

ST. MATTHEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

**2024 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
JANUARY 28, 2024**



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St. Matthew's Core Values

When it comes to God,
our Sunday worship is at the heart of our life together
we open ourselves to the Holy Spirit in our personal lives and in our life together
we seek quality Christian education and spiritual formation at all age levels.

When it comes to our church,
we embrace everyone with loving pastoral care in whatever situation or stage of life they find themselves
we bring together all generations for fellowship

When it comes to our community,
we open our doors and our arms to all who come
we are intentional in sharing our faith with others
we reach out in loving and substantive way

St. Matthew's Mission Statement

St. Matthew's, where all are invited, and welcome to celebrate faith, community and friendship.

St. Matthew's Vision Statement

God is calling us at St. Matthew's to a season of both growth and renewal. To deep faith along with reaching out to God's people. This reaching out is to those in need and to those who need God. This call is to go beyond our welcome here, where it is comfortable, and to find ways to meet God's people where they live. We do this now, in part, with our shuttle. We now operate on two levels: one is for those who are willing to drive onto our parking lot and walk through our doors, and the other is for folks who cannot manage their lives well, for whatever reason, and are shuttled by us in the van. But there are other people for whom we would be their church if they could but walk through the doors. These folks have jobs and kids or are retired; they are not without pain. We have within us the ability to reach them and be their church.

This begins by going deep: increasing further our efforts toward adult studies, spiritual and prayer retreats and similar events. And taking seriously the faith of our children. Introducing some sort of teen or pre-teen curriculum, similar to the confirmation classes of old -- in seriousness. Identifying those in every generation with particularly deep faith and bringing them into training for leadership.

Training and recognition of the great value of our Sunday School teachers, who bring faith to our youngest members, and also sustain the faith of the family, at least in part.

We continue by emphasizing the outreach team. As our faith deepens we look for ways to share this faith. And to act on it. Means, perhaps simple at first, to speak of our faith. Outreach efforts that bring together the generations and that also include children. Enhanced mission efforts and mission trips.

We see older folks as part of St. Matthew's, even when they cannot attend church due to illness or weakness. We minister to them. We care about them. We do not leave them behind.

At our center is our worship, and we do not neglect this, but rather celebrate our history, our liturgy and our God. This vision includes worship in the sanctuary, but also worship at alternative locations.

Veni Creator Spiritus

Come Holy Spirit, our souls inspire
And lighten with eternal fire.
**Implant in us your grace from above,
Enter our minds and hearts with love.**

O come anointing Spirit of peace
Well-spring of life and gentleness.
**Past ages called you the Paraclete
To us you bring your sevenfold gifts.**

You are the Power of God's right hand
Promise of God to the waiting church
**Words of true life on human lips.
Illumine now our hearts anew.**

Come pour your love into our souls
Refresh our weak frame with incoming strength
**Give grace and courage to endure
Cast away our deadly foe.**

Grant us your peace for evermore.
With you as Guide upon the way
**Evil shall no more harm our souls.
We shall know as we are known.**

ST. MATTHEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH - CLERGY, STAFF & VESTRY

The Rt. Rev. Kym Lucas	Bishop - Diocese of Colorado
The Rev. Stephen D. Hood	Rector
The Rev. Jan Head	Priest Associate
The Rev. Rich Paul	Deacon
The Rev. Teri Shecter	Deacon
The Rev. Jamie Galbasini	Deacon
The Reverends Emil Belsky, Nick Mayer, Judy Schneider, Charlotte Shepic	Assisting Clergy/Retired
Desiree Bougeaux	Executive Operations Officer
Becky Vroman	Director of Children's Ministry
Katie Walters	Music Director
Deacon Jamie Galbasini	Youth Ministry, College & Hospital Chaplain

Current Vestry

Janette Deagle (*retiring today*)
Kevin Bouwhuis (*retiring today*)
Rebekah Feigh (*term expires 2027*)
Blake Bickham (*term expires January 2025*)
LaReina Kalenian (*term expires January 2025*)
Terry McDaneld (*term expires January 2025*)
Dave Emerson (*term expires January 2026*)
Cora Galbasini (*term expires January 2026*)
Sandy Moore (*term expires January 2026*)
Matthew Ross (*term expires January 2026*)

Election of New Vestry Member

Janet Azbell (*term expires January 2027*)

Current Wardens and Treasurer

Jason Vroman, Senior Warden (*continued appointment to be confirmed*)
Heidi Plank, Jr. Warden Building & Grounds (*continued appointment to be confirmed*)
Rebekah Feigh, Jr. Warden Technology (*continued appointment to be confirmed*)
Bruce Noble, Treasurer (*continued appointment to be confirmed*)

New Warden to be Appointed

Kathy Lyn, Jr. Warden Community Life (*term expires 2027*)

St. Matthew's Foundation Board

Chuck Breaux
Ann Hayes
Fr. Steve Hood
Bruce Noble

Finance Committee

Sharon Conrad Beverly Lampley
Ann Hayes Dale Moore
Jason Vroman Janet Gallenstein
Fr. Steve Hood

Convention Delegates

Current Senior Warden, Jason Vroman
Past Senior Warden, Ann Hayes
Alternate, LaReina Kalenian
Janette Deagle (*term ends January 2025*)
Bruce Noble (*term ends January 2026*)
Rebekah Feigh (*term ends January 2027*)

Stewardship Committee

Suzanne Foster Porter
Janet Gallenstein
Cindy Belsky

MARRIAGES & DEATHS

Marriages

Nour Dean Anakar & Mimi Annette Mayer
Bill Campbell & Nicole Inman
Cole Hilger & Harley Galbasini
Derek Christopher Lofing & Judith Annette Orrick

*We bless thy holy name for all thy servants
departed this life in thy faith and fear;
beseeching thee to grant them continual growth in thy love and service;
and to give us grace so to follow the good examples of all Thy Saints,
that with them we may be partakers of thy Heavenly Kingdom.
Grant this our prayer, O Father, for Jesus Christ's sake,
our only Mediator and Advocate.
Amen*

Allen Conrad
Lynn Dunham
Richard Emerson
Danielle Hawk
Evelyn Kyle
Con Litz
Howard Lamont Martsolf, Jr.
Reed Miller
James Paronto
Lana Phelps

ST. MATTHEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
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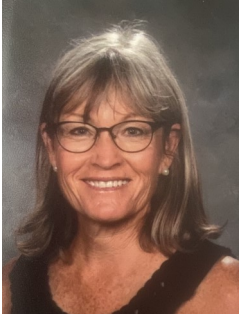
Parish Meeting called to order at 8:00 AM

- A. Reports of the Rector during the 8:00 AM and 10 AM services.
- B. Report of the Treasurer, Bruce Noble, including 2023 Finances and 2024 Budget from 9:00-9:50 AM

