



# THE WORD

May/June 2025

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



Pastor Robin Fero

## Pastor's Page



### Welcome to the Season of Easter!

As you read through this first special bimonthly (May-June) edition of the Word, I pray that you witness Christ living and breathing among the saints at St. Matthew Church.

God continues to live out God's promises through the life and work of Jesus Christ and the body of Christ. I shared these very thoughts in my Easter Vigil sermon.

Here is that sermon:

I recall the comical plaque that used to hang on the wall at my grandparents' cottage. "They said it couldn't be done, and by golly, it couldn't be done!"

That's a twist on that inspiring story about the guy who pulled off the impossible by stepping out there and making it happen. The gist of the poem is...if you don't at least try you'll never know what can be done.

I recalled Grandpa Cole's plaque---a leftover in my childhood memories--- as I meditated upon the reason that we are gathered on this special weekend...actually, the reason we gather every weekend and celebrate the resurrection.

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Yes, Jesus said he would do this thing...and he did it!

Did we ever doubt God? Do we ever doubt God's Promises?

This Saturday evening in Holy Week, more commonly known as Easter Vigil, is traditionally observed as an extended period of watching and waiting, as saints

gather around a fire and tell stories of how God has been faithful to us since before time began. These Easter vigils last for hours...so our regular service time tonight is an abbreviation of that vigil, containing a couple of elements of that service.

Traditionally, the Hebrew story of creation is told, right from Genesis 1. That's a good place to start.

Good Sunday school action stories like the Great Flood and the Deliverance at the Red Sea are read. The covenants God made with the people are told... Abraham...Moses...

The Psalms interweave each of these stories and lead into Wisdom literature, which reminds us of the virtues of God which are daily lived out in human existence.

The story of God is uniquely told in the prophets' visions. There is a valley of dry bones...utter hopelessness. A place that has had its day and is now simply a junkyard or even a museum showcasing what USED to be. The air in that valley sings a tune of "they said it couldn't be done...and by golly it couldn't be done..."

BUT...the story of God is the story of breathing new life into beings.

God knows what God is doing...whether it involves picking up dust from the ground and making little nostril holes in a molded figure and breathing life into pure nothingness...or whether it means bringing together dried up old bones to reform a civilization... or whether it means breathing the breath of redemption into the wayward lives of the people of Ninevah, as God did in Jonah's day.

No matter how God does the resurrecting power, it is one of those things that people just can't believe can be done. Jonah certainly took some convincing, right?

On this holy night, I want to remind you that God has our redemption in his hands. God promised to take good care of us... through thick and thin...and that is a promise that is from everlasting to everlasting.

The precious story of the resurrection is an echoing repeat from before time..."I told you I would do it", and that fulfilled promise is what glues our faith together. Because Jesus rose from the dead, we have blessed Hope in everything that God has promised us. THAT is why we gather each week to celebrate... the resurrection ties us together in blessed Hope.

So.....why in the world DO we look for the living among the dead?

Why do we view the universal church...the body of Christ....as a valley of has-beens? Why do we approach ministry and church work like we are heading to the morgue, bringing spices and embalming fluids and memory books that will help us honor a dead institution?

Alleluia! Christ is Risen!

God is here to breathe new life into the weary bones of the body of Christ.

God is here to make good on the Promises that were given before time began.

God is here to say, "I will do a new thing". And by golly, God will do that new thing if we quit walking the other way, shaking our heads.

"They said it couldn't be done"....and by golly, he walked right out of that tomb and is ready to do new things.

Amen.

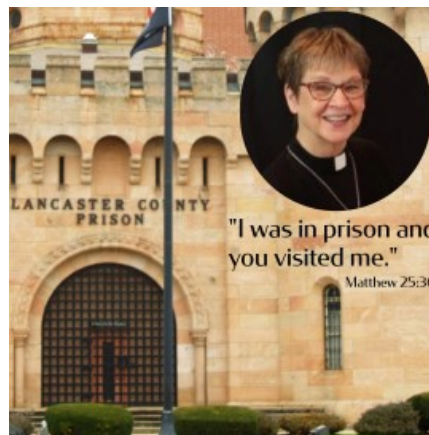
-Pastor Fero

## Learning & Loving Series

### HOW PRISON MINISTRY CHANGED ME

Join us Monday, May 12, for a powerful evening of insight and reflection as **Deacon Jane Miron** shares her experiences working with individuals impacted by incarceration.

