

The Evangel

Stewardship 2023 Edition



St. Matthew's
Episcopal Church

Letter from the Rector



Dear St. Matthew's Members and Supporters,

Everything We Have is a Gift of God to be Shared is a call to action to each of us as followers of Jesus. Jesus showed us the way to live generously and to share our time, talent, and treasure. Jesus welcomed the outcast; he overturned the tables of the money changers in the temple; he dined with the poor and healed the sick; he taught; he forgave; and, ultimately, he gave his life so that all might have life abundant.

St. Peter writes, "Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received" (1 Peter: 4-10). Sharing our gifts is much more than what we do with our money. We are called to be kind to one another and to all living things. We are called to deal with each other honestly and to be humble. Our ministries here at St. Matthew's are empowered through the generosity of all our members and supporters. Each week, we are nurtured in word and sacrament. We are called by God to care for those who are ill or hurting, and welcome all those searching for a community of faith. St. Matthew's is a generous parish. Although giving levels vary throughout our congregation, what is important is that all of us are asked to make a gift that reflects our commitment to living an abundant and generous life.

Faith is a journey we make together, not a solo expedition. Our annual reflection on stewardship is a time to consider our individual practices of intentional giving so that we live into the generous and abundant life God is calling us to live. Jesus said, "I come so that all may have life and have it abundantly." Sharing our gifts brings us closer to that abundant life.

Over the past several years, we have expanded the ways that you can give generously to St. Matthew's. Soon you will receive a pledge commitment card as one option. Additionally, through the parish website there is information for our online giving programs.

I invite you to prayerfully consider how you might live life more generously. Please consider how your standard of living lines up with your standard of giving. Think about the impact this community of faith has on your life and the wider community. Pray about God's generosity in your life and then make a pledge that reflects that generosity.

I am personally grateful for the wonderful and generous members and supporters we have at St. Matthew's.

Faithfully,
Fr. Steve+

Stewardship



Stewardship of St. Matthew's: God's Work, Our Hands

God's work is all around us at St. Matthew's. I see it in the love and support we show one another, the sacraments, and the Sunday teachings. Every Sunday, I feel "filled up" with strength for the week ahead. During the week, we share in Christ's love during morning prayer, Bible study, social events, classes, and more.

Our hands bring forth Jesus' love into the broader community as well. Our outreach team, pastoral care team, college ministry, and other ministries extend Christ's love further. Just a few examples include:

- Providing school shoes, homemade quilts, Thanksgiving dinner supplies, and more to kids and families in need.
- Supplying the unhoused and poor with necessary hygiene items and a warm smile.
- Visiting hospitalized Episcopalians and homebound members of St. Matt's.
- Raising awareness of a church that welcomes all people.

Inside and outside our walls, we see God's work with our hands. This way of Love—shown to us by a man called Jesus—is possible because each of you chooses to give your time, your talent, and your treasure to support God's work in our world.

Our fall stewardship campaign marks the time for us to consider what financial support we can commit to St. Matthew's in 2024 to continue this mission of Love. Key things to watch for:

- October 15: Our Fall Chili Cookoff marks the beginning of our time together, considering our household's contribution to stewardship of St. Matt's in 2024.
- Paper pledge cards are mailed to your home; electronic pledge information is available online. You can also give at <https://www.stmatthewsgj.org/giving-to-st-matthews>.
- Late October and early November: During Sunday service, we hear from various parishioners about why they call St. Matt's their church home.
- November 19: We conclude our stewardship campaign with a blessing of all the pledge cards at Sunday service. (Please have your pledges in by this date.)

During this focused period of stewardship, I invite you to consider the work that God is doing through you, pray, and decide on what pledge you may give for 2024. Our pledge goal is \$500,000 and every pledge (big or small) helps us in our mission, supports our vestry in managing the budget, and provides security for the work we do together.

We are glad you are part of this community. Thank you for all you do at St. Matt's. Let us pray.

Good and gracious God, please help us to do your work in the world. Help us to carefully consider how we can give our time, our talent, and our treasure to support St. Matthew's. We pray that your will be done through us. We ask all this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

With gratitude,
Suzanne Foster Porter
Stewardship Team Lead

Priest Associate's Letter

I was recently asked a series of questions for the member directory where I live. I was asked questions like where else have I lived, where do I volunteer, and what was my favorite job?



