

Pastor's Report to Congregation Council
May 16, 2023

It's been yet another full month of ministry and activity here at St. Matthew!

Let's start with worship. Since our last meeting we celebrated Compassion Sunday. Carol Elkins helped to lead much of the worship service, as well as offered us the opportunity to join in sponsoring a child abroad. It was a very moving service. Two weeks later the High School youth led the worship services, and we recognized those graduating from both high school and university. The high school graduates were presented with a gift book as well as their own copy of the ELW. This month we also welcomed 2 new communicants to the table with us, as they completed their instructions. It was announced that we will begin our worship schedule June 4.

The Christian education in the congregation is beginning to wind down as we approach the summer months. Between services we've had a couple of receptions, so the adults didn't meet on Sundays as often. However, the Bible & Brews study continues to bring people to it, and the plans are to continue through the summer (but taking a break during June). The study of Acts should conclude this coming Thursday. Congregation members who have investments with Thrivent were hosted to a catered lunch, where our local agent, Amelia Urbanik, educated the members on how to obtain financial benefits that can benefit our ministry here at St. Matthew. There are at least 40 members of Thrivent here at St. Matthew, which translates to thousands of potential dollars to help supplement our ministries!!

Committee work around the church is always strong, with never a shortage of possible meetings to attend. The Constitution & Bylaws team has been making solid progress, as they finished work on the constitution part and started on the bylaws. The Dandelion Team conducted the congregational survey, meeting with the other congregations at Bethesda on the Bay Lutheran Church to process the gathered information. The staff of the church continue to meet Tuesday mornings to plan, coordinate and support each other. I met with Melody Costello to get the Congregation Life 5 Star kick started again. A meeting has been planned. There was another meeting of All 5 Stars coming together to share and support one another (thanks to Beth Johnson for hosting). The Worship Team had their monthly meeting. I attended my monthly Northwest Conference of Clergy meeting. Personnel met and concluded their work for the next couple of months. The LGL Samaritan met. The Renovation Team met again and made progress in planning Phase 1 of the renovations (fellowship hall). The Rock the Block planning team came together to solidify more plans for the big event. And I want to thank Barb Woodard for attending the Northeast Ohio Synod Gathering with me this past weekend in Akron. Lots of meetings!!

Visitation with members of the congregation, both active and homebound members, continues to go well. There were more hospital visits this past month than there have been, as a couple of our members had major surgeries, gave birth, and health challenges. I've also met with some members for "pastoral care" matters. I am always humbled and blessed to be welcomed and invited to walk with each of you during these seminal moments of life. Thank you for calling me to be your pastor.

In Christ, with Christ, for Christ!
Pastor Steve Mahaffey