



THE WORD

June 2024

St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church
700 Pleasure Road, Lancaster PA 17601
(717) 394-9607 www.stmatthewelc.com



Pastor Robin Fero

Pastor's Page



Welcome to summer!

June brings us a green season of growth in this part of the world. This is that time of year when the early spring flowers have dried up and the leaves of the lilies are expanding more and more each day, building the anticipation of those first blooms opening. The newborn birds are ready to do their test flights from the nest; baby bunnies are hopping; neighbors are out in the lawns. Welcome to those days of celebrating God's goodness by using all the senses God gave us.

We are entering the "green season" in our liturgy; a time to take note of the teachings of Jesus, amidst those "flowers of the field". We will be walking through the Gospel of Mark, chapter by chapter this summer. There is one detour along the way...5 weeks of bread out of the Gospel of John in August (and last weekend of July).

June is also Pride month, which also serves as a growing season for our congregation, as we continue to live into our promises to learn and love and grow with all of creation.

Lancaster Pride is Saturday, June 15. St. Matthew has secured a booth and will be sharing space with Community Mennonite Church.

Lititz Pride is Saturday, June 29. St. Matthew will be joining other churches at an expanded Embrace booth.

Last year, I had the joy of experiencing 4 pride festivals, which was a record for me. Not only did I participate in the Lancaster and Lititz festivals, along with members of St. Matthew, but I also attended the events in York and Harrisburg.

Each festival is unique, but all provide a space for LGBTQIA+ people and allies to celebrate who it is that God created and nurtured them to be. There is a diverse mix of people.

The June 15 Lancaster event is within the climate-controlled convention center downtown, and is very much like a convention, with rows of booths of non-profit organizations and vendors interacting with attendees.

The June 29 Lititz event is outdoors, at the Lititz Springs Park. Tables are set up throughout the spacious paths of the park, and there are food trucks. Unique to this event is the spring that runs through the center of the event. You can take a break from the action and talk to the ducks.

I give God thanks for this special opportunity of ministry that St. Matthew church is a part of every year. The conversations that occur within the booths and around the festivals are life-changing, for both the festivals goers and the church volunteers. As a queer person, I testify to the comfort and the joy that I found years ago in seeing the face of Jesus at the pride festivals that I attended as I walked in my personal journey of searching in life. The scripture is clear in declaring that there is NOWHERE we can go that God is not there. Perhaps there are folks who attend the festival who are not expecting to run into the body of Christ. Just like Jesus, we show up in places that can prove to be a challenge. And God is glorified.

Please let me know if you would like to participate in the festival this year, including having someone walk with you through the festival for the first time. Erin Conahan, our new chair of the RIC committee can help you also, as well as any member of the RIC committee (Sue & Steve Feldmann, Phyllis Wimer,

Barb Emmerich, Nancy Pokopec).

Blessings in the green!

-Pastor Fero



Council Corner

We had our meeting of the church Council on May 14, 2024 and received reports as usual from our treasurer and committees. Pastor was on vacation but he had left a report which we reviewed. It is important to know that he has education requirements each year and he has just completed this year's subjects; Boundary training, Racial justice training and LGBTQIA+ training.

We discussed the budget as we have recently had an inspection by the Fire Marshall and had to bring our building up to code with the electrical outlets, exit signs and also install a new access box for the fire and police departments to use if they need access into the building. This expense was over \$3,000 and depleted our property improvements fund. We discussed some ways to improve this fund for future use as we have an aging building and things will break down. We have come up with a plan to help this by using our little tree in the fellowship hall. Look for it in the near future; there will be tags coming to help increase this fund.

Thank you for your support and faithfulness as we continue to live in the world that our Lord created for us. Have a nice summer.

-Council President, Barb Elsen

Growing in God's Love...Living our Welcome Statement

June is a time to celebrate the diversity of God's LGBTQIA+ children. Pride Month acknowledges the ongoing struggle for human rights and dignity—especially within Christian spaces—while uplifting a community shaped by love and joy through a wide variety of identities and expressions. Pride Month began as a riot and continues today, not in the form of violence, but as a nonviolent display of queer resilience, joy, and becoming.