If I were not working for you I'm not sure how I would have answered that last question. But now I know for sure. Being a priest at St. Matt's is the most fulfilling, joy filled, growth inducing, and enjoyable job I have ever had! Yes, there are challenges and frustrations, but please believe me. I'm not extoling this job for any reason except that it's true. Working with and for you fills my soul. It also fills my calendar!

Although we have many clergy at St. Matt's, for which I am extremely grateful, only Father Steve and I draw a salary. But because the church has attracted and/or raised multiple deacons and the donated time of retired priests and deacons, we are able to provide much more professional clergy support than just Steve and I would be able to do on our own. Have you noticed that the clergy and staff care about each other and enjoy working together? That's why there are so many of us. It's a great gift to work at St. Matt's!

In the past year my ministry has focused on building God's Kingdom both at home and afar. In addition to my preaching and liturgy responsibilities I have tried to focus on things which can bring more peace to our lives, more connection with God and one another, and more comfort to people and animals in the Navajo Nation. Our decluttering group is still meeting as participants discover the happy benefits of more space in their homes and hearts. With the leadership of Lyn Frazer and Reenie Neal we have continued the conversation about facing life's challenges through reflection and group support. I have contributed to the Clergy Coffee Hour discussions, made many pastoral visits to homes, hospital, and hospice rooms, and facilitated the second annual Women's Retreat. I've made three trips with our St. Matt's team to the Navajo Nation where we help with vaccinations and spay/neuter surgery, hoping to ease the vast overpopulation of cats and dogs who have no other access to veterinary care. And in just a few weeks I will return to the Camino de Santiago to co-lead a group of pilgrims on behalf of the Diocese of Colorado. In my preaching I try to focus on how God wants us to live into the fullness of all we can be, soaking up the abundance of grace being spread before us every day.

It is a joy and a privilege to serve you as a priest. Your prayerful response to this year's stewardship campaign will enable us to continue to make a difference in the lives of our congregation, our community, and our world. I am so very grateful for all the ways you contribute to God's work. Thanks be to God for what we are able to do at St. Matt's!

Mtr. Jan

Clergy Corner



In a recent fundraising effort for Rocky Mountain Public Television, I happened to catch an old video of a 1974 John Denver concert at Red Rocks Amphitheater. The video was grainy but, oh the memories it brought back of days long gone and fond memories of his—and my—love for our beautiful Colorado. Reputed to be his favorite, one of his songs, *Poems Prayers and Promises*, put me in a reflective mood. The lyrics have stayed with me in the form of a meditation. My life has been filled with blessings, and retirement has given me time to be more aware of them. I have nothing more to prove but, blessed with a sound mind (more or less), I still want to share what I have to give.

Father Steve has been gracious in allowing me to preside and preach at St. Matt's. I have always enjoyed teaching and here I am able to teach and to engage in the life-long learning that sustains me in my relationship with God.

St. Matt's is our spiritual home, a holy community with ministries and opportunities that allow us to grow into the people God calls us to be. I believe the future of the Church lies in our continued spiritual formation and growth—to know the unconditional, universal love of God that casts out all fear and turns us in kindness and compassion to one another.

Here at St. Matt's we enjoy one another's company, have fun together, care for one another, and learn together. Cindy and I feel privileged to be here—to (in the words of John Denver)

“talk of poems and prayers and promises, of things that we believe in; how sweet it is to love someone; how right it is to care. How long it's been since yesterday, what about tomorrow, and what about our dreams and all the memories we share?”

I have served at seven other parishes in my nearly fifty years of ministry, but the ministries here at St. Matt's are truly extraordinary and deserve our wholehearted support. Join us as we pledge to support the future of St. Matt's. The best is yet to come!

Fr. Emil

Welcome St. Matt's New Music Minister

Katie Walters is the new Music Minister at St. Matthews. She grew up in Louisiana, where she sang in church and competitive choirs and first fell in love with music. She now lives in Grand Junction with her daughter and is proud to call Colorado home.