With a lifelong dedication to faith, education, and community, Deacon Jane brings a compassionate and thoughtful voice to this important conversation. From leading Bible studies in Lancaster County Prison to offering one-on-one support to incarcerated individuals, her journey offers a unique perspective on justice, hope, and transformation. Don't miss this opportunity to hear from a woman whose ministry continues to touch lives in profound ways.



This Learning & Loving event will be open to the public, and all are invited. We hope to see you there.

## Conversation Around the Corner

### RICHARD RESSEL: THE ARTIST IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

On Tuesday, June 3, from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., St. Matthew Lutheran Church (700 Pleasure Road, Lancaster) will host "The Artist in the Neighborhood," a presentation by Grandview Heights resident Richard Ressel—an accomplished artist and educator whose career spans more than four decades.

A graduate of Lancaster Catholic High School, Millersville University (BA), and Alfred University's Continuing Education program, Ressel devoted over 40 years to the Art Department at Lancaster Catholic High School before retiring in 2020.

He is a Signature Member of the National, Pennsylvania, and Philadelphia Watercolor Societies, and a Fellow Maxima Cum Laude of The American Artist Professional League in New York. Ressel has

**AROUND THE CORNER**  
**RICHARD RESSEL**  
The Artist in the Neighborhood  
stmatthewelc.com

**CONVERSATION**

**TUESDAY, JUNE 3, 2025**  
6:30-7:30 p.m.

**ST. MATTHEW LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
700 Pleasure Rd.,  
Lancaster, PA 17601  
717-394-9607  
FREE and OPEN TO ALL

exhibited widely in regional, national, and international shows, earning recognition for his work in both ceramics and watercolor. His art has been featured in notable publications such as *Best of Watercolor: Painting Light and Shadow* and *Splash: The Best of Watercolor Series*.

Also a seasoned teacher, juror, and speaker, Ressel continues to inspire through his deep passion for the arts.

This free event is part of St. Matthew's *Conversation Around the Corner* speaker series, which aims to bring the community together through meaningful dialogue, shared learning, and diverse perspectives.

- Barb Eshbach

## Social Ministry News

Imagine the comfort and care you feel when you snuggle under a comforter or wear a piece of clothing made or worn by a loved one. That's the feeling we share through a LWR quilt. In a simple combination of fabric and thread, we reach out to people in their time of greatest need with a strong message of hope ~ you are not alone.

First and foremost, recipients use their quilts to shield against the cold and rain, and for warm bedding. But their versatility also makes quilts useful as simple tents, floor coverings, or a wrap to hold a baby on a mother's back.

What a gift to wrap others in the work of your hands through a LWR quilt. Thank you for your monetary gifts and donations of fabric. It costs about \$35-\$40 to complete a quilt, so your kindness is dearly appreciated.

"Those who sleep under a quilt, sleep under a blanket of love." We have 32 finished quilts in the workroom. During our 3rd Saturday afternoon workshops, we continue to assemble and knot quilts, and prepare squares and tops for future months. It is always a delight to see new faces. No experience is necessary and there is a job for everyone. Come and join the fun any time between 2:00 and 4:00 in Fellowship Hall. Consider stopping by to see what is happening and lend a helping hand, or just relax and socialize.

Our church had a brick installed in the Good Samaritan Quilt Plaza at the Lutheran Center in Baltimore, MD, headquarters of Lutheran World Relief. Each brick tells a story of compassion and commitment ~ and is an extension of God's love to neighbors in need around the world. St. Matthew is now part of this story of hope. Our brick also helps for the "Many Trips Around the World" quilt pattern, reminding staff and visitors of the more than 675,000 quilts and kits LWR sends around the world. Our certificate is on display on the foyer bulletin board.