Nearly 500 anti-LGBTQIA+ bills have come before legislative bodies, particularly targeting the rights of trans youth. This is a time to celebrate our God-given identities and recommit to the work of liberation for all LGBTQIA+ people. St. Matthew has journeyed a long way in embracing inclusivity and affirming the dignity of all people. We recognize that being open and affirming means more than just acceptance; it is an active stance of love, support, and advocacy for our community and neighbors. It is about creating a safe and welcoming space where everyone can worship, serve, and grow in faith together.

Continuing in our RIC (Reconciling in Christ) tradition of being open and affirming, St. Matthew will have a table at Lancaster Pride on Saturday, June 15th. You are welcome to volunteer at the table, attend the event at the Lancaster Marriott, or continue to celebrate our LGBTQIA+ community in both big and

small ways.

Let us join together in celebrating Pride Month and affirming the love and dignity of all God's children.

- Erin Conahan



Social Ministry



Lancaster County Food Hub is an important part of our local community outreach, and food banks are struggling with keeping their shelves filled. The Food Hub relies on community partners to support its efforts to improve the lives of those in need. During June and July, we will be collecting the following items:

Peanut butter, jelly, cereal, canned fruit, cans or boxes of stock or broth, rice, soup, cans or pouches of tuna or chicken, meal helpers - hamburger helper, rice sides, taco kits, mac & cheese, canola or olive oil sprays, pasta, pasta sauce, canned meals - ravioli, spaghetti's, beef stew, canned beans or vegetables, mayo, salt & pepper. (Please be certain that no items are expired or opened and canned goods do not have significant dents, no glass jars) **A "Shopping List" insert will be with the weekend bulletins as well.

We will also be accepting monetary contributions. Use the Food Hub envelope in the foyer. Items can be placed in Fellowship Hall on the table designated Food Hub.

Our container of pop tabs in Fellowship Hall is almost full! We began collecting these aluminum tabs in July of 2023 to raise money for the Ronald McDonald House in Hershey.

The "Pop Tab" program is important because it provides extra revenue that can help make up for the donations that families cannot make. The monies raised help care for families who stay at the House each year.

It takes approximately 1,128 pop tabs to equal one pound. A pound of pop tabs is typically between \$0.40 to \$0.50. This program brings in an average of \$6,000 each year. The tabs can come from drinks, soup cans, or anything with a metallic tab. Please rinse the tabs as you collect.

So... Let's try to "overflow" our container by the beginning of this July!! If you are ready for a challenge..... we can do it if we try!

- Sheila Charles

Evangelism Committee Corner

The Evangelism Committee convened on April 28th, 2024 with seven members in attendance. Devotions and prayer were led by Barb Eshbach, chair, recounting the number of times "love" appears in 1 John 4:7-21. Because love is from God, we are called to love one another in all our relationships. Loving as Christ loved, and as God loves us, we need to challenge ourselves to extend beyond our comfort zones to put love into action in the world.

Barb Eshbach presented a draft for a coming transportation ministry insert which will be placed in the weekly bulletins to alert church members of the need for additional volunteer drivers.

Robert Wimer, Jr presented a program on anti-racism, diversity, equity and inclusion, as part of our Learning and Loving Series, on May 4th and 5th in Fellowship Hall following worship services. Conversation Around the Corner occurred on Wednesday, May 15th from 6 to 7pm, also in Fellowship Hall, with presenter Adam Barkafski discussing native pollinators and their favorite plants.

The Grandview Neighborhood Yard Sale is scheduled for Saturday, July 20th from 7am to 1pm. Volunteers are needed as we prepare for this special day. Greg Scott will be our fall presenter on Monday, September 9th, speaking on C.Emlen Urban, architect of many of Lancaster's most notable buildings.

