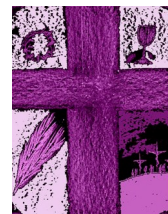


Matt's Media



The Newsletter of St. Matthew's Anglican Church, Islington

Published March 2, 2025

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What Does Your Prayer Life Look Like?

Rev. Philip Stonhouse

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:16-17)

Would you take a moment to look at your last 24 hours, your last week and your last year reflecting on what your prayer life has looked like?

Many of us at St. Matthew's have seen the difference that prayer makes. As Mary Anne and Eliza have been in and out of hospital over the past few months, I have spent a lot of time in discerning prayer, or even just checking in with God to know his direction. There are a lot of things I don't know and, to respond and live right, I need God's guidance more than ever at this time. Amid the unknown of these times and the loneliness, I have needed to connect with God to find the peace and joy that otherwise felt fleeting. When I wasn't enough, when the doctors and nurses didn't seem to be enough, when there were too many questions, I needed to pray to God, because I know he knew and would act. When everything seemed to be going wrong, I needed to turn to God in prayer so that I would be overcome with worship. When I was disappointed that Mary Anne, Eliza, and Matteo weren't coming home, I needed prayer so that God could show me the good of what he was doing. There is more. And this is only what prayer has obviously meant to me in a very short time.

Prayer can mean this much to all of us if we are only willing to put it into practice and make it a part of our everyday life. I can only imagine what prayer could mean if I lived out 'that prayer without ceasing' which Paul describes. I think about the early disciples as they prayerfully waited for the Holy Spirit, preparing their hearts for that Pentecost moment. I think about Peter, who through prayer, was led to include the Gentiles in the mission of the church. I think about the community of Christians who through prayer partnered with God in releasing Peter from jail and execution. I think about the church of Antioch, who through prayer, empowered, equipped, and sent Paul to spread the good news to the people of the known world. What could our prayer mean for our lives and the world?

... continued

What Does Your Prayer Life Look Like? *(continued)*

Prayer is both effective and affective. It changes our inner and outer worlds. As our conversation with God, it becomes an invitation for him to act in and around our lives. The more we pray, the more we are reaching out to build a relationship with him, the more we are inviting him to speak and work in that relationship, and the more we will come to know him as he comes close.

So, again, I will ask: how is your prayer life? Don't feel guilty if it is small, just move forward and try to change. Prayer isn't always kneeling beside our bed or in the pews. Prayer, like any conversation, can be any moment any place, any time, and any situation. If you have a moment waiting at a red light, if you are switching between tasks, if you finish something early, if you are feeling bored or lonely, if you want guidance or feel like you have more than enough, if you are on vacation, busy at work or surrounded by friends, these are all great moments to turn to God and invite him to come close. Your words might take any form, they might be worship, desire, anger, hope, repentance, grief, thanks, a question, or so much more.

I'm afraid that sometimes we have restricted prayer. Sometimes prayer becomes something small. You might not realize it, but the Prayers of the People we hear on Sundays are only one kind of prayer, surrounded by a Worship Service of prayer. The hymns, the worship, the welcoming, the readings, the preaching, the creed, the offertory, the confession, the Eucharistic prayer, the blessing and dismissal, these are all forms of prayer that are part of our continuous conversation and ever-growing relationship with God. Of course, even our Worship Service does not encapsulate the fullness of prayer, as a lifetime of relationship with our eternal and infinite God it is so much bigger than 75 minutes could contain. If you want to dig a little deeper into this, look at the 150 Psalms or *The Practice of the Presence of God* by Brother Lawrence, or just spend some time living in the Lord's Prayer.

In this Lenten Season, I challenge you to grow in your prayer life. See if you can add a few more moments every day where you can turn purposefully to Jesus, even just to invite him in, or to say thank you. Invite God into every relationship and see the difference he makes.

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

Your brother in Christ,
Rev. Philip Stonhouse

SERMON SERIES

A People of Prayer

March 5 to April 18

There will be special times of prayer in the service to help us explore our prayer life.



Wardens' Report

Karen Lee, Sharon Shao, Paul Lorimer, and Nancy Hurn

While it may not seem so, Spring is only about three weeks away! We are sure you are eagerly awaiting its arrival. As we enter the season of Lent and Easter, we hope that you and your families will be able to join in the many opportunities for worship and learning here at St. Matthew's.

As in years gone by, Lent and Easter offer a wonderful spiritual journey at St. Matthew's: Lenten studies, Holy Week services, Maundy Thursday Supper with Seder, Easter Sunrise outdoor service, the Children's Easter Pageant, and Easter Sunday Choral service. We are so grateful for the spiritual leadership of Rev. Philip, along with Rev. Merv, Rev. James and Tyler's musical leadership. Thank You.

We are delighted to welcome our new, youngest member to St. Matthew's, Eliza Marie Stonhouse, daughter of Rev. Philip and Mary Anne. Eliza was born on January 5, 2025.