Our container of pop tabs in Fellowship Hall is on its second fill since July of 2024. Collecting tabs raises money for the Ronald McDonald House in Hershey. The "Pop Tab" program is important because it provides extra revenue that can make up for the donations that families cannot make. The monies raised help care for the 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 you collect.



Let's try to fill our container again by the end of June!!

-Sheila Charles

## Friendship & Basketball

St. Matthew member Barb Emmerich and newcomer Beth Woodley coach a basketball team. Barb tells how it all started...

We met on a basketball court; I was in 8th grade & Beth 9th. It didn't take long until we became friends. Our summers were spent at the pool, hours playing ball on neighborhood courts & playing in competitive leagues. All these hours on the court earned us a Lancaster Lebanon League Championship in '83.

Our passion for the game took Beth to Kutztown University where she had much success and set multiple University records. Beth later coached as a varsity asset, in Texas where she taught. I began coaching Jr. High girls at Warwick that later lead me to varsity asset.

Our first stint coaching together was leading the Blue Mountain team to a silver medal in the Keystone State games. Here we are 32 years later, assisting an 8th grade AAU team (amateur athletic union). One of our current athletes is the daughter of a player we coached all those years ago.



Our bodies don't move the way they once did, driving to the basket, battling for rebounds, but the years can't take away our love for the game and our desire to pass on our knowledge to today's youth.

*-Barb Emmerich*

### ***BE STILL. Tremors be still.***

*Buzz Rothweiler shares his healing story...*

Seven years ago, I was diagnosed as having Parkinson Disease or PD. PD is a sneaky debilitating disruption to our enjoyment of life. Michael J. Fox suffers from PD. Today it is estimated to have 10 million sufferers. Symptoms range from tremors to an unsteady gait; imbalance causing falls, severe cramping of leg or arms. I now carry a product called Cramp 911. It is a rub-on of Magnesium plus I take a Magnesium supplement with great results. I have fallen several times but only once requiring a visit to emergency care. I have a friend who has had several falls resulting in injury, and he suffers from hallucinations.

I first noticed something was not right on the golf course. A sudden loss of power, costing 50-60 yards from my normal drive, was a tip-off something was not right. The inability to button my shirt as I dressed for golf that morning was the first oddity. Then just imagine a 70+ year old trying to send a text without steady hands. Shaving is hard enough with PD. I pray every day for relief from PD for myself, Greg, and anyone suffering from this curse of a disease.

Exercise is one defense for helping beat down PD. I have a trainer once a week who helps me try to improve my golf game while giving me a workout. I have been very blessed to be part of a group of patient, caring elderly golfers who look after me by keeping me aware of dangerous obstacles like bunkers, water hazards, and bad foot places. Many times they will rake the trap for me. Staying active

with golf is vital to me as it keeps me interested in something, and keeps my brain working. But the struggle to succeed can be frustrating as well as embarrassing, remembering how good I once was and trying to keep up.

One incident was the catalyst for many wonderful things to take place in my life. I was in the middle of a fairway when I noticed my shoelaces had come undone. I could not get my fingers to work to retie them. It might have been five minutes and we were holding the group behind us up as I struggled to tie my shoes. That is when one of our group came over and bent down and tied my shoelaces. I was grateful, yet embarrassed. Couldn't even tie my shoes! Another problem I encountered was putting my ball on a tee. Seems my shaking hands would knock my ball off the tee as I finished teeing off... another friend found special tees shaped like a cup that overcame the problem.

As I left the course, I was upset and selfishly prayed harder than ever to not let that happen again. I prayed for a cure to relieve me from this prison of PD. When I got home, I sat down to relax and read the newspaper. I never read the letters to the editor but this one message from Bobby Krause caught my attention. He wrote about his struggles and a new procedure to eliminate PD tremors and how he got his life back. I knew this was a sign from God answering my prayers. How humbling that God would send his sign to lowly me. I had to follow up and at least find Bobby and get the same cure he wrote about. I made contact, we met for lunch and hit it off. It seems we have a lot in common besides PD. He formed a non-profit called BE STILL Foundation. How clever. Psalm 40: "Be still all your troubles for I am God who is with you always." Tremors be still.

