



Reaching out
Reaching within
Proclaiming God's Love

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church

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The Messenger



From the Interim Pastor—Fr. Richard Osborne

A New Year's Parable

On the first day God created the cow. God said, ***"You must go to the field with the farmer all day and suffer under the sun, have calves, and give milk to support the farmer, and I will give you a life span of 60 years."***

The cow said, ***"That's a kind of tough life you want me to live for 60 years. Let me have 20 years, and I'll give back the other 40."*** And God agreed.

On the second day God created the dog. God said, ***"Set all day by the door of your house and bark at anyone who comes in or walks past. I will give you a life span of 20 years."*** The dog said, ***"That's too long to be barking. Give me 10 years, and I'll give back the other 10."*** So God, with a sigh, agreed.

On the third day God created the monkey. God said, ***"Entertain people, do monkey tricks, make them laugh. I'll give you a 20-year life span."*** Monkey said, ***"How boring; monkey tricks for 20 years? I don't think so. Dog gave you back 10, so that's what I'll do, 2, OK?"*** And God agreed again.

On the 4th day God created man. God said, ***"Eat, sleep, play, and enjoy life. Do nothing, just enjoy. I'll give you 20 years."*** Man said, ***"What? Only 20 years? No way, man. Tell you what, I'll take my 20, and the 40 cow gave back, and the ten dog gave back, and the 10 monkey gave back. That makes 80, OK?"*** "OK," said God. ***"You've got a deal."***

So that's why for the first 20 years we eat, sleep, play, enjoy life, and do nothing; for the next 40 years we slave in the sun to support our family; for the next 10 years we do monkey tricks to entertain our grandchildren; and for the last 10 years we sit in front of the house and bark at everybody!

Where does time go? Here we are at the start of another year that inevitably transitions us from one time frame to another. I don't know if the parable holds true – although it has a certain identifiable ring to it – or where each of us is in the cow-dog-monkey stages. But I do know that time is a gift and that a new year is always a new beginning, and that, since grace abounds, spiritual opportunity will always be around the next calendar corner. To put it another way, this new year we will be invited to another stage of our lives, to a more profound involvement with the spirit, to a deeper degree of conversion, to a challenge of being holier at the end of this new year than we have been at the end of the previous year.

And that challenge becomes increasingly more urgent as we limp into this new year. At this point in time, North Korea is revving up its nuclear capacities, Israelis and Palestinians continue to brutally kill one another, Russia is attacking Ukraine, our country is weaponizing Ukraine, the gap between the very rich and the very poor grows everyday wider, and our church is seriously wounded. These need not be forthcoming days of despair; however, rather, they are days of opportunity to become more virtuous, more caring, more compassionate, more Christ-like, more faithful to a gospel which has the power to reverse all these evils. All told, we have been given, on the average, some 25,000 days to live. Some portion of that has already run out. But a new year, remember, like 2024, wipes out all of the yesterday's and offers us 366 shining, new tomorrow's in which to be finer, more focused, more faithful Christians.

Of course, like last year, it's only an offer. To accept it has to be one of our most meaningful and profound New Year's resolutions. May it be so for each of us!



St. Matthew's Vision Statement

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church is living into God's vision for us as a beloved community and disciples of Christ. We are always growing in relationship with God, embracing our neighborhood and our world, and leading through acts of service as a beacon of God's justice and love.

St. Matthew's Mission Statement

The Mission of St. Matthew's is to Welcome, Respect and Care for All People. We accomplish this by following Christ, the perfect example of God's reconciling love, as we promote justice, peace and healing for ourselves and our world.

St. Matthew's office hours:

- Monday-Thursday 9:00 am-2:00 pm
- Fr. Richard is in the office 10:00 am-2:00 pm Monday and Tuesday.

Services: Holy Eucharist 10:15 am every Sunday
Evening Prayer 6:30 pm every Wednesday

The St. Matthew's Vestry's January meeting will be after church on Sunday, January 14, 2024

The Parish Council will meet on Saturday, January 20 at 10:00 am at the church.

