our survey requests personally to you for your input, and we will look forward to seeing God at work in his people and the feedback we receive for the exciting ministry that lies ahead for St. Matthew's.

Thank you, thank you, we can never say that enough. We appreciate your continued prayers and support as we journey down the road together.

Fr. Richard +



**Kansas Reverie**

The prairies  
the flat lands of quiet beauty  
at times jarred by tierce lightning  
and earthshaking thunder  
a collage of patchy grasses, flowers,  
rocks blending into winter's mellow tones,  
life renewing sleep in burrows,  
glittering ice, forgotten meadows  
of tombstones, weathered dates of  
determined immigrant ancestors,  
homesteaders with thoughts of freedom  
and a gentler life, resting in the earth  
they came to tame.

Joan Breit

**Meals on wheels**

A volunteer is needed to deliver meals on Tuesdays 6 times a year. 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday in Jan., Mar., May., July, Sept., and Nov.

Please call Thea 316-283-4939



*Remember to pray for each of these persons on their special day*

Watch over your children, O Lord, as their days increase; bless and guide them wherever they may be. Strengthen them when they stand; comfort them when discouraged or sorrowful; raise them up if they fall; and in their hearts may your peace which passes understanding abide all the days of their lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

**July Birthdays**


- July 9—Juliana Loyd
- July 15—Mary Beck
- July 19—Lennon Tyner
- July 22—Steven Biddle, Bill Swendson
- July 26—Jessica Keenan
- July 27—Fred Schroeder
- July 29—Sean Hall, Jay Holstine

**July Baptisms**

- July 9—Jordan Brinkley Orr
- July 25—Ashley Lundblom

**July Confirmations**

- July 14—Haley Sage Southern, Juliana Mae Loyd, Katherine Grace Lindgren, Maddie Stonehouse, Logan Bradley Moulds, Ethan William Moulds, Ellen Elizabeth Moulds, Bradley William Moulds, Elizabeth Ann Moulds




**St. Matt's Little Food Pantry** Please remember to add items to the Little Food Pantry at St. Matthew's.

As we move into the warmer months be sure to include things that won't be affected by the heat. Pasta, peanut butter granola bars, cereal, little containers of applesauce or fruit work well and are appreciated.

**Bible Quiz**

In Luke 15 Jesus tells three parables. Which of the following is not one of them?

- A. The Parable of the Lost Sheep
- B. The Parable of the Lost Son
- C. The Parable of the Lost Pearl
- D. The Parable of the Lost Coin



Answer: C (See Luke 15:1-32.)



## ISSUES, OPINIONS AND POSITIONS

***On June 25, 2022, Bishop Cathleen Bascom sent email to the clergy of the Diocese of Kansas. In it she wrote:***

“What a week! On Friday, the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*, holding that there is no longer a federal constitutional right to an abortion. The opinion is the most consequential Supreme Court decision in decades and will transform the landscape of women's reproductive health in America. Going forward, abortion rights will be determined by states, unless Congress acts. On Saturday, President Biden signed into law a bipartisan gun bill intended to prevent dangerous people from accessing firearms and increase investments in the nation's mental health system, ending nearly three decades of gridlock in Congress.

These developments in our nation call us to tap our theological understandings about the sanctity of life. The first lines of the Catechism in **The Book of Common Prayer** (1979) say this about Human Nature: Q. What are we by nature? A. We are part of God's creation, made in the image of God. This is true of every human being. Women. Men. Children. The faith statement is simple. However, living it out in the complexity of our human community, with its myriad of interconnected social issues, is like choosing colors within an ethical prism. I imagine that many of you will be in conversation with the faithful of our diocese on these issues, and you have my support to speak and preach your conscience.

I want to make you aware of a summary of the **General Convention Resolution on Abortion and Women's Reproductive Health** issued on May 17, 2019, by the Office of Government Relations:

The Church has declared that “we emphatically oppose abortion as a means of birth control, family planning, sex selection, or any reason of mere convenience.” At the same time since 1967, The Episcopal Church has maintained its “unequivocal opposition to any legislation on the part of the national or state governments which would abridge or deny the right of individuals to reach an informed decision [about the termination of pregnancy] and to act upon them.”

