



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

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church

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www.stmatthewsnewton.org
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The Messenger



A NOTE FROM THE INTERIM PASTOR

Driving around Newton you are apt to occasionally see a Church message on their marquee outside of the church. I saw these words on the Baptist Church sign:

PRAY FOR A GOOD HARVEST, BUT KEEP ON HOEING!

What an excellent bit of advice! It would be foolish for a farmer to ask the Lord for a good crop but fail to sow the seed. How futile his prayers would be if he paid no further attention to his crop after he planted it. To have an abundant yield, he must cultivate his fields and protect them from pests and insects, using every means at his disposal to produce the greatest increase. Prayer and work go together!

Often, we fail to apply this principle to our Christian lives. We intercede for an unsaved loved one, yet never give him a word of testimony. We invoke God's blessing on the ministry of our church, but when we are approached and asked to volunteer, we suddenly find a dozen excuses not to do it.

We offer earnest petitions for someone in need, yet refuse to give out of our own abundance to aid them. Beseeking the Lord to send out workers, we are unwilling to go ourselves. We ask that a brother who has fallen into sin may be restored to fellowship with Christ, yet we never go out of our way to say

a kind word or manifest love toward him. Jesus said, ***"Pray that the Lord of the harvest will send forth laborers into his harvest!"*** (Matthew 9:38).

Yes, its fine to ask for a good crop, but notice, the Lord's request is for workers! Having prayed for His help, don't forget to do your part!

Pray as if everything depends on God, then work as if everything depends on You!

Do Your Part, We Need Volunteers!



Time and Talent

Please stop in the Parish Hall and look over the posters describing the various areas within the church where volunteers are needed. There are opportunities to work with outreach, help during worship services, assist in the office, help in the kitchen and so many other ministries. Please fill in the forms provided with what and how you can serve. Even if you already serve in some of these areas, please fill out a form so we have a good list of volunteers. Thanks so much for all your help.



St. Matt's Little Food Pantry
HELP! The blessing Box and Food Pantry is empty! Please help friends in the area around St. Matt's by bringing a few food items to support this outreach opportunity! Thanks



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

In the Beginning

In the Beginning was the Word
exploding into blinding Light
sparks of Divine Creation
swimming crawling flying walking
water into glistening oceans of life
earth into green abundance
air of life breathing in breathing out
fire into golden streams of sunshine
Divine Incarnation
jarring humanity from deep sleep
a day-by-day explosion

In the Beginning was the Word

Joan Breit

December Birthdays

- December 5—Kathi Bogner, Jerry Collier
- December 9—Amy Ekerberg, Katrina Southern
- December 12—Jason Penner
- December 22—Sarah Hill
- December 27—Rosalind Scudder
- December 30—Melissa Keenan
- December 31—Ian McCloud

December Baptisms

- December 5 —Jim Reese
- December 20—Maddie Stonehouse
- December 22—Drew Holstine, Wayne Reif
- December 23—Alison Loyd, Nancy Craig
- December 24—Haley Southern
- December 26—Mary Ann Glover Beck
- December 29—Jane Orr, Charles Beck

December Confirmations


- December 7—Mike Sizemore, Donna Mills, Melissa Keenan, Sean Hall
- December 8—Rosalind Scudder
- December 16—Annette Bernard
- December 23—Andrew Craig

If you know of other birthday, confirmation, or baptism dates that are not listed, please contact the office so they can be included. Thank you.

Bible Quiz

Complete this Bible verse: "The (1)____ (2)____ in the (3)____, and the (3)____ has not overcome it."

- A. (1) Word; (2) speaks; (3) silence
- B. (1) light; (2) shines; (3) darkness
- C. (1) kingdom of God; (2) reigns; (3) world
- D. (1) Spirit of God; (2) shines; (3) world
- E. None of the above



Answer: B (See John 1:5.)



Advent and Christmas Services
St. Matthew's Episcopal Church



Sunday, December 4—Advent 2

10:15 am—Worship Service

Today we light the second candle of PEACE. “Almighty God, you offer rest for our hearts, and peace for our souls. Give us grace to seek peace in our lives, peace in this community, and peace in the world. Through Jesus Christ, the prince of peace. Amen.”



Sunday, December 11—Advent 3

10:15 am—Worship Service

Today we light the third candle of JOY. “Gracious God, you came to us in human flesh and you abide with us in the Holy Spirit. Fill us with your joy, and help us shine as a light to the world. Through Jesus Christ, who makes our joy complete. Amen.”