The Warden Team extends a warm welcome to Nancy Hurn as Deputy People's Warden. We thank Richard Farrar for his contributions this past year in the role of Deputy People's Warden.

The church property continues to require daily supervision and maintenance. We thank Tom Travaglini, our Sexton, for his diligence and responsiveness as the need arises. We continue to be grateful for our property co-chairs, Marguerite Locke and Stuart Watt, who assist the Warden team in overseeing repairs.

Your Warden team continues to look for fundraising ideas. Should you have an idea, please connect with Rev. Philip or one of the Wardens. Any funds raised will assist in reducing the deficit.

We look forward to walking with you at St. Matthew's as we continue to learn and grow and *Share Jesus' Love* with each of you and our external community.

You Have Mail!

Marguerite Locke

Please look for your personalized Stewardship envelope on the Hospitality Table in the Narthex on March 2. Your envelope will be located in a box, filed in alphabetical order.

It would save mailing costs if you could take your mail and that of a friend or neighbour of the parish to whom you could deliver the letter.

Thank you for your assistance,
The Stewardship Team

Palm Crosses and Easter Flowers

Palm Crosses: Volunteers are requested to make Palm Crosses on Friday, April 11 at 10:00 a.m. No experience necessary. RSVP to Sandra Wilson, Pat Currie, or the office.

Flowers for Easter: Easter is April 20th this year: 40 weekdays plus six Sundays after Ash Wednesday. Sandra Wilson will be ordering lilies and hydrangeas to decorate the church for Easter. Prices will be determined closer to that date. The prices will appear in the weekly Friday e-mail and orders will be accepted until April 6.



What's Happening

Sun Mar 2	Unity Worship: 10:30 a.m.	In person & online
Tues Mar 4	Pancake Supper & Shrove Tuesday Service: 6:00 p.m.	Gym & Sanctuary
Wed Mar 5	Ash Wednesday Worship: 10:30 a.m.	In person
	Ash Wednesday Worship: 7:00 p.m.	In person & online
Fri Mar 7	World Day of Prayer service: 2:00 p.m.	In person
Sun Mar 9	All Ages Worship: 9:30 a.m.	In person & online
	BCP Worship: 11:00 a.m.	In person & online
Tues Mar 11	Bible Studies and Taizé Worship: 7:00—9:00 p.m.	In person & online
Wed Mar 12	BCP Worship: 10:30 a.m.	In person
Fri Mar 14	Youth Group: 7:00 p.m.	In person
Sun Mar 16	All Ages Worship: 9:30 a.m.	In person & online
	BAS Worship: 11:00 a.m.	In person & online
Tues Mar 18	Bible Studies and Taizé Worship: 7:00—9:00 p.m.	In person & online
Wed Mar 19	BCP Worship: 10:30 a.m.	In person
Sun Mar 23	All Ages Worship: 9:30 a.m.	In person & online
	BAS Worship: 11:00 a.m.	In person & online
Tues Mar 25	Bible Studies and Taizé Worship: 7:00—9:00 p.m.	In person & online
Wed Mar 26	BCP Worship: 10:30 a.m.	In person
Fri Mar 28	Youth Group: 7:00 p.m.	In person
Sat Mar 29	Messy Church: 4:00 p.m.	In person
Sun Mar 30	All Ages Worship: 9:30 a.m.	In person & online
	BAS Worship: 11:00 a.m.	In person & online
Tues Apr 1	Bible Studies and Taizé Worship: 7:00—9:00 p.m.	In person & online
Wed Apr 2	BCP Worship: 10:30 a.m.	In person
Sun Apr 6	Unity Worship: 10:30 a.m.	In person & online
	Mapping Exercise: Lunch at 11:30, Mapping 12:30-4:00	In person
Tues Apr 8	Stations of the Cross Service: 7:00 p.m.	In person
Wed Apr 9	BCP Worship: 10:30 a.m.	In person
Sun Apr 13	All Ages Worship: 9:30 a.m.	In person & online
(Palm Sunday)	BCP Worship: 11:00 a.m.	In person & online
Wed Apr 16	BCP Worship: 10:30 a.m.	In person
Thurs Apr 17	Christian Seder—Dinner & Worship: 6:00 p.m.	In person
Fri Apr 18	Good Friday Worship: 10:30 a.m.	In person & online
Sun Apr 20	Easter Sunday Worship: 6:30, 9:30, & 11:00 a.m.	In person & online
(Easter Sunday)		Sunrise service in person only, Marie Curtis Park

Intercessory Prayer during Worship at St. Matthew's

I was invited by Mary Gleeson to lead Intercessory Prayer several years ago. I was nervous about doing it at first, but I have come to deeply appreciate this opportunity. I believe that *Matthew 18:19-20* provides us with clarity on the value of intercessory prayer or any form of group prayer: "Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them." (NIV)

Serving as an intercessory prayer leader is a blessing in many ways:

- It encourages me to read the Bible readings for the day a few days ahead of the service and to reflect and pray for greater understanding about what they mean and how the readings may relate to the world around us
- It encourages me to reflect on what is happening in the world and to recognize and acknowledge where God is at work in our world and where our prayers are needed
- It has helped me to get to know more people in our congregation and to consider how we can grow as a community of faith, sharing Jesus' love
- It has helped me to exchange some of my anxiety, fear and worry for praying for these things and surrendering them to God's care
- It has helped to deepen my own faith and to be of service to our community
- It has helped me to feel much more connected with our St. Matthew's community

By Marilyn Friedmann

I am in this ministry because I have seen enough miracles in the last year alone to know that prayer works. And so how can I not wish for a miracle for every being who is suffering? For a world that is in chaos? For a planet that is diseased?

