

THE WINDOW

MPC Quarterly Newsletter

Season of Lent 2022



The Pastor's Page

by Reverend Dr. Luke H. Maybry



Dear Members and Friends of MPC,

A community for you.

"Now I'm turning you over to God, our marvelous God, whose gracious Word can make you into what he wants you to be and give you everything you could possibly need in this community of holy friends."

~Acts 20:32 The Message

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Spring is in the air, friends, in more ways than one. Trees are in full bloom, the Easter season is upon us, and the days are getting warmer and longer. If you have had the blues lately, things are about to get better. We are also slowly but surely coming out of the winter of Covid. Things are opening back up and people are coming back to their normal routines of life, community, and church.

The question has been posed to me many times of what we have learned in this Covid season. I have a hard time with that question for reasons that I will address later. One thing I have learned and heard said countless times is that the church is not a building. During Covid, most of you did not even see the church for two years. Yet, the church still met. The church still worshipped, served, buried its dead, cared for one another, and gathered (albeit remotely). The church was still the church even without the buildings. Jim Dygert, our custodian, did not empty the trash in the kitchen for at least a year. He never had to. Yet... the church was still the church. That is an amazing thing if you think about it.

The other thing I learned, though, is that physical presence is important. God came to us in the physical flesh. Being together is essential. The church may not be a building, but the church most definitely is people who meet together. No meeting, no church. Preaching to a camera was never my thing. Greeting a camera in

(continued on pg. 2)

WELCOME

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

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Save the date:

For a detailed list of special worship services and events at MPC, please see the calendar on the last page of this newsletter.

* To access recent worship services online, visit our website:

www.matthewspresbyterian.org

Our Vision:

Motivated by the Grace of Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit, we strive to honor the Lord as we:

Welcome all to worship in God's name.

Share the love of Christ, through our lives, words, and deeds.

Serve our neighbors, in our community and beyond.

Encourage all children, youth and adults to grow and explore their faith.

Joining together, we celebrate our living traditions as a dynamic and caring congregation who seeks to glorify God in all we do.

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Jesus' name on Sunday morning never took the place of a real person. Virtual meeting is better than nothing, but it never takes the place of being together physically.

I would say that those are the two biggest things that I learned during Covid. I learned other things, as well, some big and some small. The two biggest, though, are that the church is not a building, but the church is necessarily a meeting. That may seem contradictory, and I guess like many things, we have to hold two seemingly contradictory things together as true at the same time.

All of which reveals why the question of what I have learned about the church during Covid has been so hard to answer. After all, what will the church be after Covid? How will we have changed? I do not know the answer to that yet, but I can say from my experience that we cannot take this journey of following Jesus alone. That journey is necessarily something that we take together. But the whole concept of massive amounts of programs, and volunteer hours, and bricks and mortar... I just do not know. Things have changed in the church in ways that we will be discerning for years.

One more thing about Covid that I learned is that God will be faithful. This is God's Church. We are God's people whom God has gathered and whom God will sustain. God has given us good work to do at Matthews Presbyterian Church. God has given us countless resources to do that work. So let us all get back home to church. Springtime is here. We are Easter people. We are blessed to call Matthews Presbyterian home.





The Book of Order reminds us that it is the responsibility of the whole congregation, particularly exercised through the Session, to nurture those who are baptized as they grow in faith and seek to respond to Christ's call to discipleship.

Please join us in welcoming the newly baptized, Whitaker Riley Wilmoth.

Whitaker Riley Wilmoth was baptized on December 5, 2021. Whit is the son of Jordan and Marianne Schild Wilmoth, little brother to Pearl Anne, and the grandson of Peter and Mary Schild.