Sunday, December 18—Advent 4

10:15 am—Lessons and Carols

Today we light the fourth candle of LOVE. “Loving God, your mercy and compassion endure forever. Open our hearts, that we may receive your love; and following the example of your Son, spread that love to a love-starved world. Through Jesus Christ, who loved us to the end. Amen.”

On this 4th Sunday of Advent we will also be Hanging the Greens right after church. Come help beautify the church for the Christmas Season. Bring a snack to share during fellowship after the decorations are put up.



Saturday, December 24—Christmas Eve

7:00 pm—Christmas Music

7:30 pm—Christmas Eve Service

Today we light all the candles of the Advent wreath. Each candle has a meaning. The first candle is HOPE, the second candle is PEACE, the third candle is JOY, and the fourth candle is LOVE. The center candle is the Christ candle. “O God of hope, peace, joy, and love. As Mary and

Joseph welcomed you into the world, now help us welcome you into our lives. Give us courage to hope; strength to seek peace. Fill our spirits with joy; and our hearts with love. Through Jesus Christ, the Lord of all. Amen.”

Ring the Bells! - bring your bells, keys, or whatever you have so we can make a joyful noise during the Christmas Eve Service!



Sunday, December 25—Christmas Day

10:15 am—Morning Prayer

“Deliver us from evil by the blessing which Christ brings, and teach us to be merry with clear hearts. May the **Christmas** morning make us happy to be thy children, and Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven, for Jesus' sake. Amen”



A collaboration across time and place

For Christmas Day worship, many churches use Psalm 98. It is fitting, then, that Isaac Watts, who interpreted 132 psalms as hymn texts, based a now-beloved carol on it.

Watts (1674-1748) was a student of language, religion and philosophy. He wanted to make Scripture more relevant to lay people and thought hymns could help. Watts composed more than 600 hymn texts, many still in use. But Psalm 98:4-9, "Joy to the World," needed music to fit its words.



Enter Lowell Mason (1792-1872), an American choir director. He came across Watts' Psalm 98 hymn text and sought inspiration for a melody from the famous oratorio *Messiah* by George F. Handel (1685-1759). Mason pulled musical phrases from sections of Handel's work, resulting in the tune we now recognize as "Joy to the World."

So it is that three men who lived across three centuries and never met — along with the composer of the original psalm more than two millennia earlier — together produced a hymn to the Christ-child, which millions have sung and continue to love.

The meaning of Epiphany

Epiphany, which comes from the Greek word *epiphaneia*, means "an appearance" or "a revealing." Centuries ago, the church set aside January 6, the 12th day after Christmas, to mark the revealing of Jesus as Christ to the wise men, who were Gentiles. Jesus' first followers were Jewish, so the revelation of the divine Christ to the non-Jewish magi reminds us that Jesus came to earth to save the whole world.

Symbols of Epiphany include light, a star, a crown (or three crowns) and a globe or stylized portrayal of the world. The color of Epiphany is green to symbolize life, growth, hope and eternity.

On the church calendar, the Epiphany season starts on January 6 and lasts until Ash Wednesday, which is determined by the date of Easter.



Epiphany Party! January 8th

Mark your calendars to join us for an Epiphany Party. We will celebrate Epiphany, when the Magi came to worship baby Jesus.

More details will be forthcoming but plan now to be here on **Sunday, January 8, after church**. Bring an inexpensive wrapped white elephant gift. We have always had lots of fun and laughter as we celebrate the end of the Christmas season and the start of the Epiphany season.

Bring a snack to share and there will be a King's Cake!



St. Matthew's Outreach

Food cart

4 non-perishable food items were delivered to the Salvation army "Harvest of Love" food bank in November.

Harvest of Love—November Collection

60 non-perishable food items were collected and taken to the Salvation army "Harvest of Love" food bank. What a wonderful way to do God's work by helping those who are in need. Thanks be to God

Blessing Box

HELP! The blessing Box is empty! Please help friends around the area around St. Matt's by bringing a few food items to support this outreach opportunity! Thanks

Adopt a Family

Everyone is aware that once again we have adopted a family through Salvation Army. We are thrilled to be helping a family of 3....a mother and her two lovely children, a daughter and a son.