In short, I am in this ministry because I believe. I believe that our collective intention has the power to move mountains.

By Tatiana Saliba

Volunteer Opportunities

Will you contribute here? Training is provided. Contact in person or through the office.

Tech Team (Rev. Philip)

- Operate the computer and the camera during Worship Services
- Record the service for later views on YouTube.

Coffee Hour Hosts (Sign-up sheet in Lounge kitchen doorway)

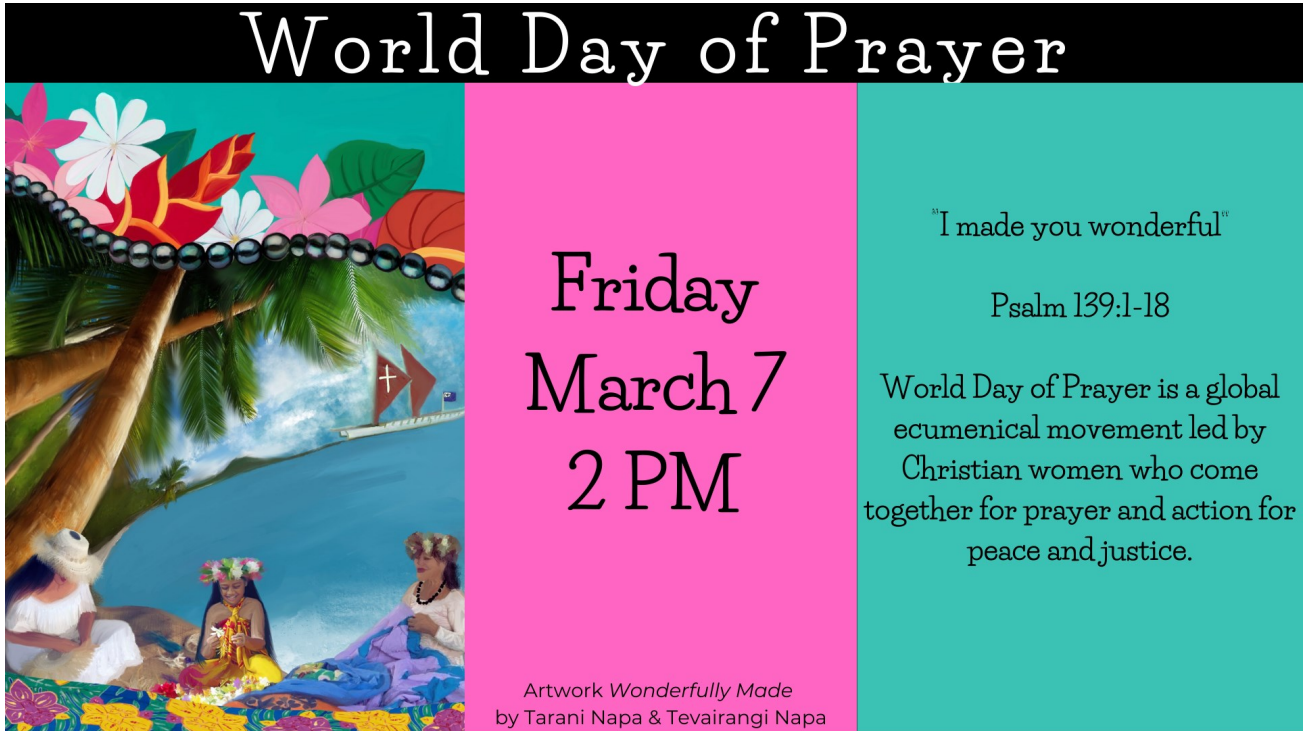
- Bring cream, milk, snacks
- Serve coffee and tea
- Tidy up

Chancel Guild (please see page 18)

World Day of Prayer

Cathy Cross

World Day of Prayer is being held at St. Matthew's on Friday, March 7 at 2:00 p.m. Join us as we pray for the Cook Islands.



World Day of Prayer

**Friday
March 7
2 PM**

Artwork Wonderfully Made
by Tarani Napa & Tevairangi Napa

"I made you wonderful"
Psalm 139:1-18

World Day of Prayer is a global ecumenical movement led by Christian women who come together for prayer and action for peace and justice.