**With joy and thanksgiving, we welcome
new members into the MPC family!**

Jeff and Reba Harris; 2/6/2022; transfer of letter

Jane Elizabeth Barnes; 2/27/2022; profession of faith

Madison Claire Bowen; 2/27/2022; profession of faith

Holly Marie Karrenstein; 2/27/2022; profession of faith

Julia Wells Maybry; 2/27/2022; profession of faith

Katie Michelle Peele; 2/27/2022; profession of faith

Sarah Lauren Purdie; 2/27/2022; profession of faith

Lilly Mary Thefaine; 2/27/2022; profession of faith

Welcoming Our Confirmands

In February, we welcomed seven new confirmands to become official members of Matthews Presbyterian Church: Jane Barnes, Madison Bowen, Holly Karrenstein, Julia Maybry, Katie Peele, Sarah Purdie, and Lilly Thefaine. Many of these girls have grown up in this congregation, and we were honored to welcome them as members. Some of them have even jumped right in, joining and participating in committee meetings.

The confirmands faith statements are printed on page five of this newsletter. Please continue to hold these girls in prayer as they grow in their faith and become even more involved in the life of our congregation.

Confirmation is a special time in the life of young people who make their own profession of faith and become part of a local church.

Confirmation is a continuation of the faith journey that began at baptism and continues throughout their whole lives. Confirmation is an opportunity to celebrate the youth of our church and their decision to make a public profession of faith. It is also a time to remember our own baptismal covenant and the faith we profess in Jesus Christ. It is a time to recommit ourselves to greater spiritual growth and discipleship.



Faith Statements from Confirmands 2022

Jane Barnes Faith Statement

I believe in a God of companionship. God is capable of forgiveness and acceptance because His desire for a relationship with us has inspired a love for us within Him. Through Christ death and resurrection, we have been saved and cleansed of sin. I believe that God is with me through challenges in my life and is using them to help me grow into a person with a perspective that will be helpful to Him and others. I believe God is trying to shape and create people that love Him much as he loves us.

Madison Bowen Faith Statement

I believe that God is forgiving. Through faith God has helped me see things in a different way. Through him I am learning that I can help the world to become a brighter place. Jesus dies on the cross to forgive our sins. Because of God's love for us we are saved and brought into communion with God through the Holy Spirit.

Holly Karrenstein Faith Statement

I believe that God is accepting. God accepts all creations for what they are and the purpose that He created them for in this world. Because of God's acceptance, we were saved through his sacrifice on the cross. In my life, God has shown me love and is getting me through new and different journeys. In the world, God is guiding everyone to share peace and love.

Julia Maybry Faith Statement

I believe God is always present in our lives. No matter what hardships and struggles we are facing God is there to guide us and protect us. Through the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ, I believe that we have been saved from our sins. God is working to give us the resources to solve many world problems, regardless of whether we choose to use them or not. Through me, God is working to build a successful and prosperous life.

Katie Peele Faith Statement

I believe that God protects His children. He is loving and compassionate to his creations. God's love is unconditional, so he carried a cross and died on it for our sins. God is giving me peace throughout my life and showing me how to love others. He is staying by my side through hard times. In the world God is calling us to spread the hope of the gospel.

Sarah Purdie Faith Statement

I believe God is loving towards everyone. God is very forgiving and accepting towards the world that He created. We were saved through the resurrection because of God's forgiveness and Grace. God is helping me get through challenges and helping me grow as a person; he is helping me become more loving and understanding like Him. Finally, I believe God is trying to heal the world from the past and create a lasting sense of peace between people.

Lilly Thefaine Faith Statement

I believe that God is complex, powerful and offers us the gift of faith. God's power is not fully understandable which is why the Holy Spirit has been given to us, extending us the opportunity to have faith even in the unknown. God's plan of salvation means that Christ saved our sins through his blood, suffering and grace. God's grace can be seen each day as we deal with human struggles.