Thus became the start of my journey of healing. Bobby set me up with Dr. Casey Halpern, a neurosurgeon at The University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. A series of measurements and testing and MRIs, CT scans, followed over the next several months with trips to Penn. Finally, the big day, February 20, arrived. A trip to Penn for the Focus Ultrasound procedure to stimulate cells in the brain responsible for movement was to take place.



Tremors be gone!! The treatment was to pass over the right side of the brain and affect the left side of the diseased brain. The effects of anesthesia started as they shaved my head and I was fitted with a device called the "halo" then put into the MRI tube. I spent 6+ hours in the MRI as the Ultrasound did its thing. Dr. Halpern was in constant contact and when finished I was able to climb out of the tube and walk out of the operating room and ultimately be driven home. Miraculously, the tremors on the left side of my body were gone. My left side felt like a new person: no symptoms at all on the left side. In fact, the entire body was calm. What a sensation after 7 years of suffering!

The procedure only offers relief for one side of the body until the brain has time to heal. Thus, a return to do the other side will happen in nine months to a year. Can't wait! Thanks be to God, Bobby Krause, and the BE STILL Foundation, and of course, Dr. Casey Halpern.

- Buzz Rothweiler

### Evangelism Corner

The Evangelism Committee convened on April 27, 2025 at 11:30am with committee members, Barb Eshbach, chair, Nancy Smith, Linda McIntyre, and Kay Gontner in attendance.

Devotions were led by Barb Eshbach, focusing upon familiar phrases in today's service, in particular the title of our special music video- Let Your Faith be Stronger Than Your Fear. In times of uncertainty, when facing change or difficult situations, fear tends to show up uninvited and it is in these times that we need to choose faith.

Barb likened this to a wheel with the center being our Evangelism Committee; connected as brothers and sisters in Christ with the spokes leading to the outer rim of the wheel representing our broader community. We need to let our faith rise when the path ahead feels uncertain, reminding ourselves that we don't walk alone. God gives us courage to take the next step, hope in seeing beyond the moment and peace that comes from knowing we are being held in His hands.

We are continuing our quest in welcoming new neighbors into our church community as we focus on Celadon in Grandview, the Foundry Apartments and the Lofts at Stehli Silk Mill, plus single homes that have been sold recently.

Our action plan is to acquire mailing lists, send postcards with a welcoming message and information about our church and apply for a Thrivent grant to cover the cost of this endeavor.

Two upcoming events include the following :

- 1) RIC is sponsoring an event on Prison Ministry to be held Monday, May 12 at 6:30pm in Fellowship Hall.
- 2) Conversation Around the Corner is featuring Richard Ressel, "The Artist in the Neighborhood" as

our next speaker scheduled for Tuesday, June 3 at 6:30pm in Fellowship Hall.

Our meeting concluded at 12:25pm with the Lord's Prayer: we will meet next on May 18 at 11:15am.

- Kay Gontner

### Welcome New Members

Russell LaBar and Laurie Ordnung became St. Matthew members on Palm Sunday. Russell was baptized and Laurie came by transfer. The couple will be married at St. Matthew in June.



### Birthdays

- |                          |                       |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Nancy Smith 5/4          | Bob Wimer 5/5         |
| Mimi Ruth 5/9            | Lunda Shaub 5/19      |
| Cynthia Longenecker 5/22 | Linda Tice 5/24       |
| Mark Smith 5/24          | Richard Kirchoff 5/28 |
| Bernice Scheetz 6/6      | Roxanne Koch 6/17     |
| Victoria Syvertson 6/25  | Beth Woodley 6/27     |
| Benjamin Kendall 6/29    |                       |