Book Review: *The Day I Learned to Pump Gas*

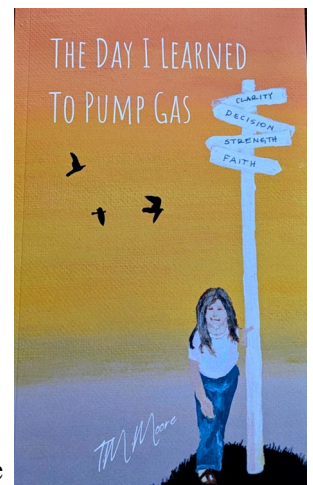
Lianne Thompson

This memoir, by our very own Tanya Marcon Moore, is her personal story of loss, grief, vulnerability, gaining strength, forgiveness, and moving forward through faith.

When I read the book last summer, I found it to be an extremely powerful telling. Tanya strips away platitudes around traumatic loss and provides the reader with an authentic view into her emotional, sometimes devastating, life experiences. Her voice is raw within these pages; I was caught by both the stories of hurt and loss but also the moments of rediscovered beauty and joy. Reading late into the night, I cried with her and had to pause numerous times so that I could continue as a witness to her journey.

What a courageous gift Tanya provides by sharing her story in this way. She offers her own experience to others who have suffered loss and trauma; shares her struggles, her cries for help, and her reaching out in faith and hope. And the end of the book provides the reader with practical tasks and insights to assist them to navigate their own experiences of loss and trauma. Recommended to all those looking for hope, faith and love on their own journeys.

The book can be purchased on Amazon (search by book title), or by speaking directly to Tanya. (Any proceeds from the sale of the book will be donated to St. Matthew's.) *And stay tuned...Tanya is working on the audiobook version which should be available in early March.*



Valentine's Day Tea

Linda Harrison

On Tuesday, February 11, we enjoyed another lovely Afternoon Tea. Approximately 35 people spent time together, chatting and catching up. As always, we had wonderful volunteers who provided delightful refreshments. There were Valentine strawberry shortcakes, squares, cake, cookies, cheese and fruit skewers.

Katie Ward was our speaker and engaged us in thoughtful reflection on the topic, "*Nurturing our Faith in the Golden Years.*" Katie spoke from her vast experience as a registered nurse, a mother, an amazing cook, and currently from the courses she has been completing towards her certificate as a Parish Nurse. These new courses have become very personal to her as a result of her Christian growth and belonging at St Matthew's. Katie has a 'giver' personality, and we are so fortunate that she is willing to share with us. Her presentation was insightful and focused on nurturing healthy lifestyle choices within a community of faith. As a result, joy can be encouraged for everyone as we age. This occasion to visit with everyone at the tea reminded us of the benefits of our St. Matthew's community and our many opportunities to share with each other.



Club Matt Children's Program

During Advent, Club Matt activities focused on the road to Bethlehem and preparation to welcome the Christ Child. The Christmas Pageant was held on Sunday, December 15, with Club Matt children along with many participants from summer camp and Messy Church. This production of the story of Jesus' birth was a delightful mix of children, youth, and adults. The roles portrayed gave life to the story. Its joy was experienced and shared by all. As a parish, we are grateful to all the children, youth, adults, and Rev. Philip.

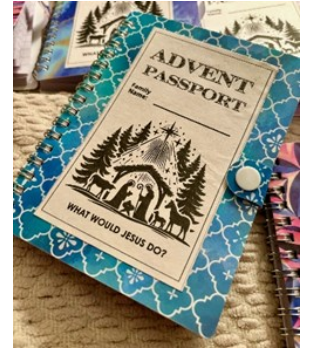


Club Matt Children's Program *(continued)*

A bonus activity for the season, the Advent Passport, was offered to everyone in the parish, not just families. The passport was filled with activities linked to Christmas and things that Jesus would want us to do.

January & February: Listening to Jesus. The New Year began with the story of Jesus as a 12-year old child participating in temple activities. Stories and videos portrayed how comfortable Jesus was on his own in the temple. Jesus showed his parents and the people that he was wise, strong, and close to God. Club Matt children began to learn that Jesus was a great teacher. He taught about what God wants for us, how he wants us to live our lives and how we respond to others. He reached out to people with lessons and stories. A lesson on "The Sermon on the Mount" came with a call to be peacemakers and to treat others as we want them to treat us. Next, children learned how we are like salt and light. Then Jesus taught us how to pray. The children took time to understand the "Lord's Prayer" and what the actions we use mean to us and to God. Another theme explored how we can trust God and that we should not be anxious. Instead, to believe that God will give us everything we need. Next, the focus was how to love one another with the "Golden Rule" of treating other people the way we want to be treated. The February 14th lesson explained that God loves us so much that we just need to "Ask, Seek and Knock." The classes explored how we need to ask God to be in our life, to seek Jesus to be with us all the time and if we knock on God's door, he will invite us in.

We are grateful to the leadership team and the teachers who volunteer each week to share time with the children of our parish.



THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

CAMP MATT

Join us for Camp Matt August 11-15

Registration details coming soon

Messy Church

Linda Dickson

Messy Church in January was themed, “Presence is a Present.” As they arrived, each person was given a piece to a puzzle. As you may have already seen in the Narthex, the completed puzzle is the photograph of St. Matthew’s church family taken on the front steps.



The children followed this by creating a picture of their own which made a puzzle to give to a friend. At another craft table they each wrote a prayer on strips of cardboard which were then linked to make a prayer chain. In the photos, you can see the ‘cup stacking’ and ‘straws and links’ activities that were co-operative ventures. A few attendees tried their skill on ‘floor skis’ with three people. Those are a great challenge.



Our February program had the theme, “God’s Love Finds You, Come Join Our Search Party.” Activities focused on the parables of the Lost Sheep, and the Lost Coin.

Messy Church is held in the gym on the last Saturday of each month from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m., including dinner.

The next Messy Church dates are:
March 29, April 26, May 31

Messy Church is for all ages... young and young-at-heart, please come and join. There is always room for more at the supper table.

Children, bring your grandparents!
Your friends!



Join us for the next Messy Church on March 29



St. Matt's Youth

Bryan Tran

We are thrilled to welcome Tanya Marcon Moore to the youth ministry team! Tanya joins Bryan, Tatiana, and Emily, bringing her passion for baking and cooking, her experience raising teenagers, and her deep faith walk with Jesus. We are excited for the youth to benefit from her gifts and care.

We kicked off the year with a volleyball session, filled with the sweet smell of cookies baking and fresh homemade hot chocolate. Next, we enjoyed a badminton night, which was a smash hit! During the evening, the youth reflected on what it means to experience aliveness—life to the full.

Most recently, on Valentine's Day, we gathered to assemble care kits for the homeless in our community. A special thank you to Tanya for organizing the donations and to everyone who contributed. We plan to distribute the kits soon with help from our friendly community police officer from 22 Division.

Looking ahead, we have some exciting events planned, including another volleyball session, ultimate frisbee, a fun cook-off with pizza and cookies, and a trip to an escape room.

Additionally, since the youth room has been repaired after the flooding, we are hoping to spruce it up! Our wish list includes:

- A new rug
- Another couch
- A few bean bag chairs.

If you have any leads or feel called to donate, please contact Bryan.

Lastly, we are proud of all the youth who are preparing to graduate high school this year. Please join us in praying for their success and that they find themselves in the right post-secondary programs.

Thank you for your continued support of our youth ministry!





Installations - Repairs - Winterization - Exterior Lighting

Jon Harrison

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The Second Great Disenchantment

Tyler Versluis

“Faith is common sense transfigured.”

This quote might have originated with G.K. Chesterton’s character, Father Brown, but I have also seen it attributed to Catholic writer Hilaire Belloc. I like this quote because it does not isolate faith or store it in a box, away from the rest of our lives. Faith becomes something we wear comfortably and use every day. I also think this application of faith is important today, as we witness a spiritual “insanity.” This is not an obvious insanity, but one that lurks in the shadows of our lives.

You might have heard the term “disenchantment” as a process in which secular values replace religious ones. Western society underwent a “Great Disenchantment” after the Second World War, when a swift secularization of society took place. To be religious was to cling to the old world, which had been destroyed in a blaze of hellfire by ambitious and evil men. Since the arrival of improvements in medicine and social security, the reduced risk of military conflict and calamity, there was less need to put faith in God. Why bother trusting God when everything was seemingly fine? If there was talk of God and Church, it was mainly in the context of how these things could be a benefit to society, rather than faith being a thing of utmost importance unto itself. In addition, the endless parade of institutional scandal, scrutinized and spread so rapidly and sensationally in the Internet age, means that most people have lost trust in their churches.

In a great conversation between Esmé Partridge and Paul Kingsnorth, they pinpointed that religion in the 20th century became such an intensely personal thing that its status as a public voice simply disappeared. When I say personal, I mean that everyone started caring more about their individual and idiosyncratic interpretations of religion, than religion as a shared understanding of community, vision and dogma. Unsurprisingly, being religious or spiritual became less about aspiring to Christ-like perfection and more of a way to “justify” and prop up individualistic desires and predispositions.

However, something strange has been happening. People are losing their “faith” in this artificial bubble of prosperity and individuality. They are becoming disenchanted with the Great Disenchantment. They are weary of the false religions of individualism, with its *ex cathedra* declamations from Silicon Valley, identity politics and spiritual grifters, who ultimately fail in their methods of salvation, because they do not believe in anything beyond the material. In many cases religion is being thrown back into the public sphere, for better or for worse, often in a confusing tangle of ideas. I recall an hilarious recent debate between Jordan Peterson and Richard Dawkins, arguing bizarrely about the religious symbolism of dragons - it’s a huge mess, and it is mainly happening online. It is a reminder - and an affirmation, I believe - that humanity is ultimately a religious creature, with a trait that cannot be deleted from our consciousness or bled out.