Parish Business Meeting Convenes – 11:15 a.m. January 28, 2021

1. Opening Prayer – Deacon Teri Shecter
2. Appoint Clerk for the Annual Meeting
3. Appoint Father Steve as presider over the meeting
4. Voting Instructions for Vestry and Convention Delegates
5. Voting (in-person voting will be included)
 - Incoming Vestry Slate
 - Affirm appointments of the Senior Warden
 - Affirm the appointment of the Junior Wardens
 - Delegates to Diocesan Convention
7. Brief Recess
8. Meeting Reconvenes
 - Senior Wardens Comments
 - Junior Wardens Comments
 - Youth and Children's Ministry Report – Becky Vroman
 - Assisting Priests Comments – Mother Jan Head
 - Deacons Report – Deacon Jamie Galbasini
 - Prayers for those who died in 2023 – Deacon Rich Paul
 - Thanks for outgoing members of the Vestry – Jason Vroman
 - Election Results – Father Steve (if needed)
 - Commissioning of Incoming Vestry, Wardens, and Convention Delegates – Mother Jan
9. Closing Remarks from Father Steve
10. Benediction and Adjourn - Deacon Rich Paul

VESTRY WARDEN APPOINTMENT



Kathy Lyn, Jr. Warden - Community Life

Kathy Lyn was born into a close knit family that lived in a small rural community in northwest Iowa. She moved to sunny Phoenix, Arizona at the age of 7 and has loved warm sunshine ever since. Kathy discovered her love of learning and teaching at an early age so became a special education and literacy acquisition professional. She spent over 40 years serving students and families in the educational field. Kathy has lived in Miami, Florida, Southern California, and the Republic of Panama before settling down in the Grand Junction area. Kathy raised 5+ children and now has 4 grandchildren. She and her husband Clarence Ross, love to play outside with hikes, bikes, kayaks, swimming, horses, and world travel adventures. Kathy loves to scuba dive and jet ski as well.

Her faith journey began as an infant. She was baptized in the Methodist church her family attended regularly. Curiosity led her to explore many denominations over the years. She was introduced to the Episcopal Church in 1987 and has always felt at home in this faith community. She originally joined St. Matthews in June of 1989. She rejoined the community in August of 2022. She is excited to serve this parish as the Jr. Warden of Community Life so she can lead the organizing of parish parties, dinners, and special events that allow everyone to deepen relationships and share some laughs.

2024 VESTRY CANDIDATE



Janet Azbell, Vestry

Janet has served as the clerk for the vestry for the past year. During this time, she has had the opportunity to see what exactly the vestry does for our church community. As a person born and raised in the catholic church, the vestry and even some Episcopalian practices are new/different/welcomed. Janet and her family started attending an Episcopal church about seven years ago. Initially, stating "We are catholic but we attend an Episcopal church" seemed accurate but has moved to, "Why yes, we are Episcopalian!"

Janet is married to Joe, and they have two sons, Jonathan (15) and Jacob (13). She attended The Ohio State University College of Nursing and works as a registered nurse. When not working or driving kids around, Janet enjoys reading, kombucha brewing, and all outdoor activities but especially mountain biking.

CONTINUING WARDEN APPOINTMENTS & DELEGATE



Jason Vroman - Sr. Warden

I am an army veteran who served from 1994-2002. I am married to Becky, our children's ministry director, and we have 5 children and 2 grandchildren. I am a Project Superintendent at Shaw Construction and have served as the Junior Warden of Building and Grounds the past 5 years here at St. Matthew's. As senior warden I will be responsible for coordinating Vestry meetings and agendas, and in the absence of our Rector, will make decisions for the church.



Heidi Plank - Jr. Warden, Building & Grounds

I have attended St Matthews for over 10 years. My daughter Rebecka, now in college, served as an Acolyte at St. Matthews up until 2 years ago. My son Oliver is active in the youth group and works in the nursery on Sundays. My husband David and I work for the Bureau of Land Management and US Forest Service respectively and moved to Grand Junction 15 years ago. My husband also runs a small business as a handyman and the two of us have remodeled 5 homes together over the years. We have two dogs and foster dogs through the pointer rescue organization. When we have down time you can find us hiking with our dogs, or working in our garden.



Rebekah Feigh - Jr. Warden, Technology & Convention Delegate

I started attending St. Matthew's on Easter Sunday in 2019, just a few days after arriving in Grand Junction in the RV for my husband Adam's travel nursing assignment at St. Mary's. Adam and I instantly fell in love with Grand Junction and with the community at St. Matt's. After renewing Adam's contract twice, we decided to officially make Grand Junction our home, selling our house in South Carolina and buying a home within walking distance of St. Matthew's. I returned to working as a social worker after taking almost two years off to be a traveling stay-at-home mom to our daughter Charleigh.

I was raised in the Southern Baptist church in South Carolina and Georgia, but felt uncomfortable with some of the beliefs of that tradition. After taking a Christian Theology course in college at the University of South Carolina and meeting Adam (a cradle-rocked Episcopalian), I began attending All Saints' Episcopal Church in Cayce, SC with Adam. The Episcopal Church's long history and connection to the past, combined with its commitment to radically loving all God's children, immediately drew me in and helped my faith to grow in new and wonderful ways. I am excited for the opportunity to serve on the Vestry at St. Matthew's as a way to give back to this amazing community and to help it continue to grow and welcome all.

CONTINUING APPOINTMENT & DELEGATE



Bruce Noble - Treasurer & Convention Delegate

Bruce is pleased to continue in the role of Treasurer for St. Matthew's, as well as a Convention Delegate. He retired from a 33-year career with the National Park Service. He and his wife Pat have been members of St. Matthew's in two stints: from 2004-2007 when Bruce was Superintendent of Colorado National Monument and again from 2016 to the present. Bruce has also served as Co-Chair of the St. Matthew's Search Committee.

RECTOR'S REPPORT

As you review this year's annual report, I hope you will take note of our ministries and pay attention to the members that are leading them. My initial response when I consider the things that happen at St. Matt's is to ask, "how do we do all of this stuff?" My report is just a snapshot of the good things that are happening at St. Matthew's, and I am so thankful for the passion and witness of our laity that offer so much of their time, talent, and treasure to church work, as well as the work of the church in the world. I am amazed weekly at the enthusiasm and support that you show one another as you work together and share the love of Christ with each other and our neighbors. Thank you for your openness, your faithfulness, and your willingness to do hard things for each other and for the world.

Christ's Peace,
Father Steve

Current strengths:

Solid income base. The congregation is hovering around \$500,000 in annual income, although this won't be sustainable in the long term without some significant investment and growth.

Good financial controls and budgeting. The parish has been able to manage its expenditures for the last few years. There have been cuts in personnel and other expenses to offset rising property and health insurance premiums, and higher maintenance costs. Bruce Noble serves as the parish treasurer, and he convenes a finance committee that reviews our financial records and reports. Bruce and the finance committee raise important questions when expenses seem out of line and they work hard to encourage fiscal responsibility.

Stable children and youth ministries. Both the youth ministry and children's ministry program have good leadership and solid participation. Becky Vroman is the director of Christian formation for children and youth. She serves part time, although her position continues to grow and she takes on more responsibilities year after year. St. Matthew's uses Godly Play as our curriculum for the younger children, and it is well received. Youth ministry is led by Becky and Deacon Jamie Galbasini, and has solid programming and attendance each week. Vacation Bible School grows from year to year and there is a high volunteer participation from our adults and youth members.

Wardens and Vestry—Jason Vroman, Janette Deagle, Rebekah Feigh, and Heidi Plank have been excellent leaders and care deeply about St. Matt's. As Janette steps down, I'm very excited that Kathy Lyn has agree to step into her role. All the wardens want to see the parish grow and are open to new possibilities and opportunities. Kevin Bouwhuis is completing his term on the vestry. He has been a faithful and dedicated member despite some serious back issues over the past 18 months. He is a great advocate for the ministry at St. Matt's and will continue serving as an usher and in the kitchen. Janet Azbell is stepping into Kevin's seat and has already shown an interest in the leadership of the parish, serving as the secretary to the vestry in 2023. Sandy Moore and Rebekah Feigh completed terms of other members of the vestry, and will now be elected to full terms of office.