Katie received her bachelors degree in literature at CMU in 2013 and has used her particular understanding of language both in and out of the classroom. She has also worked as a professional vocalist in many groups in the Grand Valley. Notably, she is a principal vocalist with the Grand Junction Rockestra, the Western CO Jazz Orchestra, and Katie and the Players. Whether with small ensembles, rock bands, or large groups/orchestras, Katie is passionate about collaborating with other musicians. She has a particular love for blues and soul, but enjoys music in all its forms- including religious and classical- and looks forward to exploring the rich cannon of sacred music with the choir at St. Matt's.

Youth & Children's Ministry

Nursery:

The nursery at St. Matthew's continues to be a fun place where the youngest members of the church begin their faith! During the 8:00 and 10:00 services, children ages newborn-4 socialize and play in a safe and fun environment.



Sunday School:

The Sunday school class has been incorporating Micah 6:8 "Do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God," into each of our lessons. Kids are being invited to be menders in God's world. As they make connections between bible stories and mending actions, they're discovering simple ways to live out their faith in their daily lives.

Over the next couple of months, our focus will be on FORGIVE.

Youth Group

The youth group continues to meet on Sundays from 11:00-12:30. On Saturday, October 14th we are planning a hike with the youth to coincide with the solar eclipse.

Safety Committee

Safety Information - Medical Event

There have been several medical events recently at St. Matthew's and the response by clergy and parishioners has been timely and appropriate. Below are some key points to remember going forward.

Response:

Person to call 911 and stay on the line with the operator.

(Communicate church address - 3888 27 1/2 Rd, Grand Junction, 81506 & nearby intersection. (if asked) - 27 1/2 Rd and Cortland Ave.)

Clergy or Ushers ask if medical professionals are present and can assist.

Person(s) to stabilize the victim and let them know help is on the way. (Don't move the victim unnecessarily and leave enough open space around the event to avoid overwhelming the victim.)

Person(s) at main entry to escort responders (likely the Fire Department) upon their arrival.

Family or parishioner(s) to accompany the victim or proceed to the hospital.

Notify family member(s) if they are not present at the Service. (See Church Directory)

Learning points:

Gathering Space landline may be used for 911 Call. If using your cellphone, know how to initiate 911 Call.

Be aware of First Aid Kit location - On wall in the hall across from kitchen door.

Be aware of Defibrillator location and use - Above the water fountain in gathering space.

Resources available: A possible Medical Professional, Ushers and Safety Team, Landline in Gathering Space, Cell phones, First Aid Kit, Defibrillator, Wheelchair

This information will also be posted in the Red Binder near the Suggestion Box in the Gathering Space.

Outreach

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

The Outreach Team continues its mission by serving those in need in the Grand Valley. Recently, we applied for a grant to expand our shoe ministry for not only elementary students, but also for middle and high school students and adults including migrant services and those experiencing homelessness. Funding for this project is essential due to a lack of resources within our local school district and an increase in homeless and economic insecurity throughout our community.

With the City's closing of Whitman Park, Stone Soup will be moving to the Catholic Outreach cafeteria for their monthly dinners in the future. We are fortunate to have the cooperation of this organization in a joint effort to provide meals to the homeless in our community.

Looking ahead to the holidays, we are currently preparing for our annual Thanksgiving drive to provide dinners for 50 families of our Chipeta students. The drive for non-perishables will begin on October 22nd. We will wrap up 2023 with our Christmas giving project, yet to be determined.

We look forward to another productive year in 2024 with the support of our incredibly caring and generous congregation.

Thank you all!
Your Outreach Team

Street Ministry Update

Did you know that according to the Common Sense Institute, homelessness in Grand Junction has risen 43% since 2019 and Grand Junction has a larger homeless population per capita than Denver, Colorado Springs, and Boulder?

Thank you to all who donated sunscreen, toiletries, and clothing to St. Matthew's Street Ministry during the past summer months. Your donations and prayers made an impact! In addition to our clothing and sunscreen drives, we were able to continue to provide our houseless and struggling neighbors with basic hygiene and healthcare items. As we head into cooler weather, please be on the lookout for requests for items to care for folks during the cold winter months. If you would like to know more about how to help with our work with the most vulnerable in our city, please reach out to Nicki Inman.

Amber's Group Build – Habitat for Humanity

Amber Peña would like to thank everyone from the bottom of her heart for your love, support and generosity of your time and talents. She feels truly blessed to be a part of the St. Matthew's family.