My own opinion on gun control” the bishop wrote, “is simple and clear: I support all efforts to reduce gun violence. Men, women, and children are beautifully made in the image of God and, since first witnessing the terror of the Columbine shooting (near where I grew up), far too many have been killed because of easy access to weapons in our nation. The new law is a first step and I am thankful for bipartisan support.

My stance on abortion is more complicated: I seek to stand in solidarity with women who are beautifully made in the image of God and often bear unequal responsibility for unwanted pregnancies and at the same time to stand with children born and unborn who are beautifully made in the image of God and must be protected. Sorting out the balance in conflicting claims of sacred life is difficult. I find myself in agreement with the official Episcopal Church statement above. These are my opinions. You and your parish members must prayerfully find your own answers.”



## St. Matthew's Outreach

### Food Cart

9 non-perishable food items were delivered to the Salvation Army "Harvest of Love" food bank in June. Hunger never takes a vacation....please remember those who don't have enough to eat.

### Soldiers & Shut Ins

Please keep these people in your prayers

Stephen Biddle	Jordan Orr
Sharon Davis	Ryan Bernard
Susan Koehn	Connor Ekerberg
Kathleen Leid	

If anyone has a loved one that they would like to add to either one of these boards, please contact Melissa

### Back to School in July

It's hard to think about School when it seems like Summer has barely begun. Planning vacations, pool time, family BBQs, all kind of fun things...hanging out with friends. But in order to make sure that we can help kids have the proper tools to help them learn in school, now is the time to collect school supplies. Once again, we are collecting supplies for Northridge elementary school right across the street from us.

There will be a display in the front hall and lists of needed items. We will have this available through the whole month of July. Thanks.



Make a joyful noise  
unto God, all ye lands.

Psalm 66:1, KJV

## July 2022 Coffee Hour Hosts

July 3—Twila Lockaby  
July 10—Barbara Gibson  
July 17—Nancy and Charlie Craig  
July 24—Sarah Teichler  
July 31—Fred Schroeder



Coffee hour gives us a time to socialize with each other, to relax and discuss important events, happenings, or fun things in the church, our lives, etc. It's wonderful to be able to do these things with a treat and a refreshing drink of coffee or tea.

There are always plenty of Sundays available to sign up and show off a special recipe, your favorite treats, or fun foods. It can be fun to sign up with a friend, or a committee, or go solo.

Any questions or concerns, please contact Melissa.

## Growing Earth Stewards: Skip the plastic!

Plastic has become the most common packaging material for many of the personal and household products that we use every day. But there are some significant, negative impacts on our environment from the production, use, and disposal of plastic products.

With some extra care and attention, you can reduce the amount of plastic that you use in your daily life. Here are some alternatives to plastic packaging and single-use plastic products:

- Reusable water bottles
- Bar soap, shampoo, and conditioner instead of liquid in plastic bottles
- Laundry detergent strips or powders instead of liquids packaged in plastic
- Refillable glass or ceramic soap bottles
- Reusable food storage containers
- Cloth grocery bags
- Products packaged in cardboard or paperboard instead of plastic
- Clean and reuse plastic packaging when it's possible and safe

- From the Diocese of Kansas Dialog



Please join  
Deacon Barbara for  
Evening Prayer every Wednesday  
at 6:30 pm on Facebook

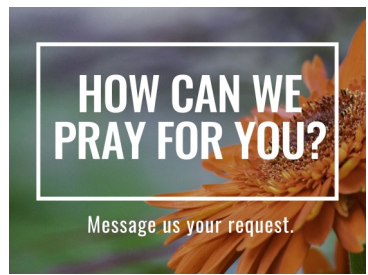
Or join us in person at the  
church in the St. Matthew's Chapel  
Everyone is welcome  
Come take a few minutes to  
end your day  
with prayer



**St. Matthew's Prayer Chain**

If you have a request for prayers for yourself or others, please contact Mary Upton at **316-841-1736**. The information you share with me will then be passed on to the chain leaders who will then pass the information on to their team. The members of the chain will then add your request to their prayers. The information you give me is confidential and will not be shared with others outside the prayer chain without your permission.