SERVE



Worship Volunteer Opportunities

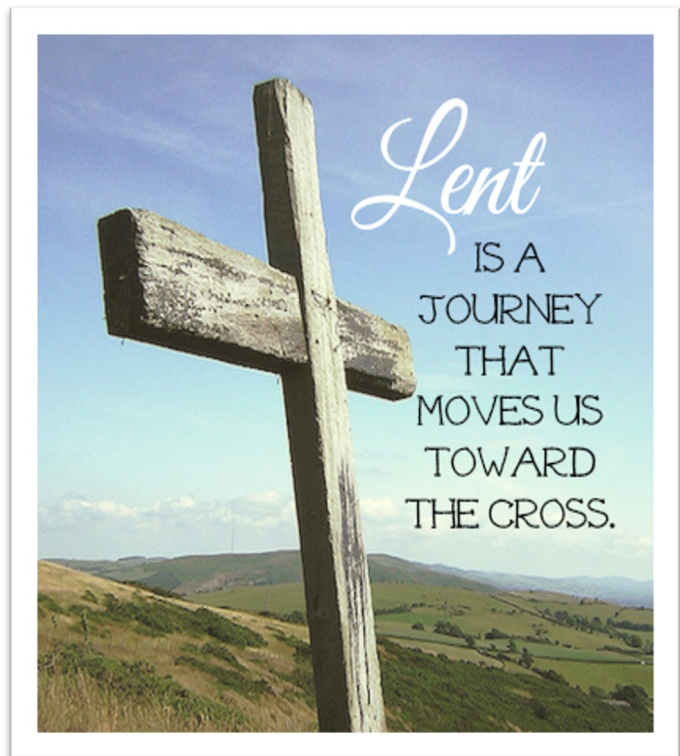
There are easy ways to get involved and serve in the life of this church. On Sunday mornings, we need assistance with greeting and lay reading. We have approximately 75-85 people attending the 10:30 worship service, and we need some smiling faces to warmly greet folks as they enter the sanctuary.

Also, we have opportunities for someone to serve as a lay reader on Sundays. The liturgy and prayers are written, and all that is required is a willing spirit to lead the congregation in a few parts of the service.

* Please contact the church office if you are interested in either of these opportunities.

Lenten Prayer Wall:

Throughout Holy Week, you will have the opportunity to write your prayers on a designated paper, roll it up, and add it to the Prayer Wall in the Sanctuary before and after services. Prayer Papers will be available as you enter the Sanctuary from all entrances. There is a Prayer Box outside for you and the community to write and place prayer requests in. These prayer requests will be placed on our Prayer Wall. We invite all to participate as many times as you feel called to do. The prayer specifics will not be read aloud or shared but will be prayed for in general by our church.



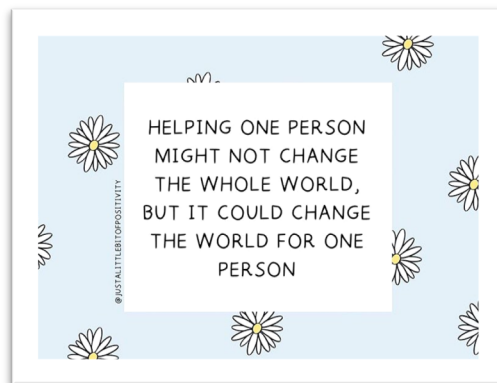


MPC is actively involved in Missions & Outreach within our community. We invite you to participate in supporting these mission projects:

Gas Gift Card Drive:

The Missions Committee is sponsoring a gas gift card drive through the month of April to donate to Matthews Help Center. You can purchase any denomination of gas gift card and leave it in the donation boxes on the Chancel area and in the Friendship Court.

*Checks and cash are not accepted for this outreach – gas gift cards only.



Share Our Spirit Mission Project:

The Circle is collecting empty egg cartons to donate to Common Heart, a non-profit in Indian Trail. There is a collection box located in the Friendship Court.

*** Continue to support the mission and outreach programs at MPC by maintaining your giving to the church in three easy ways:**

- Mail your offering to the church (P.O. Box 97 Matthews, NC 28106).
- Arrange for automatic draft with your bank.
- Click here to make a pledge payment or gift on the church's website via our secure server.