Thank you!

St. Matthew's
Episcopal
Church



Happening at St. Matthew's

The Annual Fall Kickoff/Chili Cook-off October 15th after the 10:00 service



Who will win this year's Chili Cook-off Contest?

It's time to put on your apron and chef's hat and prepare for **the annual Chili Cook-off**. There are sign-up sheets under the butterfly window for the following: Set-up/Serve/Clean-up (you need not participate in all), chili chefs, judges, and cookie bakers. If you do not make chili or cookies, a batch of cornbread would be appreciated. Western wear is encouraged! Please contact Janette Deagle or Sue Emerson if you have any questions.

Ongoing Enneagram Learning Community

This fall let's begin to integrate what we know about ourselves and what we have learned about the Enneagram. We will begin by exploring the three Centers of Intelligence and the Types that are associated with each Center. Continuing with our spiritual practices we will begin to see how relaxing our minds enables us to make changes in our behaviors. These gatherings will be facilitated by Deacon Charlotte Shepic and Fr. Steve Hood. Everyone is welcome whether or not you participated in the classes earlier this year. Please bring a lunch. **11:30 AM - 1:00 PM on October 22nd and November 12th.**

Wine, Women, Jesus & Dinner

All women and their friends are welcome to come to a monthly dinner (**typically the first Monday of the month**) to socialize with other women in the parish. A small cooking team is formed each time to prepare soups, salads, chili, chicken, or any simple meal. More than the food, it's about making new friends and enjoying a night out with no cooking. The \$7 entry fee defrays food costs, and the remainder is donated to local agencies serving women. WWJD meets September through June. For questions contact Sue Van Voorhees at sukeyvanv@gmail.com

Church Women of St. Matthew's Presents Coffee & Conversation

This year, instead of the regular ECW meetings, all women of the church and their friends are invited to attend Coffee & Conversation, which will meet on the 3rd Thursday of the month at 1:00 PM. Instead of presentations, the group will come together to share interests and ideas in a causal setting. Bring goodies to share or just come and enjoy friends and fellowship. For questions, contact Peggy Pretti at pdpretti@bresnan.net.

St. Matt's Piecemakers

No Kid Sleeps on the Floor in Our Town!

We meet on the second Saturday of each month. Members of the group have been busy piecing quilt tops. We gather to help cut and layer the quilts. Fabric and supply donations are housed at the church. Batting has been purchased and is available for Piecemakers to use. Contact Kathy Morgan at kathleen.morgan@yahoo.com if you are interested in joining us.

Blessing of the Animals October 8th at 5:00 pm

On Sunday, October 8 we will gather to celebrate the Feast of St. Francis with the Blessing of the Animals at 5:00 PM. There will be a brief liturgy at the pavilion and clergy will be available to provide individual blessings for all our furry, feathered, shelled, and finned animals who bring joy and companionship into our lives. All animals (or pictures) are welcome! Friends and neighbors are welcome. Leashes / cages please! Your donations to support our local animal welfare organizations are appreciated!

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church
3888 27 1/2 Road
Grand Junction, CO, 81506

Clergy

The Right Reverend Doctor Kimberly (Kym) Lucas, Bishop
The Reverend Stephen D. Hood, Rector
The Reverend Janice Head, Priest Associate
The Reverend Rich Paul, Deacon
The Reverend Teri Shecter, Deacon
The Reverend Jamie Galbasini, Deacon

Assisting/Retired Clergy

The Reverend Emil Belsky
The Reverend Nick Mayer
The Reverend Judy Schneider
The Reverend Charlotte Shepic

Vestry

Jason Vroman, Sr. Warden
Heidi Plank, Jr. Warden Building & Grounds
Janette Deagle, Jr. Warden Community Life
Rebekah Feigh, Jr. Warden Technology
Bruce Noble, Treasurer

Blake Bickham
Kevin Bouwhuis
Dave Emerson
Cora Galbasini
LaReina Kalenian
Terry McDanel
Sandy Moore
Matthew Ross

Church Office Hours
Monday thru Thursday, 9:00 am - 2:00 pm,
Friday 9:00 am - noon.

Finance Office Hours
By appointment only.
(970) 242-3293

Email: stmattsgj@gmail.com
www.stmathewsgj.org