Why is this happening? Because society no longer can hold the mask to its face. Its true nature has emerged, and we can no longer pretend that the structures that kept us placated and content are of a neutral, altruistic nature. Western culture is engaged in a race to scrape the bottom of the barrel, and what lies there is not particularly appetizing. We have hit the proverbial rock bottom. Is it no wonder that people are looking upwards again?

...continued

The Second Great Disenchantment *(continued)*

I am not sure how much churches will benefit from this revival. As mentioned before, young people really do not have much faith in institutions - and the very notion of being part of any physical community - including a parish church - is actually quite bizarre for them. Everything is online. If people are getting their religion anywhere, it is from YouTube, Substack, PDF documents and podcasts. They are probably not sitting in a pew behind you. But they are searching, and perhaps one day they will hear something that captures their imagination and then their heart.

Why do I believe this will happen? Because the world is crazy and rootless, and they desire peace. As Christians, we must believe that lack of faith is a very particular kind of insanity that pessimistic and hurting people fall into. We must believe that the world is the way that it is, because people have chosen not to believe, or at least have forgotten that the Devil exists. The shadow which has fallen over the world is particularly sinister because it almost irresistibly demonstrates that the world is fine - even better - without God.

What can we do? The most important thing that we can do as Christ followers is hold strong to the tenets of our faith, as challenging, unwieldy and off-putting as they can be in a worldly context. It is my belief that people are tired of feeling numb, placated and pandered to. They want hard truths and bitter medicine, and most of all, the peace that passes all understanding that guards our hearts and minds in Jesus Christ.

In His service,
Tyler Versluis

Concert: *Amor con Fortuna*

The second concert in our Young Artists Series, in memory of Ron Landry, was held on Sunday, February 2, at 2:30 pm.

Formed in 2022 in Toronto, Canada, the Diapente Renaissance Vocal Quintet specializes in the beautiful, wonderful, rare and unique vocal music of the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries. Combining solo and ensemble musicianship, bold unpretentious enthusiasm, and scholarly historical approaches to interpretation, Diapente brings the music of old to new audiences.

The quintet's aims include both welcoming those new to Early Music to the world of madrigals, motets, and monodies, as well as introducing lesser-known and rare works to the genre's veteran fans.

Their program, *Amor con Fortuna*, featured musical genres that flourished in the Kingdoms of Spain during the 16th century. The poetry spoke to the ever-present questioning of fate and yearnings for love and faith. We experienced the inventive and evocative ways the composers expressed love, heartache, yearning, loneliness, fear, and consolation.



Diapente Renaissance Vocal Quintet: Jane Fingler, Soprano; Peter Koniers, Countertenor ; Martin Gomes, Bass; Alexander Cappellazzo, Tenor; Jonathan Stuchbery, Tenor, Guitar & Vihuela

The Chosen: Pick Me

Martha Lewis

On Tuesday, November 12, 2024, a group of parishioners met at St. Matthew's Church to watch the first of four episodes of the second season of the video series entitled, *The Chosen*, a dramatization of the life of Jesus.

The opening episode of Season Two reminded us that Jesus' story began not with his birth but at Creation! Jesus was "much more than could be seen or touched," the Son of God who spoke with Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. And it also reminded us that God promised that Abraham's descendants, God's chosen people, the Jewish people of Israel, would inherit land for their descendants. How relevant is that now, in the present time?

Tension built as the Disciples wrestled with the increasing popularity of Jesus in Samaria. An argument broke out amongst his disciples about the purity laws, the Jewish set of rules about which foods are considered clean and unclean. They were preparing for Jesus to have supper and meet with local leaders from the synagogue, who might try to trap him in his words. The disciples disclosed their prejudice. They always seemed to be worried about Jesus as they tried to manage his itinerary. Ironically, Jesus was not seen to be anxious about his disciples. Jesus knew that his brief life on Earth would not be the end of his story. He taught in parables and led by example. He demonstrated his love for them by accepting them as they were, and ultimately, giving his life for them. And for us.

Later in the episode, James and John (nicknamed by Jesus - the 'Sons of Thunder') were about to retaliate on behalf of Jesus after they were assaulted by passing strangers for being Jews. Jesus' response to the near-violent encounter was to stop his disciples. "As we gather others," Jesus said, "I need you to show them the way – to be humble." Jesus hinted at the authority he would bestow on them one day through His Holy Spirit when he rebuked James and John and said that he would have to delay that transfer of power, or hand it out in smaller doses. But he told them that first, "You need to calm down a bit."

After watching the video, we gathered for a discussion led by Rev. Philip, who did so with dignity and respect. A study guide provided us with thought-provoking questions. We shared our personal perspectives on what we had watched. Having seen Jesus in various life situations in *The Chosen*, we were encouraged to see things from that point of view.

I came away with less anxiety about my life and the world.

I don't have to worry about how God is going to accomplish all His plans.

I can pray for the willingness to allow God's Love into my heart and mind.