If you have a prayer request, would like more information and/or join the St. Matthew's Prayer Chain, please contact Mary Upton at **316-841-1736**.



**Altar team for July 2022:** Chris Simmonds, Margie Knupp, Katie Reese and Elizabeth Hill

**Altar Flowers for July 2022**

**July 3**  
*The Rev. Scott Hankins*  
"In loving memory of Sam and Vera Hankins"

**July 10**  
*Stephanie and Katherine Lindgren*  
"In celebration of Life"

**July 17**  
*Oliver J. and Carol Geiger*  
"In memory of Inez and Watt Geiger by their children and grandchildren"

**July 24**  
*Jim and Katie Reese*  
"In memory of Nomi and Royston Reese and Agnes Lundstrom"

**July 31**  
*Rose Pulis*  
"In loving memory of Jim Pulis"



**Concerning the Altar flowers:**

I have visited with Jack at Ruzen's and it has been over five years since we have had a price increase for the two flower arrangements for Sunday Service. The price will be \$44.00 including flowers, tax, containers and delivery. Thanks, Twila Lockaby



## Prayer and Icon Retreat

Fr. Les Jackson will again facilitate the icon writing retreat. He studied with The Reverend Peter Pearson, Iconographer, and author of *A Brush with God* and *Another Brush with God: Further Conversations About Icons*. Participants will engage the prayerful process of writing (painting) an Icon for their own private devotions. The uses and meanings of Icons for individual and corporate prayer and worship will be discussed.



**When:** July 21, 6-9 pm, July 22 6-9 pm, and July 23, 9 am - until finished

**Where:** St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Guild Hall, 1062 E. Chet Smith Ave., Derby, KS

**Cost:** \$80, make checks payable to Trinity Episcopal Church with "Icon Retreat" in the memo line and send to P.O. Box 507, El Dorado, KS 67042

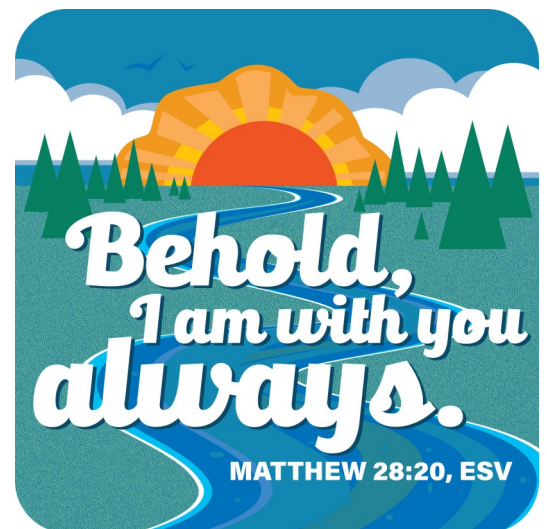
**Register by Thursday, July 7**

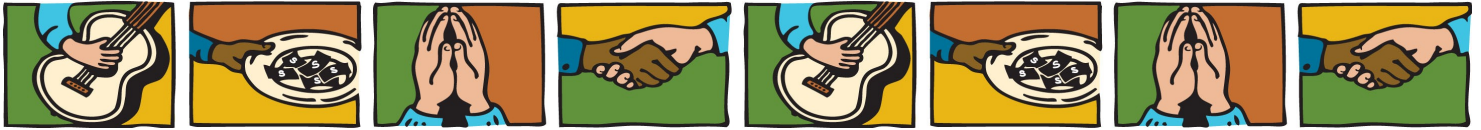
No prior art experience is required. Retreat cost covers all materials (Paint, brushes, art panels, lunch on Saturday, etc.). Questions? Contact Father Les at [fatherles@trinityeldorado.org](mailto:fatherles@trinityeldorado.org).