The St. Matthew's Annual Meeting will be after church on Sunday, January 21, 2024. There will be a potluck lunch, bring a dish to share.

The Vestry Meeting minutes will be posted on the Vestry bulletin board in the hallway.



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

Birthdays

- January 2— Keagan Bush
- January 3— Patrick Craig, Chuck Cooper
- January 6— Wayne Reif, Nyla Friesen
- January 7— Beth Penner
- January 10— Mitch Young, Michael Southern, Jr.
- January 16— Caleb Woodward
- January 17— George Graybill
- January 20— Joy Robb
- January 21— Mary Werner
- January 26— Steve Stonehouse
- January 31— Mollie (Collier) Partridge

Baptisms

- January 2— Jake Partridge
- January 9— Juliana Loyd
- January 10— Jordan Loyd
- January 30 - Joe Robb

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.



A Message from Junior Warden:

The time has come to assess the aging parts of our building. One of the major concerns is our heating and air conditioning systems. The large unit is over 20 years old and uses Freon. Freon has become expensive and obsolete. We must be prepared to replace the major HVAC unit. There are other repairs and improvements that are due to age and need attention. For this reason I am forming a Capital Campaign committee. This group will identify needs, prioritize those needs, and look for means of funding these projects. The last Capital Fund Drive was conducted over 20 years ago. This drive shouldn't be as major as the last one but equally important. I am looking for volunteers to serve on this committee. Please let me know if you would be willing to give of your time and talent in this way. I have already started looking at grants that might be available so if you have any expertise in this area we would appreciate you sharing that skill.

Chris Simmonds, Junior Warden



Rector
SEARCH COMMITTEE

One of the missions for the Vestry in 2024 is to organize a search committee for our next rector. If you are willing to serve on this important committee, please contact the church office or any Vestry member.

Peace
Peace Peace
Much talked about
but not always lived yet
the ideal down through the ages
the Christ message angels' song
over Roman-occupied Bethlehem's hills
today's continuing occupation to the daily
killing of children as was Herod's war on
children "Peace on earth good will to all"
the risen Christ again repeating "Peace be with you"
until peace vibrations break open our sleeping hearts

Peace
Peace Peace

Joan Breit Spring 2023



Parish Council Meeting

The St. Matthew's Parish Council will be meeting on Saturday, January 20 at 10:00 am in the St. Matthew's Parish Hall. Everyone is invited to attend. Outreach committee, music committee, altar guild, vestry, and anyone else that wants to be involved.

We will be talking about and planning the calendar for the next quarter. All input is appreciated and encouraged. What do you want to see done here at St. Matthew's January-April (and beyond)? Hope to see each of you at the meeting. Bring your calendars!

A few things that will be discussed are: the Pancake Supper, Ash Wednesday, Lent and Easter! A busy time.



Thank you to everyone that has made a pledge to St. Matthew's through our stewardship campaign. Thank you also for all you do here at St. Matthew's and for stepping forward to help with what needs to be done to keep our church open and serving. Your dedication to the church and your generosity are appreciated. Its never to late to submit a pledge or to volunteer for the many roles and responsibilities at St. Matthew's. You can contact the church office or any Vestry member or a member of the clergy to discuss how you can be involved. 2024 is looking to be an amazing year!



On entering the house,
they saw the child with
Mary his mother;
and they knelt
down and paid
him homage.

Matthew 2:11,
NRSV



You Are Invited to An Epiphany Party At St. Matthew's

We have arrived at Epiphany,
the celebration of the visit by
the Magi to the infant Jesus,
which is seen as evidence that
Christ, the Jewish Messiah,
came also for the salvation of
Gentiles.