## *Anniversaries*

Brad & Sheila Charles 5/2

Paul & Donna Kilgore 5/17

Sarah & Erik Teichmann 5/19

Steve & Sue Feldmann 5/28

Nick & Ellen Boehm 6/14

Ned & Cynthia Longenecker 6/18

## *Worship Assistants*

**Altar Care for May** – Barb Elsen & Linda Tice

### **May 3 – Saturday 5pm**

- Assisting Minister: Nancy Pokopec
- Reader: Nancy Pokopec

### **May 4 – Sunday 10am**

- Assisting Minister: Steve Feldmann
- Reader: Steve Feldmann
- Greeter: Carol Rothweiler
- Usher: OPEN
- Counters: Brad Charles & Barb Elsen

### **May 10 – Saturday 5pm**

- Assisting Minister: Brad Charles
- Reader: Brad Charles

### **May 11 – Sunday 10am**

- Assisting Minister: Barb Elsen
- Reader: Norm Drescher
- Greeter: OPEN
- Usher: OPEN
- Counters: Linda Tice & Carol Rothweiler

### **May 17 – Saturday 5pm**

- Assisting Minister: Sheila Charles
- Reader: Sheila Charles

### **May 18 – Sunday 10am**

- Assisting Minister: Steve Feldmann
- Reader: Steve Feldmann
- Greeter: Kay Gontner
- Usher: OPEN
- Counters: Brenda Stauffer & Barb Elsen

### **May 24 – Saturday 5pm**

- Assisting Minister: Nancy Pokopec
- Reader: Nancy Pokopec

### **May 25 – Sunday 10am**

- Assisting Minister: Barb Emmerich
- Reader: Norm Drescher
- Greeter: Anna Neal
- Usher: OPEN
- Counters: Brad Charles & Linda Tice

### **May 31 – Saturday 5pm**

- Assisting Minister: Brad Charles
- Reader: Brad Charles

### **June 1 – Sunday 10am**

- Assisting Minister: Barb Elsen
- Reader: OPEN
- Greeter: OPEN
- Usher: OPEN
- Counters: Carol Rothweiler & Brenda Stauffer

## **LANCASTER PRIDE 6/28/2025**



## **LITITZ PRIDE 6/7/2025**



*Worship Assistants*

**Altar Care for June** – Barb Elsen & Kay Gontner

**May 31 – Saturday 5pm**

- Assisting Minister: Brad Charles
- Reader: Brad Charles

**June 1 – Sunday 10am**

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

**June 7 – Saturday 5pm**

- Assisting Minister: Barb Emmerich
- Reader: Barb Emmerich

**June 8 – Sunday 10am**

- Assisting Minister: Linda McIntyre
- Reader: Peg Sampson
- Greeter: Carol Rothweiler
- Usher: Barb Elsen
- Counters: Barb Elsen & Brad Charles

**June 14 – Saturday 5pm**

- Assisting Minister: Nancy Pokopec
- Reader: Nancy Pokopec

**June 15 – Sunday 10am**

- Assisting Minister: Barb Elsen
- Reader: Roxanne Koch
- Greeter: Kay Gontner
- Usher: OPEN
- Counters: Linda Tice & Carol Rothweiler

**June 21 – Saturday 5pm**

- Assisting Minister: Sheila Charles
- Reader: Sheila Charles

**June 22 – Sunday 10am**

- Assisting Minister: Steve Feldmann
- Reader: Peg Sampson
- Greeter: OPEN
- Usher: Barb Elsen
- Counters: Brad Charles & Brenda Stauffer

**June 28 – Saturday 5pm**

- Assisting Minister: Brad Charles
- Reader: Brad Charles

**June 29 – Sunday 10am**

- Assisting Minister: Linda McIntyre
- Reader: Linda McIntyre
- Greeter: OPEN
- Usher: OPEN
- Counters: Barb Elsen & Linda Tice



***Celebrating Pride – All Are Welcome!***



This June, we joyfully celebrate **Pride Month**, honoring the dignity, worth, and love of our LGBTQ+ community. As a church committed to justice, compassion, and radical welcome, we believe that God’s love knows no bounds — and neither should ours.

We’re excited to participate in upcoming Pride events in our community and are looking for volunteers to help represent our congregation with love and hospitality. Whether it’s helping with greeting visitors, handing out swag items or simply showing up to stand in solidarity — your presence matters.