## All we need to know

When a loved one dies, we have questions: What caused the death? When will the funeral be? What form will our grief take? Some deaths also bring spiritual questions: Where was God? Is our loved one with God now?

Paul shared deep thoughts about death with the believers at Corinth. His complex ideas might raise further questions, but here's the key: We don't need to understand everything right away — not all of Paul's theology, or everything about God or all the practical matters around a loved one's death. Here, from 1 Corinthians 15 (NRSV), is what we do know: "Christ has been raised from the dead" (v. 20) — death doesn't have the final say. "All will be made alive in Christ" (v. 22) — a loving promise God offers to all. "The last enemy to be destroyed is death" (v. 26) — in the end, Jesus will destroy all sickness, pain, sorrow, war, poverty, oppression and even death itself. We are in God's loving hands. That's all we need to know. —Heidi Hyland Mann





Here is the worship schedule for June. As we begin to get back to a more normal Sunday service, please consider serving as lector, counter, usher or host. The sign up sheet will be out every Sunday for you to sign up. Thank you for your time and service.

	July 3	July 10	July 17	July 24	July 31
<b>Season</b>	<b>4th Sunday after Pentecost</b>	<b>5th Sunday after Pentecost</b>	<b>6th Sunday after Pentecost</b>	<b>7th Sunday after Pentecost</b>	<b>8th Sunday after Pentecost</b>
<b>Service</b>	ComAP	Holy Eucharist	Holy Eucharist	Holy Eucharist	Holy Eucharist
<b>Leaders</b>	Deacon Barbara Gibson	Fr. Richard Osborne	Fr. Richard Osborne	Fr. Richard Osborne	Fr. Richard Osborne
<b>Lectors</b>	Fred Schroeder	Mary Upton	Bonnie Jones	Elizabeth Hill	Scott McCloud
<b>Counters (2)</b>	Twila Lockaby	Steve Stonehouse	Margie Knupp	Elizabeth Hill	David Simmonds
	Mary Upton	David Simmonds	Fred Schroeder	Twila Lockaby	Fred Schroeder
<b>Ushers (2)</b>	Melissa Keenan	Melissa Keenan	Elizabeth Hill	Steve Stonehouse	Rick Glover
	Mary Upton	Mary Upton	Rick Glover	Rich Stinnett	Elizabeth Hill
<b>Hosts</b>	Twila Lockaby	Barbara Gibson	Nancy and Charlie Craig	Sarah Teichler	Fred Schroeder
<b>Altar Flowers</b>	The Rev. Scott Hankins	Stephanie and Katherine Lindgren	Oliver J. and Carol Geiger	Jim and Katie Reese	Rose Pulis
<b>Acolyte</b>	Fred Schroeder	Karen Wall	Fred Schroeder	Maggie Snow	Fred Schroeder
<b>Organist</b>	Chris Teichler	Chris Teichler	Chris Teichler	Kelly Glann	



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## Notes from the St. Matthew's Vestry Retreat 2022

For our parish retreat on June 4, we reviewed a paper provided to us by Bishop Cathleen Bascom entitled **"Invited to Abundant Life" A Discernment Guide for 21<sup>st</sup>-century Parishes, Minsters, and New Expression Communities**. It was prepared for use at our retreat and for other parishes in the Diocese of Kansas, especially those that are: wondering what vision has for them to in the next phase of their congregational life. Processes in this guide are valuable for us as a parish in transition between clergy leaders.

Smaller groups of faithful followers may discern God calling them to become what the bishop refers to as "a New Expression Community" living their life in Christ not centered in a church building but in homes, outdoors, or in other settings.

Bishop Cathleen invited parishes in our diocese to engage in reflection about our identity and unique calling. Kansas has vital congregations of all sizes and shapes, and they are the communities essential to our personal experiences of Abundant Life. Jesus said,

*"I am come that they might have life,  
and that they might have it more abundantly." John 10:10b*

God has given us all that we need to be successful in serving God. As the psalmist writes,

**"God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.  
Therefore, we will not fear" Psalm 46:1-2**

The most faithful, healthy and effective churches are:

Focused and faithful to their unique reason for being.