Staff—Beth Fisher stepped down as office manager at the end of 2023. She has served faithfully for many years at St. Matthew's, but she is now focusing on her growing accounting business here in Grand Junction. I appreciate her years of dedicated service and generous spirit to the people of St. Matt's. Thankfully, Desiree Bougeaux has stepped into the role of office manager and continues to serve as the rector's secretary. She has served as parish secretary for 10 years, and is quickly learning how to do her job as Office Manager. She is well received by the parishioners and understands her job is also a ministry. She takes extra initiative and has become a stakeholder in the vision of St. Matt's. Becky Vroman serves as Minister for Children and Youth. She is very creative and has a great work ethic and our programs have grown through her efforts (see Stable children and youth ministries above).

Clergy—From the mid 90s until last year, the parish has had at least a priest and an active deacon serving at St. Matt's. For most of that time the parish had a rector and an associate priest. Currently, St. Matt's has a full time rector and a 1/4 time priest associate. All of the rest of the work of the clergy at St. Matt's is done by non-stipendiary (no salary) and retired clergy. When I arrived at St. Matt's, there was one active deacon (The Reverend Rich Paul) serving on the staff and a full time associate priest (The Reverend Laura Stephenson). Pastor Laura accepted a call and moved to Louisiana shortly after I arrived. Deacon Rich continues to serve at St. Matt's and he is passionate about pastoral care, supports many of our outreach ministries, and leads our efforts to bring Education for Ministry (EfM) back to St. Matt's. The members of St. Matt's have an expectation of clergy being available, and thankfully, The Reverend Jan Head has joined the staff as a part time associate (1/4 time) and focuses on creating spaces for growing spiritual practices and for caring for one another, especially the aging members of the parish. The Reverend Emil Belsky is retired but volunteers his time convening Christian formation opportunities and serving liturgically when needed. The Reverend Teri Shecter has joined the staff as a deacon, and serves the diocese as a the regional missionary for the Southwest Region. She has a passion for creation care and organizes spay and neuter clinics to the Navaho Nation during the year. The Reverend Charlotte Shepic, a retired deacon, joined our clergy team during the pandemic and serves as part of our Christian formation team. She is a spiritual director and loves to meet with individuals and small groups to explore spiritual practices and leads a monthly enneagram group at St. Matt's. The Reverend Jamie Galbasini was ordained a deacon in June and is working as a hospital chaplain at Community Hospital and youth leader at St. Matt's. Our hope is to transition Jamie to a college chaplain position in the future. In late 2023, The Reverend Nick Mayer decided to step aside as a weekly Bible Study leader after many years of service. I am very thankful for his enthusiasm for the Bible and work among the people of St. Matt's for these many years. St. Matt's has a creative and collaborative team of clergy, and we love serving together and loving the people of St. Matthew's and Grand Junction.

Postulant for Holy Orders and Aspirants for Ministry—Suzanne Foster-Porter was accepted as a Postulant to the Priesthood and Nicki Inman-Campbell was accepted as a Postulant to the Diaconate by Bishop Kym in the fall of 2023. Suzanne hopes to enter seminary in the Fall of 2025 and Nicki will begin her diaconal formation in 2024. Please keep Suzanne and Nicki in your prayers. Gabriel Gordon decided to pursue Holy Orders in another diocese, and declined an invitation by Bishop Kym to attend BACUM in the fall of 2023. Gabe enrolled in the graduate school at Marquette University and Gabe and Hannah moved to Marquette, Wisconsin in the fall. Derek Lofing enrolled at The School of Theology at the University of the South to study church history, and Derek and Annette moved to Sewanee in the fall.

Music Ministry—Katie Walters is our new choirmaster and has been at St. Matt's for six months following the retirement of Dr. Richard Morgan. She sees her work as a ministry of the parish and she is working hard to learn her role. She is making good progress and is well received by the members of the parish. My hope is she will help us move in some new directions musically, and I believe she can be successful at it once she establishes herself in the church. Sandy Moore and Robbie Breaux continue to share the role of pianist/organist and both are excellent musicians and committed to their role in serving the choir and congregation during worship. Additionally, John and Christie Hatch have offered their gifts in contemporary worship music, and are now regularly participating in leading worship at St. Matt's. We are currently without a bell choir director, but we are looking for someone to fill this role in 2024.

Investments—St. Matt's has investments over \$290,000 with The Colorado Episcopal Foundation, another \$26,000 with Fidelity Investments, as well as other smaller investments in a few other accounts. Additionally, \$140,000 of our General Fund has been moved to a interest bearing account at Alpine Bank. For a full accounting, see Bruce Noble's Treasurer's Report.

All are Welcome—St. Matt's is one of the few congregations in Grand Junction that has a calling and commitment to the full participation in worship and leadership of Christians that have been historically excluded from participation in the church, including people that are lesbian, gay, or transgender. Many of St. Matt's members desire to work in areas of racial reconciliation and social justice, and participate regularly in poverty initiatives. The parish is committed to outreach, and our church building and pavilion are open for use by our members and our neighbors for community and group meetings, educational events, and non-profit fundraisers at no charge to these groups (except compensating parish staff that are asked to do extra tasks outside normal business hours).

Challenges

St. Matt's is an aging congregation although we have seen an influx of new members, both younger families, as well as older couples, have joined St. Matt's since the pandemic. Continuing to support our ministries for Children and Youth, as well as creating new ministry opportunities and supports for our aging members, will help St. Matthew's to continue to grow and flourish.

St. Matt's hovers with an ASA (Average Sunday Attendance) between 150-210 people. The newer members of the congregation are far less likely to be regular in attendance, and some families with children and youth participate in the those ministries, but rarely attend worship. Connecting visitors and newcomers to our worshipping community for the long term has been difficult at times, and we are working hard through our Connection Committee to create spaces to connect newcomers and visitors to our community.

Physical plant and fiscal shortfalls—the buildings at St. Matt's are beautiful and well maintained, but the beauty and maintenance diverts resources from programming and ministry. Our building is now over 20 years old, and it is time to due some refresh and remodeling, as well as look ahead to new opportunities. The possibilities include adding solar panels to the building, creating a pet memorial garden, adding an additional columbarium, and building an addition for more gathering spaces, storage, or ministry expansion. Thankfully, a well planned pledge drive led by Suzanne Foster-Porter will help balance our budget in 2024. The downside is we

have had to combine two staff positions and not renew our college missioner position to bring the budget in-line with the fiscal realities. There exists a significant tension between the maintenance of the physical plant and the funding of mission and ministry at St. Matt's. Unless there is significant investment and growth, the parish will have to choose between keeping the physical plant maintained or funding mission and ministry.

Opportunities

My hope is we all recognize the potential of St. Matt's and will invest in its future. Even though St. Matt's seems vital and it is currently financially secure, we must continue to infuse more capital and energy to keep the parish growing into the future. Without capital investment and continual renewal the parish will decline quickly. I hope the members of the parish, as well as the diocese leadership, will realize the opportunity to do some parish development work at St. Matt's. The end of the pandemic and the embrace of change gives a perfect window to propose a new future at St. Matt's. Please do not hesitate to share with me or other leaders of our parish your hopes and dreams for St. Matthew's, and help us live into the future that God has for all of us.