When: Noon on Saturday, January 6, 2024
(Day of Epiphany)

What: *Potluck Lunch* – bring a dish to share. There will be coffee, water,
and iced tea provided

White Elephant Gift Exchange - Bring a wrapped white elephant gift and
join in the fun as we play a game to
exchange the gifts

Chalking of the Door – a ceremony to bless the church for the
coming year

Who: You and your friends and family. Everyone is welcome!

**Please join us for the fun and fellowship on Saturday the 6th as we continue to
celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ!**



January
2024



Coffee Hour Hosts

January 7 - OPEN
January 14 - OPEN
January 21 - ANNUAL MEETING/POTLUCK
January 28 - OPEN

New year, new calendar!! Sign up to host coffee hour. Don't break your budget...can be simple, such as cookies, or crackers, etc. We are not expecting lunch. Let's have fun!!



The St. Matthew's Card Guild will meet Monday, January 8, 10:00 to 2:00. Bring a lunch or snack. Join us for the fun and fellowship!



Please join
Deacon Barbara Gibson
for Evening Prayer
every Wednesday
at 6:30 pm In the
St. Matthew's Covey Chapel.
Or join us on Facebook.
Everyone is welcome.
Come take
a few minutes to end your
day with prayer.

St. Matthew's Outreach

Food Cart

14 non-perishable food items were delivered to the Salvation Army "Harvest of Love" food bank in December. Please remember those who don't have enough to eat. The need is great.

Harvest of Love Totals

69 non-perishable food items were collected in November for the Salvation Army "Harvest of Love" food bank. Thanks to all for making this outreach possible!

Adopt A Family

Our family of 4 was very excited and grateful to receive all of the wonderful and thoughtful gifts that we provided to make their Christmas a possibility.

Much heartfelt thanks to those of you who took the time to shop and wrap and bring gifts for this opportunity to show God's love!!

Mitten Tree

We are still collecting mittens, underwear, socks, sweat-pants, leggings, stocking hats, and scarves for Northridge Elementary school. The deadline is January 7th. Thank you.

Upcoming Outreach


Souper Bowl of Caring

Our "Souper Bowl of Caring" will be on Super Bowl Sunday, February 11th. Be sure to bring cans of soup to church on that day.

St. Matthew's
Prayer Chain



If you have a request for prayers for yourself or others, contact Mary Upton at **316-841-1736**. The information you share will then be passed on to the chain leaders who will pass the information on to their team. The members of the chain will 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.

ALTAR GUILD

**Altar Guild Team
for
January 2024**

Twila Lockaby
Scott McCloud
Ruth Cooper
Maggie Snow

**Altar Flowers for
January 2024**

January 7
Christmas Poinsettias

January 14
Dr. Charles and Nancy Craig
"For Blessings Received"

January 21
Ruth Cooper
"For people who have no one to pray for them"

January 28
Mary Werner
"For Blessings Received"

We have two openings for Altar Flowers in 2024 - June 9 and August 11, call Twila Lockaby at 316-215-1164 if you would like to fill either of those dates.

Payee Program Report

The St. Matthew's Representative Payee Program currently serves 179 clients. We also have three referrals. Ten new clients began receiving services during the past two months. Currently, the majority of our clients have stable, affordable housing and a number of our clients are maintaining employment.

The current total amount of client funds that are managed is \$490,163.22. The Payee Program continues to charge each client a monthly fee for service of \$52.00. Money from the Client Needs Fund has been used to assist clients with transportation and to obtain housing.

Volunteers continue to meet with clients in person on Tuesday mornings and the volunteers also assist with paying client bills every Tuesday afternoon. I especially appreciate the extra help that the volunteers provided while Peggy Gerber was out on medical leave in September.

Peggy and I are working on developing a new Advisory Board. The Advisory Board has not met since the pandemic and several of the former board members stated they would like to retire from serving. Please let me know if you have an interest in serving on the Advisory Board. Also, Peggy and myself are planning to meet with the staff of the Episcopal Social Services Payee Program in January to explore ways in which the two programs can assist each other.