There are still a few tags left on our wreath. Please be sure to have your wrapped gifts with the tag you took from the wreath back to church by Dec 18th. Any questions or concerns please contact Melissa. Thanks

Mitten Tree

We are collecting mittens, gloves, scarves, hats, and even socks..yes, socks for our Mitten Tree at the back of the Nave. These items will be donated to Salvation army. Deadline is December 18th. Thanks.

Soldiers & Shut Ins

Please keep these wonderful people in your prayers.

Ryan Bernard	Jordan Orr	Conner Ekerberg
Stephen Bidle	Kathleen Leid	

If anyone has a loved one that they would like to add to either one of our boards, please let Melissa know ...an photo would be greatly appreciated! Thank you.

December 2022 Coffee Hour Hosts

December 4- Bonnie/Ginger/Mary U.

December 11- OPEN

December 18- Hanging of the greens/
lessons & carols..... BRING SNACKS

December 25- Melissa Keenan



Thanks to everyone that has hosted during the coffee hour in 2022! There will be a new sign up board for 2023 available soon. Merry Christmas



Card
Ministry

The Card Ministry group will be meeting again in December on Monday, December 12 at 1:00 pm at the church. Please join us! All you need to bring is yourself, as all the materials will be provided. Hope to see you there!

Mary Upton and Bonnie Jones



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 Covey Chapel.
Everyone is welcome. Come take a
few minutes to end your
day with prayer.



Christmas Flowers

If you would like to donate towards Poinsettias to decorate the church for the Christmas Season, please pick up a form at the church or contact Twila Lockaby. You can designate the gift in Loving Memory of someone, for Blessings Received or for anything else. Any amount you can give is wonderful. Lets fill the church with the beauty of the poinsettias and for the blessings of the season. Thanks for your generosity.

Please have your donation and designation to Twila by December 18.



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 December
Melissa Keenan and Karen Wall

Altar Flowers for December 2022

December 4 - Ruth Cooper
"In loving memory of darling Chuck"

December 11 - Margie Knupp
"For Blessings Received"

December 18 - Twila Lockaby
"For Blessings Received"

December 24 - Christmas Poinsettias

December 25 - Christmas Poinsettias

January 1 - Christmas Poinsettias

January 8 - Christmas Poinsettias



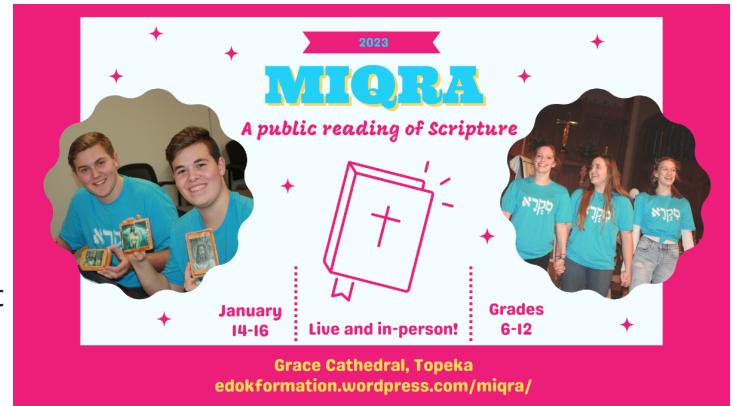
Youth & Young Adult Ministry

Miqra registration is now open!

Here's what the youth are saying about Miqra:

- It is a lot of fun and there is so much to experience!
- I know it might sound weird to read the Bible, but that is only a fraction of what we do. We sing, dance, play games, and the food is amazing!
- We do a bunch of fun activities that help you create a deeper connection with your faith -- while still being hands-on and crafting creatively!
- It is an event full of community, games, music, and faith.
- Miqra is a place of safety and community.
- Miqra is a fan-favorite!
- Some of my fondest memories are from youth events and I hope to share some with you!
- The people there are amazing!

We hope you'll join us for the first in-person Miqra since 2020!



When: Saturday, January 14, 1:30 pm – Monday, January 16, 11 am, 2023

Students may choose to stay overnight or come just during the day.

Where: Grace Cathedral, Topeka

Who: Grades 6-12

Fee: \$55

Are you an Adult who loves to read the Bible? Want to be a part of a Youth Event? Check this out!!