- Kay Gontner

Save the Dates

June 15 Lancaster Pride
June 29 Lititz Pride



Birthdays

Benjamin Kendall 6/29 Bernice Scheetz 6/6
Victoria Syvertson 6/25

Anniversaries

Ned & Cynthia Longenecker 6/18

Worship Assistants

Altar Care for June – Barb Elsen & Kay Gontner

June 1 – Saturday 5pm

- Assisting Minister: Nancy Pokopec
- Reader: Nancy Pokopec

June 2 – Sunday 10am

- Assisting Minister: Barb Elsen
- Reader: Linda Tice
- Greeter: Nancy Smith
- Usher: Open
- Counters: Carol Rothweiler & Brenda Stauffer

June 8 – Saturday 5pm

- Assisting Minister: Barb Emmerich
- Reader: Mimi Ruth

June 9 – Sunday 10am

- Assisting Minister: Steve Feldmann
- Reader: Steve Feldmann
- Greeter: Kay Gontner
- Usher: Barb Elsen
- Counters: Brad Charles & Barb Elsen

June 15 – Saturday 5pm

- Assisting Minister: Sheila Charles
- Reader: Open

June 16 – Sunday 10am

- Assisting Minister: Linda McIntyre
- Reader: Barb Elsen
- Greeter: Carol Rothweiler
- Usher: Open
- Counters: Linda Tice & Carol Rothweiler

June 22 – Saturday 5pm

- Assisting Minister: Brad Charles
- Reader: Brad Charles

June 23 – Sunday 10am

- Assisting Minister: Linda McIntyre
- Reader: Linda Tice
- Greeter: David Ostrander
- Usher: Barb Elsen
- Counters: Brad Charles & Brenda Stauffer

June 29 – Saturday 5pm

- Assisting Minister: Nancy Pokopec
- Reader: Nancy Pokopec

June 30 – Sunday 10am

- Assisting Minister: Barb Emmerich
- Reader: Steve Feldmann
- Greeter: Open
- Usher: Open
- Counters: Barb Elsen & Linda Tice



Quilt for Lutheran Camping Auction





Geranium Gardeners



Evangelism Team



Community Meal Prep



Happy Birthday, Bob



Conversation Around the Corner





Loving and Learning with Robert Wimer

Officers (2024)

Barb Elsen, President

Barb Eshbach, Vice President

Phyllis Wimer, Secretary

Brad Charles, Financial Secretary

Steve Feldmann, Treasurer

Staff

The Rev. Robin Fero, Pastor

Susan Feldmann, Director of Music

Phil High, Musician

Church Council

Barb Elsen

Phyllis Wimer

Steve Feldmann

Nancy Smith

Barb Eshbach

Kay Gontner

Nancy Pokopec

Pastor Fero

St. Matthew Lutheran Church Statement of Welcome, Affirmation and Full Participation



Welcome to St Matthew, the little church with a big heart.
We are a Reconciling in Christ (Open and Affirming) congregation, so when we say
“all are welcome”, we really mean it.
We strive to live that out in our actions as well as our words. We publicly and humbly
commit to do what it takes to truly be a sanctuary filled with warmth, love,
understanding, safety, respect and care for all who enter here.

*(Please see our Full Statement of Welcome, Affirmation and Full Participation
on our website: www.stmatthewelc.com. Copies of the Full Statement are also
available in the Education and Resources Stand in the Fellowship Hall.)*

St. Matthew

June 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 5pm - Worship
2 10am - Worship	3	4 12pm - Better Bones at St. Matthew	5 12pm - Bible Study 6:30pm - M.T. Democratic Committee	6	7	8 5pm - Worship
9 10am - Worship	10	11 12pm - Better Bones at St. Matthew 7:00pm - Church Council	12 12pm - Bible Study 6:30pm - RIC Committee Mtg	13	14	15 12pm - Lancaster Pride 2pm - Quilting Workshop 5pm - Worship
16 10am - Worship 11:15am - Evangelism Mtg	17 9am - Community Meal	18 12pm - Better Bones at St. Matthew	19 12pm - Bible Study	20	21	22 12pm - York Pride 5pm - Worship
23 10am - Worship	24	25 12pm - Better Bones at St. Matthew	26 12pm - Bible Study	27	28	29 12pm - Lititz Pride 5pm - Worship
30 10am - Worship						

ST. MATTHEW

700 Pleasure Road
Lancaster, PA 17601

(Return Service Requested)

The Little Church with the Big Heart