Let’s show up with joy, kindness, and open hearts — because **love is love, and God is love.**

**Lititz Pride:** Saturday, June 7<sup>th</sup> from 11:00 to 6:00 PM. More information will follow on how our congregation can get involved.

**Lancaster Pride:** Saturday, June 28<sup>th</sup> from 12:00 –7:00 PM. Volunteer sign-ups are in the Fellowship Hall.



# Easter 2025





### *Officers (2025)*

Barb Elsen, President

Nancy Smith, Vice President

Kay Gontner, Secretary

Brad Charles, Financial Secretary

Barb Eshbach, Treasurer

### *Staff*

The Rev. Robin Fero, Pastor

Susan Feldmann, Director of Music

Phil High, Musician

### *Church Council*

Barb Elsen

James Frazier

Nancy Pokopec

Nancy Smith

Pastor Fero

Barb Eshbach

Kay Gontner

Peg Sampson

Toni Sweitzer

## **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](http://www.stmatthewelc.com). Copies of the Full Statement are also  
available in the Education and Resources Stand in the Fellowship Hall.)*

St. Matthew

May 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 6:30pm - Vocal Choir Rehearsal	2 9:30am - CPR Class 5pm - Worship	3 9:30am - CPR Class 5pm - Worship
4 10am - Worship	5 6:30pm - Loving & Learning about Incarceration	6 12pm - Better Bones at St. Matthew	7 12pm - Bible Study 6:30pm - M.T. Democratic Committee	8 6:30pm - Vocal Choir Rehearsal	9 1:30pm - CPR Class	10 5pm - Worship
11 10am - Worship	12 6:30pm - Loving & Learning about Incarceration	13 12pm - Better Bones at St. Matthew	14 12pm - Bible Study 6:30pm - RIC Committee	15 6:30pm - Vocal Choir Rehearsal	16 1:30pm - CPR Class	17 2pm - Quilting Workshop 5pm - Worship
18 10am - Easter Worship 11:15am - Evangelism Mtg	19 9am - Community Meal 5:30pm - CPR Class	20 PRIMARY ELECTION 7pm - Church Council	21 12pm - Bible Study	22 6:30pm - Vocal Choir Rehearsal	23 11:30am - CPR Class	24 5pm - Worship
25 10am - Worship	26 9am - Community Meal 5:30pm - CPR Class	27 12pm - Better Bones at St. Matthew 7pm - Embrace Meeting	28 12pm - Bible Study	29 6:30pm - Vocal Choir Rehearsal	30 11:30am - CPR Class	31 5pm - Worship

St. Matthew

June 2025

UPDATED

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 10am - Worship	2	3 12pm - Better Bones at Grandview 6:30pm - Conversation Around the Corner: Art	4 12pm - Bible Study 6:30pm - M.T. Democratic Committee	5 6:30pm - Vocal Choir Rehearsal	6 1:30pm - CPR Class	7 11:00am - Lititz Pride 5pm - Worship
8 10am - Worship	9	10 12pm - Better Bones at Grandview	11 12pm - Bible Study	12 6:30pm - Vocal Choir Rehearsal	13 1:30pm - CPR Class 5:00pm - Wedding Rehearsal & Dinner	14 10:00am - Wedding 5pm - Worship
15 10am - Worship 11:15am - Evangelism Mtg	16 9am - Community Meal 5:30pm - CPR Class	17 12pm - Better Bones at Grandview 7pm - Church Council	18 12pm - Bible Study	19 6:30pm - Vocal Choir Rehearsal	20 1:30pm - CPR Class	21 2pm - Quilting Workshop 5pm - Worship
22 10am - Worship	23	24 12pm - Better Bones at Grandview	25 12pm - Bible Study	26 6:30pm - Vocal Choir Rehearsal	27	28 9:30am - CPR Class 12:00pm - Lancaster Pride 5pm - Worship
29 10am - Worship	30					

# ***ST. MATTHEW***

700 Pleasure Road  
Lancaster, PA 17601

(Return Service Requested)

*The Little Church with the Big Heart*