Connected to and expressive of their unique church tradition and character.

Self-renewing and responsive to the challenges and opportunities before them.

Sustainable or working toward greater sustainability in terms leadership and finance.

The Discernment Guide that the Bishop provided reminded us of the experiences of the ancient Israelites. When Moses died, God's promise to Joshua as he faced an unknown future is still God's promise to

us:

**"Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed,  
for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go" Joshua 1:9**

*(Continued on page 9)*





*Vestry Retreat*  
(Continued from page 8)

Jesus said that no one who puts their hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God. God wants us to look forward, not back. God wants us to prepare for the future that we cannot see or yet imagine. We are called as a congregation to engage in prayerful and intentional discernment centered on this core question of ministry:

**“What is God calling this congregation to do in this place and at this time?”**

To help answer this question, we are asking the entire congregation of St. Matthew's to engage in prayerful discernment. Although we believe that God's kingdom lasts forever, individual congregations may not. Congregations come into being, live, and might even eventually, die. This is normal. The stages in the congregational life cycle are birth, formation, stability (both healthy and stagnant), decline, disintegration, and death.

Here is a way of understanding this Lifecycle.

**Stage 1 Birth:** A founder or founders have a desire, an idea, a dream.

**Stage 2 Formation:** Identity. They figure out who they are as a faith community by asking: What is our mission, and how must we organize ourselves and prepare leaders to do the work that needs to be done?

**Stage 3 Stability:** Once established, institutionally and spiritually, a fruitful and sustainable ministry has fit together the elements of organizational life: money, vision for ministry, property, people. This can be a **place of health** or can tip into feeling **stagnant, stale or stalled**.

Healthy stable congregations stay healthy by recognizing and acting on areas in a congregation that need improvement. They have in place processes that scan the life of the congregation, listen for and act on areas that need improvement. These congregations engage the formation questions, seek to understand their life cycle and consider God's mission and kingdom.

When stability becomes stuck and stagnant, a congregation and its leadership will need to look at formation questions in a more focused way: Who are we (identity)? What are we here for (purpose)? Who is our neighbor and how may we seek and serve Christ in them (context)? How must we organize ourselves and prepare leaders to do the work that needs to be done?

**Stage 4 Decline:** Numbers fall off, energy declines, vision blurs, fear and blame creep into the system, confusion, focus on small things rather than central issues.

*(Continued on page 10)*



*Vestry Retreat*  
(Continued from page 9)

The further down the path a congregation goes in declining numbers, finances, energy and flexibility, the more costly it becomes for a congregation to engage the formation questions that have the potential to activate what it will take to return to stability. Redevelopment is a possibility, but significant effort will be needed to increase the likelihood that redevelopment efforts will turn things around and bear fruit.

When a congregation feels stuck or loses hope that leaders are able to turn things around, you are seeing symptoms of disintegration. When disintegration begins and things begin to fall apart, or paralysis can set in. At this point a diocese will often intervene, taking charge of the decisions as there is probably no capacity/leadership to do what may be needed.

**Stage 5 Death:** The end of life, the total and permanent cessation of all the life-supporting functions of an organization.

*Where do you think we are in this life cycle?*

We are asking the congregation to engage in prayerful and intentional discernment centered on the question: “**What is God calling this congregation to do in this place and at this time?**” This is the core question of ministry.

*Why are we here? What is God's will for our life together?*

Discerning God's purposes for the congregation is the foundation of what we are doing when we conduct a church planning or re-visioning effort. A very few congregations are intentional about practice of discernment. Simply using the word “discernment” is not enough, especially if it is not the normal practice of your congregation. In fact, it could make the planning and visioning effort feel alien or intimidating. How do we seek to know God's will in concrete ways in a planning process?

*Ever-present God, you call us on a journey to a place we do not know. We are not where we started. We have not reached our destination. We are not sure where we are or who we are. This is not a comfortable place. Be among us, we pray. Calm our fears and save us from discouragement and help us stay on course. Open our hearts to your guidance so that our journey to this unknown place continues as a journey of trust. Amen.*