PRIEST ASSOCIATE'S REPORT

It hardly seems possible that I've been on staff at St. Matt's for almost two years now. The time has gone so very quickly. But that's what happens when you're having fun. We work hard at St. Matt's to serve each other and the community, but there is also a lot of joy that seems to infuse everything we do. I remain extremely grateful to be a part of it!

2023 brought opportunities to examine and revise different areas of our lives. Last spring I led a series of instructional sessions on decluttering and follow up sessions to provide ongoing support and coaching. Lyn Fraser and Reenie Neal facilitated a series we called Continuing the Conversation which explored the challenges and blessings we encounter through our life span.

Although it might be considered "just part of the job" of clergy, the efforts that go into the special seasons of Easter, Advent, and Christmas are significant, and not just for the paid staff. Were it not for the dedicated service of our deacons, altar guild, hospitality staff, property committees, child care workers, ushers, and other volunteers, none of what is so special about these times would be possible. I'm proud of the rich liturgical experiences we offer at St. Matt's!

Last fall we offered the second annual Women's Retreat at Cathedral Ridge. It was a great time to be together and play with expressing our thoughts and experiences of God through art. Our retreat facilitator returned to Grand Junction in September to lead a one day workshop, which also used art to explore our personal theologies.

It was a privilege to participate in two trips to Navajo Land, assisting with spay and neuter surgeries and vaccinations of the overabundance of dogs and cats on the reservation. We also conducted a blessing of the animals at St. Matt's in observance of the Feast of St. Francis.

December brought the winter solstice and we again offered a time of contemplative prayer and reflection followed by a candlelight labyrinth walk. This service, along with the blessing of the animals, become entry points for people who might not think they want to join us on Sunday mornings. And then we see them in church!

After twenty-two months of working as an Associate Priest at St. Matt's, I am more grateful than ever that I came to be a part of the wonderful ministry of this church. People probably think I'm just saying this, but it absolutely true. This is the best, most enjoyable, most meaningful job I have ever had. Other jobs have had some elements of that triad, but never that combination. I am truly grateful to serve!

Mtr. Jan Head, Priest Associate

SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

I have been honored to serve you this last year as your Senior Warden and I thank you for your trust.

We are blessed to have amazing members serving on the Vestry who are dedicated to trying their best to make good decisions for all who call St. Matthew's their church home. Thank you to our vestry and staff for putting in those long hours behind the scenes. It has been a busy year and much has been accomplished. There are so many things that we have been involved with here at St. Matthew's, but here are some that stand out to me. We have been blessed this last year with so many Clergy and gaining a new Deacon. St. Matthew's hosted Convention this year. Bishop Michael Curry spoke to some of our kids on the youth trip to Maine. The youth that went on that trip came back and said that trip was life changing. The summer concert series was amazing again. Richard retired and we gained a new Music Director, Katie to name a few.

To our Volunteers that serve in so many capacities, thank you. We would not be able to do all we do without you.

To our Outreach team, thank you. Your commitment and dedication enrich the lives you serve. Thank you to our Stewardship team. Your enthusiasm and heartfelt approach are very appreciated. Thank you to the finance committee, the audit committee, the altar guild, the ushers, the safety committee, and everyone behind the scenes. Anyone who has an idea, opinion, or comment about the church is always welcome to contact me, write a note, text, or email me with how you think we could improve St. Matthew's. Thank you all for your continued support and it has been a pleasure, an honor, to serve as your Senior Warden. God bless you all.

Jason D. Vroman, Senior Warden

JUNIOR WARDEN'S REPORT - BUILDING & GROUNDS

As the Jr. Warden of Building and Grounds for St. Matthew's, it is my responsibility to oversee the property and buildings of the church. I am extremely grateful for the volunteers who have shown up to help with the cleaning of the grounds and the many other events where members jump in-always ready to lend a hand. No one could do this job without the support and assistance from the congregation.

This year we have installed new signs at both parking lot entrances, updated the entry key card system, and removed a dead tree as well as a lot of debris and shrubbery from around the church grounds, and installed new exterior lighting. Future plans include a more permanent solution to the parking lot lighting, a refresh of the flooring and paint in the church, and replacing the water pump cover on 27 1/2 Rd.

I would like to thank our vestry and staff for putting in those long hours behind the scenes. Please feel free to contact me with any ideas you might have on ways to improve St. Matthew's. Thank you all for your continued support and it is a pleasure to serve as your Junior Warden of Building & Grounds.

Heidi Plank, Jr. Warden

JUNIOR WARDEN'S REPORT - COMMUNITY LIFE

It was another busy (and fun) year for those involved in event planning for the parish. Members of the congregation were treated to a Southern feast including homemade beignets for the Mardi Gras dinner, an annual favorite. Other major events included the Easter brunch, the Fall Kickoff/Chili Cook-off, and the picnic. One special occurrence this year was a reception for Dr. Richard Morgan, who retired as the choral director. Thanks to Cat Montgomery for orchestrating this (pun intended) and putting on a beautiful tribute to Richard.

The centerpieces in the gathering space are designed by Sue Emerson. They provide a welcoming atmosphere to all. The decorations thoughtfully reflect the seasons of the Church and are changed out frequently.

Coffee hour occurs after both the 8:00 and 10:00 services and the Community Life team handles the later service. Generous volunteers bring in treats to keep this activity ongoing. The first Sunday of every month is Ice Cream Sunday, and on the third Sunday, the Outreach Team brings in doughnuts as a fundraising activity.

It takes people willing to step up and take an active role in organizing and preparing for these things, and I would like to thank those who contribute snacks to make coffee hour a pleasant experience, as well as Sue and Dave, Kevin and Sarah, Jason and Becky, and the many others who make our events successful. It has been a pleasure serving you, and I wish all the best for the incoming Junior Warden.

Janette Deagle, Junior Warden for Community Life

JUNIOR WARDEN'S REPORT - TECHNOLOGY

It's been a great year for technology at St. Matthew's. We've settled into a good groove with our Media Ministry team to run technology during services. The Spirit of the Valley 5K was a huge success with the move to online sign-ups through RunSignUp.com, and we are hopeful that the 2024 race will be an even greater success with donations and sponsorships through the same website.

In 2024, I hope to add a few additional members to our Media Ministry team so that we can have 4-5 pairs able to run services, which will help us be able to cover a full month before the same pair needs to cover another service. I also hope to work with Becky and clergy on developing a "brand" identity for St. Matthew's to help us be more consistent with our public outreach efforts. Once a clear brand has been established, I hope to increase our online outreach on social media and our website.

Rebekah Feigh, Jr. Warden - Technology

TREASURER'S REPORT

Let me start my Treasurer's report with the good news. The St. Matthew's Foundation Fund grew by \$35,519 in 2023, more than making up for losses experienced in 2022. In addition, we are now keeping most of our church funds in an interest-bearing money market account that is bringing revenue into the church. We also signed up more church members for the City Market rewards program so we are earning money for the church through the simple act of buying groceries, despite the discontinuation of the Safeway rewards program and the Amazon Smiles program.