I can pray for the strength to serve others to the best of my ability, like the disciples tried to do.

With Jesus, there is always Hope.

ASH WEDNESDAY AT ST. MATTHEW'S

10:30 AM



7:00 PM

Lessons and Carols: God With Us

Vanessa James-Locke

One of the many gifts God has embedded in us is a voice to sing His praises and ears to hear those praises. As He hears and listens to our daily prayers, I like to imagine He is delighted by our offerings of song and music. When we use our voices to sing the many beautiful and memorable melodies of the Advent season, we can sense the atmosphere shift into one of spiritual comfort. Comfort and Joy.

Tyler Versluis' thoughtfully curated *Lessons and Carols* presentation brings together the enduring carols of old and the divinely inspired newer arrangements in between the Lessons and Readings. We are treated to such beautiful songs that uplift our spirits through the darkest days of winter.

Henri and I were blessed to sing with the St. Matthew's choir in early December for *Lessons and Carols*. There is something so special about singing in a choir with fellow worshippers under the direction of someone with an enlightened vision for the music. Spending cozy winter evenings rehearsing together as a choir in the sanctuary singing, laughing, praying, and preparing for the service helped to balance the materialistic, frenzied aspect of the modern Christmas season. *Lessons and Carols* gave us a time to slow down and savour the celebration.

A most magical element of *Lessons and Carols* came with the St. Philip's Hand Bell Choir. It cannot be overstated how angelic and pure these bells sound resonating throughout the church. The precision and clarity of the bells seem to enter into us, clearing us of any doubt that the Saviour is near.

It was our honour as the choir to share these musical announcements of our loving God and the birth of the Christ Child, but my favourite part was when we joined in song with the congregation. It was in these moments that I could truly feel God with us and a multitude of angels rejoicing in our shared love of the Lord and each other.

Blue Christmas Service

Linda Aldridge

St. Matthew's Blue Christmas service was held on Wednesday evening, December 11, 2024. As each Christmas season comes and goes, I find myself thinking of Christmases past spent with family and friends. Those reflections occur but sometimes they are brief and fleeting and I feel that I'm not devoting the time I want to the people of my past. The Blue Christmas Service provides that opportunity to sit quietly and to reflect on them longer. I am generally accompanied at this service by other family members so that we are able to reflect in unison, which brings its own comfort.

Likewise, I become aware that other families present at the service are likely experiencing the same emotions as myself which helps me feel less alone. The church is dimly lit, quiet, and still. The words spoken, the hymns, and the prayers were thoughtfully chosen and bring their own comfort to the occasion. Candles are lit for lost individuals and placed, one at a time, at the altar - a comforting process.

In general, this has become one of my favourite services and I look forward to it each year.



We are deeply appreciate of the variety of services and offerings during the Advent and Christmas season, from the learning during bible studies to the joy of the Christmas pageant and the many Christmas eve services. Thank you, St. Matthew's!

Christmas Luncheon

Jane Learn

Wednesday, December 4, 2024, dawned a glorious day - the perfect backdrop for St. Matthew's Christmas Luncheon. Making our way into the large gymnasium, we found beautifully decorated tables, perfectly set and so inviting. Hot apple cider promptly followed. It wasn't long before a well-organized group of ladies served each and every one of us groaning plates filled with seasonal fare. The menu was varied and delicious, consisting of hot turkey, mashed potatoes, dressing/stuffing, peas and carrots, coleslaw, dinner rolls and, of course, lots of cranberry sauce and gravy. Our table agreed that we were spoiled for choice!! Dessert followed soon after: decorated Christmas cookies, pies with ice creams, tea, coffee and more apple cider. Rev. Philip and Eddie Norfolk at the keyboard led us in singing carols aplenty and a raffle awarded many of us wonderful gifts.

A huge 'thank you' is offered to Nancy and Deborah Hurn who gifted the wonderful food for our enjoyment and to all the church volunteers who contributed to making the day perfect. We all departed the church that special day having enjoyed a delightful meal, the fellowship of friends and the joy of the Season.

ST. MATTHEW'S ANGLICAN CHURCH

BIBLE STUDY

AND TAIZE WORSHIP

In the reflective and Spirit-filled atmosphere of a Taize service, we will be discussing the "Lord's Prayer" from four different directions. The chance to explore the same passage four weeks in a row, creates a wonderful opportunity for us to see the richness of God's word.

TUESDAYS MARCH 11 - APRIL 1

7 - 9 P M

3962 Bloor Street West
416.231.4014 / office@saintmatts.ca / saintmatts.ca



MUSIC AT ST. MATTHEW'S

*Concert series presented
in loving memory of Ron Landry*

POETRY & FORCE

Violin and Piano



Local Etobicoke virtuosi Anton Yeretsky (violin) and Maria Dolnycky (piano) perform a diverse array of works, including a première piece by Tyler Versluis.

Sunday, May 25, 2025

2:30 PM

Pay what you can (\$20 suggested)

www.saintmatts.ca 3962 Bloor St. W. 416.231.4014

Will You Try Helping the Chancel Guild?

