

Report to Congregation Council
August 15, 2023

The reality of EVERYTHING that we've been juggling here at St. Mathew for the past year finally settled and weighed-in on me. I believe this feeling comes from the fact that some of those items are reaching a semblance of completion, requiring those of us that have been working on each item additional planning in how to present it to the membership. For example, this coming Sunday both the Dandelion Team and the Constitution & Bylaws Team will be presenting their work. Communicating all of this is extremely important, as it creates an atmosphere of "walking together" vs. being told it's happening (something the Dandelion survey shows us we need to work on as a congregation). Although it's exciting to have arrived at this point of presentation, neither projects are fully complete, as the Constitution has to get sent on for Synod approval and then ultimately congregation approval, while the Dandelion Project still has another year to go.

Another area of completion that is quickly approaching happens annually, as we transition from the Summer schedule into the Fall activities. Preparation for Sunday School has been happening around the office. This year I plan to "rotate" my Sunday mornings with the different age groups, which will require some adults to step up to lead the adult education class. It's important that I have more time with the youth of the congregation outside of the Children's message during worship. Additionally, as we prepare for the ELCA National Youth Gathering in 2024, it's equally important I get to know those youth that plan to attend. So, I am setting up a monthly rotation that will allow me to be a part of the different age groups' Sunday School experiences. Although I will continue to teach the adults on Sunday, it will be a part of the rotation. My schedule will be in place on Rally Day, with the first month being spent with the adults.

Visitations with families and homebound members continue to go well, and still includes some first-time home visits with people for dinners! It's great to get to spend multiple hours with our membership outside of a Sunday morning and be allowed into people's lives on a deeper level. Additional time this past month was spent with the Obermeiers, as Leitheia entered the Church Triumphant on August 8th. It was wonderful that she'd rallied on July 30 for her 85th birthday celebration at the church. Many committees remain active meeting and preparing for ministries together. This past month included the monthly Samaritan fund, Rock the Block, Dandelion, Constitution & Bylaws, Medina Clergy, Mutual Ministry, Comprehensive Youth, 5 Star Joint Team, and the first meeting of a newly formed Finance Committee. It's good to be active and engaged in so many ministries!

The Summer worship schedule continues to go well, and most Sundays have been very well attended throughout the entirety of the Summer months. This past Sunday we held the annual Outdoor worship service at Buckeye Park, followed by a church picnic. Although there were "less" people in attendance than what has been the "norm" this Summer, it was still well attended, and people seemed to really enjoy the fellowship afterwards. A big thank you to the many people involved to help make this alternative worship service happen. There's quite a bit of work and coordination involved to pull off a worship service outside of our church building. Our last Summer worship service will occur on September 3, as we will return to 2 services on September 10, Rally Day.

Lastly, I will begin another new member class this coming Sunday, August 10. The following people have expressed an interest in joining with us in our mission here at St. Mathew, and therefore require

approval for membership: Evan Neidig, Austin Stertzbach, Meghan Harris, Lauren Harris, Dorothy & Todd Davis, and Jeffrey Callihan.

In Christ, with Christ, for Christ!

Rev. Steven M. Mahaffey