On the other hand, we had a bit of a down year when it comes to our parish revenue stream. In 2022, a very strong finish to the year in December allowed us to just break even for the entire year. We did not have the same good fortune in 2023. In fact, our expenditures were greater than our income in December 2023 and we finished the year with an \$8,300 deficit.

What do we do when we overspend our budget for the year? Quite simply, the overall financial strength of St. Matthew's means that we had an ample amount of money in the bank that allowed us to cover the deficit. Although we do not want our annual expenditures to exceed our income every year, we can bear it every now and then.

I still support our budget for 2023, despite the deficit. We knew heading into the year that our pledge income would be down, but we also knew that the church was growing and we wanted to put forward a budget that would enhance the growth of the church. We did that and I think it was the right thing to do.

Looking to the future, 2024 begins with great promise. We had an extremely successful stewardship campaign in the fall of 2023 and we have more money in pledge commitments to the church than we've had since 2019. We have also tried to be more realistic in the spending expectations factored into our 2024 budget. With strong revenue projections and a budget grounded in a solid understanding of our actual expenses, 2024 has all the earmarks of a strong financial year for St. Matthew's.

Among my goals as your Treasurer in 2024, I'd like to tap into the expertise of the Colorado Episcopal Foundation to organize some training in various ways that we can give to the church. Of course we want the church to stand on a strong financial foundation, but we also want our church members to give in ways that are most advantageous to them in terms of tax consequences and their overall financial well-being. I hope we can explore some creative ways of giving to the church through Qualified Charitable Donations and other channels that may not be familiar to all our church members.

Finally, I want to thank our Finance Committee Members for their ongoing service to the church. In 2023, committee members included Sharon Conrad, Janet Gallenstein, Bev Lampley, Ann Hayes, Dale Moore, Senior Warden Jason Vroman, and of course Father Steve. Most of all, I want to thank all of you—the members of St. Matthew's—for your ongoing generosity and your willingness to provide the funding that allows our dynamic church community to fulfill its mission to serve God, our parish, and our community.

Bruce Noble, Treasurer

ACOLYTES

Acolytes, or servers, assist the celebrant at the altar during the Eucharist. The goals of this ministry are to provide a meaningful ministry, especially for the youth, to have youth and adults serve together as equals, and to prepare youth to serve in other lay positions such as altar LEMs. Serving as an acolyte is meant to be spiritual, educational, and fun. The acolytes are taught about the liturgy as they serve. A progressive training program is in place that pairs less experienced acolytes with mentors for on the job training. Currently the acolytes assist both at the altar and at the distribution of the sacraments. Acolytes are also available to assist at other services.

James V. Sidwell, Acolyte Master

ADULT SPIRITUAL FORMATION

A certain spiritual hunger has been noted at St. Matt's. To address this, in September of 2023 a new endeavor in adult spiritual formation was inaugurated with our Clergy Coffee Hour--presentations generally but not exclusively by clergy--during the hour between services on Sunday mornings. Topics were many and varied; some suggested by members of the congregation on areas of spiritual interest, some selected by clergy. These sessions were well attended with attendance ranging from 15 to 25 participants per session. We may well have to find more space for these sessions. A sampling of just some of the engaging topics can be found below.

- Episcopal Church Polity
- The Structure of the Eucharist
- Changing the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed (addressed again in January, 2024)
- Sacramental Confession
- The Church of the Future
- The Psalms as the Prayer of the Church
- The Formation of the Gospels
- The Knowledge & Consciousness of Jesus
- Mystics & Mysticism

In addition to these presentations on Sunday mornings, a series on the insights offered by the Enneagram have taken place on select Sundays after the 10:00 service. Through most of the 2023, Fr. Nick moderated a Bible Study on Tuesday mornings. With Fr. Nick drawing back, Fr. Steve began a study in the fall on the Gospel of Mark. These have all been well attended. Also, parish retreats offer the possibility of an extended time away from the busyness and obligations of everyday life. We have tried to meet this need by providing these special opportunities for spiritual growth:

- A Men's Retreat using Richard Rohr's book *Falling Upward* on February 2nd-5th at St. Benedict's Retreat Center, Snowmass
- A Women's Retreat at Cathedral Ridge
- An Art & Theology Workshop here at St. Matt's
- An Advent Mini Retreat, *Living in Liminal Time*, here at St. Matt's on the morning of Saturday, December 9th

Suggestions and new ideas for spiritual growth are always welcome.

Fr. Emil

ALTAR GUILD (ST. MARTHA'S)

St. Martha's Altar Guild

God's Housekeepers

There are a faithful few who work unseen
and unobtrusively give their best;
Who spend their lives perfecting little things
which often pass unnoticed by the rest.
Theirs are the hands that dust the Altar rails
and change the flowers and keep the linen fair.
They sweep the aisle with cheerful reverence
and polish brass with a murmured prayer.
They are the quiet ones who freely give their time
and thought and love with glad accord;
Who softly tread the byways of resolve,
and share the peace of God for their reward.

The members of St. Martha's Altar Guild are basically the stage managers for the Rector. We are divided into four teams that are in charge one week a month; with a team assigned one of the fifth weekends of the year. We oversee all the utensils, the hangings (which are changed to coordinate with the season of the church calendar), the bread and wine, the linens, and the candles.

We set the stage, so to speak, for every worship service, setting out everything needed whether it is for the regular service, or for baptisms, weddings, or funerals.

The linens are reverently washed and ironed. All utensils used during the service are washed after every service. Brass is polished once a month by designated teams.

We decorate for Christmas, Palm Sunday and Easter. Covering the crosses with appropriate colors during Lent.

Come and join this ministry to our Church!! We have both men and women in the Guild. So anyone who is interested should contact a member of the Altar Guild for more information.

BREWERY THEOLOGY

Brewery Theology was established several years ago by Gabe Gordon and others, and has grown into a vital ministry at St. Matt's. When the Gordons and the Lofings moved to Wisconsin and Tennessee this past fall, Dr. John Hatch, Father Steve Hood, and Dr. Richard Morgan took over the facilitation of Brewery Theology. Christie Hatch took over the promotion and organization. Currently, we have a good crowd of regulars coming each week with a few others flowing in and out on occasion. This ministry continues to prove important to our common life, and gives a forum for those that want to discuss theology in a curious and accepting atmosphere.

General Information

The purpose of Brewery Theology is to provide a safe place for spiritual seekers, including Episcopalians, Christians from different church traditions, people of other faiths, and "Nones," to

engage in thoughtful conversations about the Christian faith in an informal setting that celebrates the goodness of life, including enjoyment of craft beer. We meet every Thursday at 7:30 at a brewpub (or a home on occasion). Currently we are meeting at Kanah Creek on 12th Street near CMU. Each week either a podcast episode or an article will be sent out for that upcoming Thursday. Materials used in Brewery Theology 2.0 will feature a diversity of Christian voices and traditions, including Episcopalian/Anglican. Those who miss their "homework" for the week are welcome to come anyway and will not be shamed or given a bad letter grade. The only expectation of participants is to enjoy one another's company, listen graciously, and engage with differing perspectives on the discussion topics honestly and respectfully.

We hope you will join us!

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

I'd like to start my ministry report by thanking those who work each week with our children: Anna Claire Hood, Aubrey Mears, Oliver Plank, Ally Thurstin, Terri Vair, and Abby Vroman. Each of our children's ministry members not only works to provide secure, nurturing, and fun care to the children who attend our Sunday programming but also takes time to get to know each child who enters our building.