Thank you for your prayers and support as we continue the work of the Payee Program being the hands of Jesus serving those in need.

Fr. Mike Loyd, Director

Bible Quiz


In the book of Judges, the warrior Barak would go to battle only if a certain female leader went with him. Who was she?

A. Rebekah
B. Jael
C. Michal
D. Deborah



Answer: D (See Judges 4:1-10.)

LET'S FILL UP THE ST. MATTHEW'S FOOD PANTRY.



The pantry is outside, at the entrance to the parking lot. Some suggested items: cereal, canned goods, jelly, mac and cheese, boxed meals, spaghetti, easy muffin mixes, etc. Please consider the weather when leaving your items.



St Matthew's
Annual Parish Meeting
Sunday, January 21, 2024
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 chairs are asked to submit their Annual Reports to office@stmatthewsnewton.org or leave with Charlie in the church office as soon as possible. It is requested that all reports be submitted by January 2, 2024.

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.

Convocation delegates and alternate attend three or four meetings per year of the SW Convocation. The delegates attend the annual Diocesan Convention in October, which will be in Wichita in 2024. 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.

At the beginning of the new year the Vestry will be organizing a Search Committee to begin the search for a new Rector at St. Matthew's. Please consider serving on this important committee.

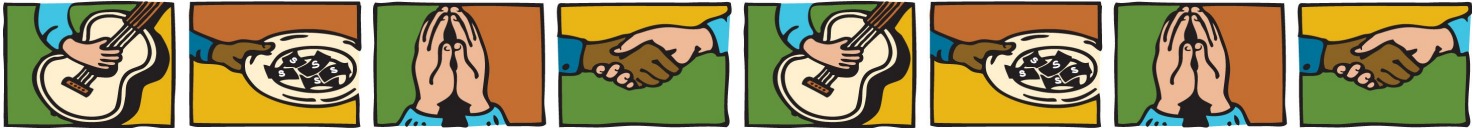
Please plan to attend the Annual Meeting as we look at what was accomplished in 2023 and as we plan ahead for 2024.

All members of St. Matthew's are encouraged to attend this important meeting of our church. Each committee will have their report for 2023, the budget will be discussed, and plans for the new year will be talked about and voted on!

Of course we will also be planning a Potluck Lunch along with the Annual Meeting!

Please bring a dish to share.

**ANNUAL
MEETING**



Here is the worship schedule for January. 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!

	January 7	January 14	January 21	January 28
Season	First Sunday after Epiphany	Second Sunday after Epiphany <i>Vestry Meeting</i>	Third Sunday after Epiphany <i>Annual Meeting</i>	Fourth Sunday after Epiphany
Service	Holy Eucharist	Holy Eucharist	Communion in the absence of a Priest (ComAP)	Holy Eucharist
Leaders	Fr. Richard Osborne	Fr. Richard Osborne	Deacon Barbara Gibson Maggie Snow	Fr. Richard Osborne
Lectors	Fred Schroeder	Mary Upton	Jeremy Kitto	Thea Ferguson
Counters (2)	Twila Lockaby	Fred Schroeder	Mary Upton	Margie Knupp
	Margie Knupp	David Simmonds	Fred Schroeder	David Simmonds
Ushers (2)	Elizabeth Hill	Melissa Keenan	Rick Glover	Elizabeth Hill
	Mary Upton	Bonnie Jones	Mary Upton	Melissa Keenan
Hosts	Open	Open	Annual Meeting Potluck Lunch	Open
Altar Flowers	Christmas Poinsettias	Dr. Charles and Nancy Craig "For Blessings Received"	Ruth Cooper "For people who have no one to pray for them"	Mary Werner "For Blessings Received"
Acolyte & LEM	Fred Schroeder	Karen Wall	Maggie Snow	Fred Schroeder
Organist	Chris Teichler	Chris Teichler	Chris Teichler	Kelli Glann