Miqra is a weekend retreat for youth where we read the entire Bible out-loud. We begin the reading on Friday morning, but the youth don't arrive until Friday evening or Saturday afternoon. So, we always need volunteers to help us start the reading Friday during the day, and with the incorporation of technology, can now invite you to help us throughout the weekend as well. **You can choose to read in-person at the Cathedral in Topeka, or join our Zoom meeting and read from your home or office.**

Please click on the following web link (or copy it into your web browser if clicking doesn't work) to go to the signup sheet: <https://volunteersignup.org/QBB4Q> . To sign up, just follow the instructions on the page. It only takes a few seconds to do. Please take the Friday time slots first as that is where we have the most need.

If you'd like to volunteer to help at Miqra as an adult, registration is open and we'd love to have you. We need family group leaders, nurses, overnight supervision, and kitchen staff. You can sign-up here: <https://www.ultracamp.com/info/sessiondetail.aspx?idCamp=986&campCode=1sC&idSession=380136>



Thank
You

I want to let all of my wonderful church family at St. Matthews know how much I appreciate all of the

calls, visits and cards throughout my absence during my recovery from surgery. Thank you all very much!! Melissa

Christmas crackups

Enjoy these kid-friendly holiday jokes!

What did Adam say the day before Christmas?

It's Christmas, Eve

What does the gingerbread man put on his bed?

Cookie sheets.

What do you sing at a snowman's birthday party?

"Freeze a jolly good fellow!"

What is a Christmas tree's favorite candy?

Ornamints.

What goes "Oh, Oh, Oh"?

Santa walking backward.

Why did Rudolph get a bad report card?

Because he went down in history.

What is an elf's favorite kind of music?

Wrap music!

How much did Santa pay for his sleigh?

Nothing. It was on the house!

What kind of photos do Santa's helpers take?

Elfies.

Holiday Outreach Opportunities



We have adopted a family through Salvation Army. We are thrilled to be helping a family of 3...a mother and her two lovely children, a daughter and a son. Please pick a tag off the wreath in the Parish Hall. Have your wrapped gifts with the tag you took from the wreath back to church by Dec 18th.



We are collecting mittens, gloves, scarves, hats, and even socks..yes, socks for our Mitten Tree at the back of the Nave. These items will be donated to Salvation army. Deadline is December 18th.

Decorate the Church



On Sunday, December 18, we will be Hanging the Greens to decorate the church for the Christmas Season.

Plan to be here on the 18th for the worship service of Lessons and Carols at 10:15 am and then stay afterwards to help decorate. As always, we need people to setup the candles at the end of the pews, line the candles along the windows, hang the big wreaths, decorate the Christmas tree, hang garland along the stairs, hang the garland from the choir loft, setup the nativity and whatever else is needed to beautify our wonderful church!

Bring a snack along to share during a fellowship time after the decorating is finish. Let us celebrate this time together and be joyful for the Christmas Season! Thanks be to God!



St Matthew's
Annual Parish Meeting
And Pot Luck Lunch
Sunday, January 22, 2023
11:30 AM

Almighty and ever living God, ruler of all things in heaven and earth, hear our prayers for this parish family. Strengthen the faithful, arouse the careless, and restore the penitent. Grant us all things necessary for our common life, and bring us all to be of one heart and mind within your holy Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

All committee chairpersons are asked to submit their Annual Reports to the email address office.stmatthewsnewton@gmail.com or to the church office as soon as possible.

One agenda item is election of new Vestry members and convocation delegates. The nominating committee will be meeting to name a slate of nominees for Vestry and a convocation delegate. Please prayerfully consider serving if asked by the nominating committee.

Being a Vestry member is an important leadership position. Working with the priest, the Vestry is responsible for the financial and spiritual health of the church community.

**Stewardship At St. Matthew's:
More Than Enough**

Stewardship ingathering has completed, and despite the current economy we have seen an uptick in giving. Thank you to everyone at St. Matthews for your generosity and for recognizing the value in giving. We will present a budget for the church at the annual meeting, and we will have 2022 final donation statements out to everyone by the end of January.

For those of you who cannot attend church worship regularly, I encourage you to consider online giving to St. Matthew's. It's easy to get started: Just visit our website

Convocation delegates and alternate attend three or four meetings per year of the SW Convocation. The delegates attend the annual Diocesan Convention in October. The alternate is encouraged to attend meetings of the SW Convocation to learn about the responsibilities of the delegates and attend the convention if the elected delegate cannot attend.