Children continue to lector during the Ice Cream Sunday service. I am thankful to the congregation for their patience and encouragement as our children bravely take on leadership roles in the church. During the first Sunday of the month, children attend Children's Chapel, participating in a shortened version of a Eucharist service. In Children's Chapel, kids gain an understanding of liturgical actions and the order of events in a typical Eucharist service: the calls and responses, a reading from the lectionary, the prayers of the people, the confession of sin, the peace, the Our Father, and the dismissal.

We have been incorporating Micah 6:8 "Do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God" into each of our Sunday lessons. Through moments of wonder and exploration, we make connections between bible stories and mending actions to discover how, even as children, we can all be agents of change in our world while we live out our faith in our daily lives. The vision for the nursery in 2024 includes consistency in Bible story integration while continuing to provide quality childcare.

As a congregation, we take seriously the protection of our youth and work diligently to create safe environments for them. This year, thanks to some hard work by the Diocese, Deacon Rich and I were able to offer both online and in-person training. These Safe Church courses provide policies for ministries with children, youth, and vulnerable adults. They also ensure that St. Matt's is a welcoming and safe place for all who enter our building. I am very pleased to say that our church has 48 members who are current in their Safe Church training! Not only are the Sunday school leaders and nursery staff trained in protecting our children, but we also have numerous watchful eyes committed to their protection.

Jerusalem Marketplace Vacation Bible School was a blast this year. It took numerous volunteers to put on VBS, and I am grateful for every single one of you! June 24th- 28th, 2024: Maker Fun Factory VBS is back by popular demand. Maker Fun Factory was a favorite of our youth group. They are looking forward to designing the set, leading our children, and sharing the fun they once experienced. If you have never volunteered for VBS, you are missing out. Please consider joining us for the week, or for a day, while you teach your skills to a younger generation.

In 2023, our children and youth once again attended camp at Cathedral Ridge. Friendships were made, and others were strengthened. Camps are offered for rising 3rd through 12th grades. Thanks to the Southwest Scholarship fund, our children have had the opportunity to attend camp at little to no cost. If your child thinks they want to attend camp this summer and would like to apply for a scholarship, I will need to know that by April 1st as this year I must provide an estimate of the scholarships needed. Again, this is an estimate and not a hard yes. I will once again be leading the 3rd-5th grade camp in 2024 and will be able to provide transportation for this group. Unfortunately, I will not be available to provide transportation for the middle and high school camps. Camp dates are as follows:

Rising third through fifth- July 7th-12th
Rising sixth through eighth- July 14th-19th
Rising ninth through twelfth- July 21st- 26th

I am so thankful to have the congregation's support and outpouring of love. We are looking forward to the fun ahead in 2024!

Becky Vroman, Director of Children's Ministry

COFFEE HOUR

The gracious volunteers for the 8:00 AM Service Coffee Hour, who serve on a rotational basis, are Katherine Bowden, Ken & Susan Brownlee, Tanya Davis, Anne Kearl, Deb McLaughlin, Laura Mockler, Rita Paronto, Peggy Pretti and Judy Schneider. Katie Zollner is available as a substitute. Many thanks to Marge Brown and Lucia Webster for past service. Thanks to all for faithful service in this ministry. A 6-month assignment roster is posted on the church kitchen freezer.

Respectfully submitted,
Judy Schneider / Coordinator

CONNECT COMMITTEE

The Connect Committee is a new group that is looking at how both new and current members can get to know each other better. Stay tuned for some fun, easy opportunities to get to know others on a more personal basis.

Marty McDanel & Jan DeLay

DEACON'S REPORT

Welcome to the annual report from the Tsunami of Deacons!

This year we have added the Rev. Deacon Jamie Galbasini to our ranks and welcomed Nikki Inman-Campbell as she enters the diaconal formation process.

It continues to be an incredible blessing for all of us to serve the people of St. Matt's, our community and our region.

You have such wonderful hearts and such giving spirits. Many of you have joined us as we help

those in need or who are marginalized (both human and non-human!). You are a people of faith, hope, and resilience and you continue to find ways to love each other, worship together, and care for each other.

Last year we began a Visting Deacons Program (VDP) with a small regional grant to cover the cost of travel. We visited many of our southwest region churches and served at the altar, preached and talked about the Diaconate.

It is hard to believe that there are only 20 active deacons in Colorado for 124 church communities. Our hope is that our presence to other churches on the Western Slope will build a greater sense of unity within the church and help educate folks on who deacons are and what we do. We also hope to encourage others to consider the diaconate as a path to serving God's creation.

This year our team of deacons is planning to expand our diaconal visits to the 8 Episcopal churches of the Navaho Nation. With the blessings of Bishop Kym and Bishop Barry (Bishop of Navaho Land), we will begin building relationships and partnering in lay leadership programs. We are excited to see where this partnership may lead us.

Deacons Teri and Jamie made several trips to the Navaho Nation to volunteer with spay/neuter clinics. They were joined by Cora and Dani Galbasini, Chip Page and Mother Jan. This outreach ministry of St. Matt's is now supported by a small regional grant to help pay for travel to and from these clinics.

Deacon Charlotte and Father Steve continue to offer regular opportunities to explore the Enneagram as a path for transformation. They hope to create community of people who are interested in learning more about themselves and those around them.

Our Outreach and Pastoral Care committees continue to reach out to those who are sick or in need (see their individual reports enclosed). They continue to feed the hungry, provide shoes and clothing to the needy, send cards, call, email, and pray for those who need comfort and support.

Our goals for 2024 are:

To meet regularly with our Tsunami of Deacons as we continue to discern our call to Gods creation

To better identify those who are sick and shut-in so no one is forgotten.

To engage with St. Matthew's House (as well as other Karis facilities) and other community outreach programs in a more meaningful way.

To look for ways that we at St. Matthew's can connect with other churches, organizations, and programs to have a more synergistic impact on those who need help in our community.

To assist the priests in worship and in adult education opportunities.

Blessings from the Tsunami of Deacons:

Jamie Galbasini

Rich Paul

Teri Shecter

Nikki Inman (Postulant to the Diaconate)

Charlotte Shepic (retired)

Judy Schneider (retired)

Pam Stewart (unassigned)

MUSIC MINISTRY

This is Katie Walters, music director at St. Matt's. Since September, I've had the privilege of working closely with the choir, who continues to impress me with their enthusiasm for singing, as well as their willingness to try new things. That I get to work with two very talented and seasoned pianists/organists as well is something I continue to be grateful for. Their guidance, as well as that of the clergy, has been invaluable to this new directorial role.

On the technical end, the choir has mostly stayed within the traditional canon of music, with the exception of some lovely offertory pieces. Moving into this new year, we will continue honoring Episcopalian musical traditions, but we'll also be experimenting more with different styles of music, as well as (hopefully) encouraging people of all ages in and out of the choir to participate musically- whether that be in the form of a vocal ensemble setting, instrumental solos, or an acoustic trio/band, etc...

I believe that parishioners like John and Christie Hatch are already leaders in this area- opening doors and making a path for others to feel inspired to share their own musical gifts. And that the choir continues to grow in members- both experienced and brand new to choral music, is deeply heartwarming and will certainly help encourage other parishioners to participate in the future. Additionally, I hope also to explore the possibility of holding a choir concert later in the year - Christmas or otherwise, as that is something the choir has expressed excitement about (and I share their enthusiasm).