Pat Currie

What is the Chancel Guild? We are the men and women who prepare the Chancel — the area surrounding the altar — for weekly worship services, baptisms, weddings, and funerals. We also decorate the church for Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.

This is a very important and meaningful ministry. We prepare the church for worship on a weekly basis. This helps build our faith and increases our understanding of church traditions.

We work in teams of two on a rotating basis, approximately once a month. The preparations on Saturday morning usually take about an hour. On Sunday, the changeover between services takes about half an hour. We all have occasions when we are unable to fulfill the duties on our scheduled date. This is not a problem: we can easily switch our scheduled duty day with another member.

We are desperately looking for new members, to join our team. Please give it a try.

If you need more information concerning the duties of the Chancel Guild, please contact Pat Currie at 647-998-7607 or Sandra Wilson at 905-624-3786.

St. Matthew's Synopsis

Mitten Tree decorations of 82 items of knitted scarves, hats and mittens knitted by parishioners were delivered to St. Paul's Anglican Church in Mississauga.



Melville Calendar, a very much loved and great Christian friend died December 23, 2024, Christmas Eve, in Barbados to where he had retired several years ago. He was predeceased by his wife, Joy, who had been buried in the place of their birth in Barbados and Mel returned so he

could be buried alongside of her. Members of our former 8:00 a.m. Sunday service especially remember his deep and abiding faith and the funny little bits of humour as he departed.

Blessington Velagapalli has returned to India. He took photos at both services on his last day. Blessington is pictured here with Club Matt.

Bishop Kevin Robertson visited St. Matthew's on Sunday, December 8. He is pictured here with Rev. Philip, Karen Lee, and David Oakden.



Church Records

Births

Eliza Marie Stonhouse
January 5, 2025

Baptisms

Onyedikachukwu Ezra Udorji
January 5, 2025

Sienna Carolyn Bennett
March 2, 2025

Deaths

Mel Callender
December 23, 2024

*Grant to him Eternal Rest, O Lord,
and let light perpetual shine on him!*

Join Us this Easter

APRIL

8 STATIONS OF THE CROSS SERVICE AT 7 PM
(Further dates and times to be announced)

13 PALM SUNDAY WORSHIP AT 9:30 & 11 AM

17 CHRISTIAN SEDER DINNER & WORSHIP AT 6 PM

18 GOOD FRIDAY WORSHIP AT 10:30 AM

20 EASTER SUNDAY SERVICES AT 6:30 AM (Marie Curtis Park)
9:30 & 11:00 AM (St. Matthew's)

27 EASTER PAGEANT AT 10:30 AM



Pastoral Care: Pastoral visits can be offered in person, over the phone, by email or via Zoom. Please contact the office at 416-231-4014 or office@saintmatts.ca.

Partners in Prayer: Should you desire prayer for yourself or for another person, please make details known to the church office at 416-231-4014 or office@saintmatts.ca.

Cycle of Prayer: “Beloved, pray for us.” This is Paul’s way of asking the Thessalonians to pray for him (5:25) and it expresses the genuine need for believers to support one another through prayer. Each Sunday, we pray for individuals and families of St. Matthew’s in the Prayers of the People. Each week, a few names are mentioned in our prayers and we have the opportunity to support one another through prayer. Please take the time to remember these people during the week in your own prayers as well. If you do not wish to be included in our “Cycle of Prayer” please let the office know and we will be sure to keep your name off the list.

Prayer Shawl Ministry: Prayer Shawls are provided to those who need the warmth and comfort of God and St. Matthew’s. If you would like a shawl for someone, please contact the office at 416-231-4014 or office@saintmatts.ca. If you are knitting shawls for this ministry, please contact the office to arrange to drop them off.

Join Us

Wednesday

10:30 a.m. BCP Service
(Posted on YouTube afterward)

Messy Church

Last Saturday of the month
Next Messy Church is March 29

GIFT Groups

Contact the office for information



Sunday Services

9:30 a.m. Casual (in person & online)
followed by Coffee Hour in gym

11:00 a.m. Classic (in person & online)
12:10 p.m. Coffee Hour

10:30 a.m. Unity Worship replaces
9:30 and 11:00 a.m. worship
(generally first Sunday of each month)
Please check saintmatts.ca

Office Hours

Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday
9:30 - 3:30

416-231-4014
office@saintmatts.ca



The Rev. Philip Stonhouse, Incumbent
416-231-3060 / philipstonhouse@hotmail.ca

The Rev. Merv Mercer, Honorary Assistant
The Rev. James Liu, Visiting Priest
Dr. Tyler Versluis, Music Director and Organist
Bryan Tran, Youth Ministry Associate
Tom Travaglini, Sexton
Grant Dunbar, Verger
Lisa Tait, Administrator

3962 Bloor Street West, Etobicoke, Ontario, M9B 1M3

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<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCeTIBsRzvoz-zJcKv5nKb7g>