Please plan to attend the Annual Meeting as we look at what was accomplished in 2022 and as we start to plan ahead for 2023.

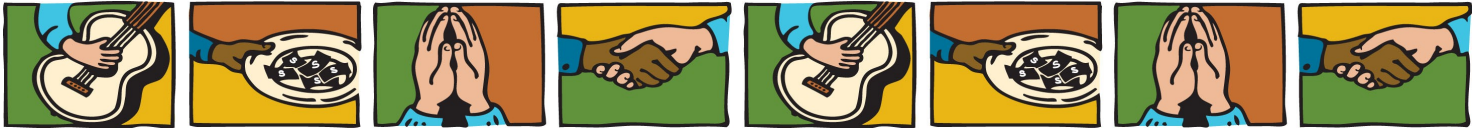
All members of St. Matthew's are encouraged to attend this important meeting of our church. Each committee will have their report for 2022, the budget will be discussed, and plans for the new year will be talked about and voted on!

at <https://www.stmatthewsnewton.org/> and click on the Red **Give** button that is located on the right side of the screen below the banner. You will be directed to Tithely, our online giving platform, where you can give a single gift or set up recurring giving on a schedule you choose. You are always free to send gifts to the church as well.

Maggie Snow
Jr. Warden & Treasurer



MORE THAN ENOUGH



Here is the worship schedule for December. Please let the office know if you would like to sign up to read, usher and/or count. We can always use more hands! ***If you are unable to serve when you are scheduled, please find a substitute.*** Thanks for your service!

	December 4	December 11	December 18	December 24	December 25
Season	Second Sunday of Advent	Third Sunday of Advent	Fourth Sunday of Advent	Christmas Eve	Christmas Day
Service	Holy Eucharist	Holy Eucharist	Communion in the absence of a Priest (ComAP) Lessons & Carols	Christmas Eve Service Holy Eucharist	Morning Prayer
Leaders	Fr. Richard Osborne	Fr. Richard Osborne	Deacon Barbara Gibson Maggie Snow	Fr. Richard Osborne	Deacon Barbara Gibson
Lectors	Elizabeth Hill	Fred Schroeder	Mary Upton	Fred Schroeder	
Counters (2)	Fred Schroeder	Mary Upton	David Simmonds	Margie Knupp	
	Margie Knupp	Maggie Snow	Fred Schroeder	Twila Lockaby	
Ushers (2)	Dave Simmonds	Charlie Craig	Dave Simmonds	Melissa Keenan	
	Mary Upton	Rick Glover	Bonnie Jones	Rick Glover	
Hosts	Bonnie, Ginger and Mary	Open	Everyone bring Snacks	Open	Melissa Keenan
Altar Flowers	Ruth Cooper <i>"In loving memory of darling Chuck"</i>	Margie Knupp <i>"For Blessings Received"</i>	Twila Lockaby <i>"For Blessings Received"</i>	Christmas Poinsettias	Christmas Poinsettias
Acolyte	Fred Schroeder	Maggie Snow	CoMap	Michael Southern Fred Schroeder	
Organist	Chris Teichler	Chris Teichler	Chris Teichler	Chris Teichler	

advent CALENDAR

Perform a random act of kindness



two

Donate food to a local food bank

Have a coloring contest



four

Buy socks for a homeless shelter



5

Watch a favorite holiday movie

Make or buy a new Christmas ornament



Let someone go in front of you in line

seven

8

Clean out and donate outgrown toys



Build a snowman out of cotton balls

9

Take cupcakes to your local fire department



Decorate a gingerbread house

eleven

thirteen

Leave a happy note for someone to find



Have a game night in your PJs

14

Make paper snowflakes



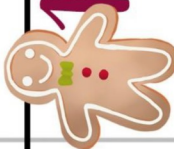
15

Drink hot cocoa



17

Make Christmas cards



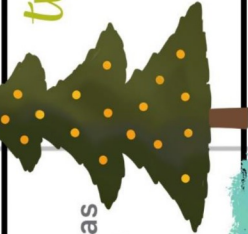
18

Bake Christmas cookies



19

Sing Christmas carols



twenty

Take a family photo in front of the Christmas tree

Read your favorite Christmas story

21



22

Take a car tour of your local light displays

Deliver Christmas cards to your neighbors



23

Watch or attend a Christmas Eve service

twenty-four



Read the Nativity story

25