There are, of course, even more possibilities with music, which is a challenging and exciting endeavor I look forward to meeting in the coming year.

Katie Walters, Music Director

OUTREACH MINISTRY

Vision: To share Jesus' love with the marginalized, unseen, and others in need.

Mission: To provide essential human needs while building relationships and transforming ourselves, our parish, and our community.

Values: Love, Respect, Compassion, Inclusion

With the support of our congregation, the Outreach team was able to serve our community in various ways. Our projects, drives, and donations provided much needed clothing, food, and supplies throughout the year and made the holidays brighter for many.

This year we conducted the following drives:

Share the Warmth for the Street Ministry

Robes and slippers for the Palisade Living Center

Food drive for the Community Food Bank

Thanksgiving dinners for 60 Chipeta families

Christmas gift cards for families, residents of the House, residents in assisted living, and a few individuals

We continue serving our community with our ongoing ministries:

- Soles for Souls shoe ministry
- Chipeta Elementary needs, including the turkeys and pies for Thanksgiving
- Monthly Stone Soup dinners
- Hygiene products for the Street Ministry
- Goodwill vouchers upon request
- Sewing project for St. Mary's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit
- PieceMakers quilting group

Recently, the Southwest Region Executive Committee awarded a \$2000 grant for our shoe ministry, which will enable us to serve adults and secondary schools, as well as the elementary schools. This year requests for shoe donations were down compared to numbers we've experienced in the past. To increase awareness, we personally visited all 39 schools in District 51 to familiarize their personnel with the program.

Stone Soup now serves a noon meal to our friends on the third Saturday of each month at the Catholic Outreach Soup Kitchen. We are in partnership with Fruita's Sacred Heart Catholic Church. It's fun sharing our ideas for menus with their team and then working side by side to make it all come together.

A new addition this year, PieceMakers is a small, but talented group of quilters who are creating quilts for "No Kid Sleeps on the Floor in Our Town." It is a part of the national organization, "Sleep in Heavenly Peace" which provides beds and linens to children who have no beds of their own. In 2023 we pieced, finished, and donated more than 40 quilts to the Central High School's chapter.

For funding the Outreach Team relies solely on contributions from the summer concert series collections and donations from individual donors. We want to thank our faithful congregation for your support with your prayers and generous donations. In 2024 we are looking forward to an even more productive year of sharing Jesus' love with those in need by expanding our ministries.

Gretchen Davis-Lubinski, Chair

PASTORAL CARE TEAM

The Pastoral Care Team is a lay-led group of parishioners who offer a caring presence to individuals and families in our community. Many of our members are Stephen Ministry trained and are official volunteers of St. Mary's. The Team's 2023 activities included:

Visits to all Episcopalians at St. Mary's hospital six days a week, including communion on Sunday. The Team aims to accompany those who seek support during the often challenging time when medical care is needed.

Visits and regular greeting cards to those in our church community who are unable to regularly attend worship. The team works to keep people connected to their church home and to the outside world.

Healing prayer during worship service. This lay-administered ministry is available during communion to anyone who would like extra prayer for healing.

Support to the St. Mary's No One Dies Alone program in which volunteers sit with a dying person whose loved ones are unable to be with them in their final hours. This ministry is for people of any (or no) faith tradition.

Also in 2023, we honored long time Pastoral Care Team leaders—Jim Sidwell, Sue Sidwell, and Marjorie Suedekum—for their role in founding of the group and their long-time leadership. Thank you!

If you know someone in our community who could benefit from a visit at any hospital or care facility, please let us know. St. Mary's hospital is kind enough to give us the names of Episcopalians in the hospital, but other facilities do not do this for us. If a visit is needed, please do not hesitate to call a clergy member, the church office, or our Pastoral Care Team lead Suzanne Foster Porter at (970) 312-7179 or sfosterporter@zoho.com. We appreciate the opportunity to serve you and our community.

Suzanne Foster Porter, Team Leader

PLEDGE CAMPAIGN / STEWARDSHIP - GOD'S WORK, OUR HANDS

Congratulations St. Matthew's! As you may already know, we met our stewardship goal for 2024. More than 110 households in our community pledged during this season (89 paper and 16 online), and we are grateful for each one. Thank you again, pledgers, for providing important information on what you plan to give in 2024!

As of January 9, 2024 we had more than \$417,000 pledges for 2024. This is 102% of our pledge goal of \$410,000. We expect an additional \$80,000 from givers of record and \$10,000 from loose plate to enable our total budget of \$500,000 for 2024.

As we move into 2024, we invite you to determine how you plan to give. Giving options and details are listed on our website: <https://www.stmatthewsgj.org/giving-to-st-matthews>. Whether it is by check, online back transfer, PayPal, or another method, determining your giving approach will help ensure St. Matthew's financial stability.

If you haven't yet had an opportunity to pledge, we encourage you to do so. There are pledge cards by the front door of the church that you can mail in or drop by the office. Alternatively, feel free to submit your pledge in the online form.

A special thank you to everyone who made the stewardship season happen. Our volunteer team of more than 15 people helped with various aspects of planning and designing of our Stewardship season. This included designing the logo, helping with the chili cook off, making banners, sharing ministry minutes during service, tracking pledges, helping with the website, and more. The team will meet in February to celebrate and debrief our work, so that we can continue to improve our stewardship effort. If you are interested in helping with this ongoing effort, please feel free to contact Suzanne Foster Porter at sfosterporter@zoho.com and 970 312 7179.

Your time, talent, and treasure in support of your community is much appreciated. Thank you again for being a community where the holy spirit dwells, where God's love is shared, and where we grow in faith. We on the Stewardship Team truly appreciate your personal commitment to the ministry here at St. Matthew's.

Suzanne Foster Porter, Stewardship Team Lead

PRAYER CHAIN

“When two or more are gathered together, there I will be.” God’s promise that he will hear our prayers.

The Prayer Chain group prays daily over the list of names that we have been given. Lifting up each one and putting their name in God’s hands. He knows the needs of each of us but sometimes we need the extra boost of knowing that others are praying for same issue too.

We on the Prayer Chain have the honor of intercession for those in need of prayer. We contact one another once a month on the second Wednesday to go over the list and edit it with any updates for those on the list, and to add the requests that have been given over the month since the last meeting date.

We welcome anyone who would like to be a prayer warrior. If you are interest in this ministry, please contact Deb McLaughlin at bildeb@bresnsn.net; Margy Palo at margpalo31@gmail.com or Merrilyn Simpkins at merrilyn41@gmail.com

Merrilyn Simpkins, Team Member

SAFETY TEAM

The Safety Team addresses preparation and training for Medical, Fire, Security and Weather events.

The “St. Matthew’s Episcopal Church Disaster Preparedness Plan” was approved by the Vestry in June.

A planned Medical Drill for the fall was cancelled as St. Matthew’s experienced several actual medical events for which clergy/parishioner response was timely and appropriate.

Thank you to Dave Emerson, Sarah Bouwhuis and John Hesslink for service on the Safety Team. Thanks to Heidi and David Plank for installing solar lights by the parking spaces adjacent to the Pavilion.

A Safety Suggestion Box is available in the gathering space.

Respectfully submitted,
Don Schneider / Safety Chair

ST. MATTHEW’S SHUTTLE

St. Matthew's Episcopal Shuttle is a community outreach ministry of St. Matthew’s. It provides a no-cost service for those in our community without transportation. This ministry was started in 2000.

The ministry serves the homeless in conjunction with Homeward Bound, the women’s and children’s shelter on 29 Road, the Day Center and the Grand Valley Catholic Outreach. In addition, the Shuttle takes residents of St. Martin’s and St. Benedict’s to Walmart to shop for groceries.

The Shuttle provides rides from the homeless shelter to the Day Center, Catholic Outreach, Social Services, Social Security, Job Services, medical appointments, jobs, as well as serving the residents of St. Martin's and St. Benedict's.

For the last few years, Shuttle service has been available every week on Thursday from 8:00am to 12:00am. A total of 740 rides were provided in 2023.

The GOOD NEWS is that Shuttle service is now provided two days a week on Mondays and Thursdays from 8:00am to 12:00am. We are able to resume service two days a week because we now have three new drivers and one new rider. There is a possibility of another driver and rider as well. The Ministry is very grateful for these new Volunteers and would welcome more.

Linda Jameson, Coordinator

SPIRIT OF THE VALLEY 5K

I want to thank everyone for their help in making the eleventh annual Spirit of the Valley 5k- Run, Walk, 'n Roll a success. One of the team's goals for 2023 was to recruit more volunteers. And as is typical- when asked, St. Matt's shows up. We had tons of people at the event, welcoming and showing hospitality to our sponsors and runners. We raised \$3,500 for the VA and \$500 for the Latimer House. Many thanks to Mobility Driven, Lizard Analytical Laboratories, Mountain West Dermatology Aesthetics, Charles Breaux, Matco Tools, Doehling Law, Super 8, RRGJCO, Performance Plumbing and Heating, Lunsford Manufacturing, Moore's Auto Body, Allergy and Asthma, and USIC for sponsoring the 2023 race.

When the 5k began, the hope was to train team captains to run different portions of the event. Once again our team captains were Sue and Dave Emerson, Casey Wren, Rebekah Feigh, Jamie Galbasini, Sarah and Kevin Bouwhuis, and Jason and Becky Vroman. Each of these captains have been serving the committee for multiple years. Our goal for 2024 is to have each team captain train a new captain to take their place before retiring from their position. If you are interested in serving, this is a fun and rewarding ministry. Not only is the 5k able to fund the VA Recreational Therapy Program and financially contribute to the Latimer House, but it's also an opportunity for community members of all abilities and activity levels to enjoy a day of competition, food, and music.

Becky Vroman, Coordinator

ST. MATTHEW'S FOUNDATION AND LEGACY SOCIETY

The St. Matthew's Episcopal Church Legacy Foundation was created with legacy gifts from church members. The donations form the principal of the Foundation, which is maintained intact and invested to create income, which can then be used to support special projects at the church. Such a project in 2020 was installation of the Loop hearing assistance system (~\$25,000). The donated principal of the Foundation is \$229,575. The total Foundation assets as of the end of 2023 were \$330,965. Any church members who would like to include the Foundation in their legacy plans can discuss it with Fr. Steve, Vestry members, or Foundation Committee members.

Chuck Breaux, Foundation Committee Chairperson

STREET MINISTRY

According to recent reports, Grand Junction's houseless population has increased by almost 43% since 2019. Only 40% of these were living at local emergency shelters, transitional housing, rapid re-housing, or permanent supportive housing. The rest of these souls are living on the streets in camps. Under these conditions, as temperatures drop, the risk for loss of life and limb becomes acute. St. Matthew's Street Ministry is primarily concerned with ensuring that those who are camping in our neighborhoods due to lack of housing have the resources they need to prevent death or severe injury from frostbite, hypothermia, infection, and illness. This work is most successful when those providing tangible goods are able to build relationships with those we serve. This is the primary goal of the Street Ministry.

This year, Street Ministry has continued working directly with those experiencing a lack of housing to provide them with essential items needed to safely navigate the cold of winter and heat of summer. When entering this cold season, we made bulk purchases based on prior years' orders and spending. This year, thanks to support for St. Matthew's Outreach Team, around \$1,000 was expended on hygiene products. Through another generous donation, over \$900 has been spent this winter to prevent loss of life and limb, including gloves, socks, candles, hot hands, propane, and mylar rescue blankets. Distribution of these goods, along with hygiene and harm reduction supplies, homemade brownies, and warm hugs, takes place every Saturday during The Feed at Emerson Park. Thank you to everyone at St. Matthew's for your generosity and support.

Nicki Inman, Street Ministry

USHERS

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all the members of the Usher Ministry for their flexibility and adaptability to meet the needs of our congregation while supporting worship services during 2023. Many changes occurred to help facilitate maximum safety for everyone. What an awesome and dedicated group of folks!

Often, the ushers are the first people new visitors meet when they come to St. Matthew's. This gives us an opportunity to make a good first impression, to help them with anything that we can, and to welcome them to St. Matthew's!

As always, we are happy to welcome new members into the Usher Ministry group and can always use more help. If you're interested in serving in this wonderful ministry please contact Dave Emerson at zianutz3@gmail.com. You'll be surprised to see how easy and fulfilling it is to serve as an usher.

Dave Emerson, Head Usher

WELCOME MINISTRY/GREETERS

The Welcome Ministry reaches out to visitors and new people through cards and greeting people at Coffee Hour. The feedback from new people is that we are a welcoming and friendly church. That comes from ALL of the congregation making an effort to welcome visitors and new people! Thank you for your warm welcome to our guests and new members!

The greatest need of the Welcome Ministry is for a new Coordinator and one or two additional Greeters. If you are interested in either of these roles, please contact a clergy person.

Marty McDanel

WINE, WOMEN, JESUS & DINNER

WWJD (Wine, Women, Jesus and Dessert) is an open social group for women and their friends. The only agenda is fun and friendship. Simple menus are cooked by 3 or 4 members each month we are able to have in-person gatherings. Wine and non-alcoholic beverages are served. A charge of \$10 at the door is collected to defray food costs. Usually there is a surplus by the end of the year. These funds are donated to groups supporting women in need.

Sue Van Voorhees, Coordinator

YOUTH MINISTRY

In 2023, we welcomed about seven new youth members to our group! The youth group continues to meet on Sundays after the 10 am service for lunch, social time, and lessons; however, it was decided that breaking up the group occasionally helped Deacon Jamie and me to conduct the meetings in a way that met the needs of both our middle schoolers and high schoolers. The middle and high school alternate weeks and come together at least once a month for fun and for a chance for our high school kids to mentor their younger peers.

A highlight from this year was when four of our youth traveled to Maryland for the EYE conference (The Episcopal Youth Event.) This was our first group of delegates to attend the conference. Gathering from dioceses and parishes around the world, over 1,000 Episcopal young people and their adult leaders had the opportunity to pray, play, and learn together. At the conference, our teens gained a greater understanding of their personal connection to something much bigger. They asked some tough questions about diversity, inclusion, and how they can live their Baptismal Covenant every day. They were exposed to creative music, programs, and activities showing the wide and diverse landscape of people who make up The Episcopal Church.

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The Reverend Rich Paul, Deacon
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The Reverend Jamie Galbasini, Deacon
The Reverend Emil Belsky, Assisting Clergy