GROW IN FAITH

Digging Deeper

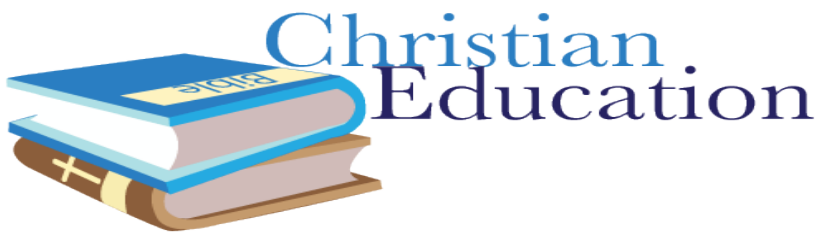
by Pastor Luke

The study that we have had on Wednesday night about hymns has been illuminating and encouraging. The hymns that we know and love were often written during tragic circumstances. Cleland Boyd McAfee wrote *Near to the Heart of God* after the death of his two infant nieces. Fanny Crosby wrote *Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross* after she was stricken with blindness. We do not know who wrote *What Wondrous Love Is This*, but we do know that it came from somewhere in Appalachia, which was Scots-Irish, which at times was a tragic existence.

Hymns were ALL new at one time and therefore controversial. Isaac Watts is the most prolific hymn writer in the Protestant Church, but the theological and musical hallmarks that we know as *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*, *Ah Holy Jesus*, *Joy to the World*, *From All that Dwell Below the Skies*...were all summarily dismissed at the time as “Watts’ Flights of Fancy” or “Watts’ Whims.” Only long after these hymns were first introduced did the church appreciate their beauty and power.

Finally, not only were those hymns originally dismissed as fanciful and whimsical, but also heretical in that they were taking secular and profane language and music and putting them in holy places like sanctuaries. At the time, it would be like reading a poem that the pastor had written instead of Scripture. What we value as having formed so many people in the way of Christ was painfully controversial at the time it was written. Yet God worked through the controversy, the pain, and the bewilderment to do God’s good work.

The same is true today. God is working among God’s saints in ways that God’s saints do not see at the time. Through the controversies, decline, mundaneness, pain, and tragedy of our lives together, God is working nonetheless in ways big and small, through people big and small, to do God’s good work of redeeming the world that God has loved.



Sunday School

The Spirit gives us the gift of faith, and our faith deepens when we share by coming together to listen for what Scripture tells us about God and ourselves. You are invited to join our Sunday School classes each week, as participants grow their faith through scripture and discussion. The Explorers and the Living and Learning God's Word class are meeting in-person with masks and offering a virtual option on Zoom.

Locations:

Explorers- Room 205 | 9:30-10:15

Living and Learning- Room 206 | 9:30-10:15

5th Sunday Intergenerational Events | Fellowship Hall

Youth Sunday 2022

This year's Youth Sunday was focused on the theme of connection. The youth developed liturgy, chose music, created artwork, and practiced hard to make this service come to fruition. In this season without a music director, Youth Sunday was more of a challenge than in typical years, but the youth did a great job. With the leadership of

Miller Webb, Howie Webb, and Luke to carry us through musically, our service went smoothly. Our seniors: Holden Bagley, Parker Davis, Emilie DeVantier, Carly Novak, Charlotte Peele, and Andrew Perry, blessed us with thoughtful sermons and other talents. Thank you to Sarah Evans, our dedicated youth leaders, and the congregation, for making it such a wonderful Sunday service.





Holy Week/Easter Activities

To kick off Holy Week, our children will process in waving palms at our Palm Sunday service. On Palm Sunday, April 10th, there will also be an Easter egg hunt following worship. There will be an opportunity for pictures with the Easter Bunny, as well as light refreshments. This event will last about 45 minutes, we hope to see you there!

Sunday School

Our Sunday School classes are still going strong, there are options to attend both in person and via zoom. Our Living and Learning class continues to meet in Room 206 as well as our Explorers class in Room 207. We are currently working to develop a plan for summer Sunday School.

AMP

Our AMP kids are currently working on Children's Sunday. This year our focus has been around being a good neighbor. Each week the kids had the opportunity to be the winner of the "good neighbor award." The good neighbor award is less about if we're listening and following directions (though those things are very important) and more about how we treat those around us and if we show exceptional kindness and thoughtfulness. Children's Sunday will also focus on being a good neighbor. We hope that everyone will join us that to support the children.

Summer News

The calendar for this summer is already filling up for our youth! We will kick off the summer, saying goodbye to our seniors and welcoming rising youth, with our EMPY awards on May 15th. As we look further into the summer, the youth are planning to attend the Montreat Worship and Music conference June 19-24. They will also have a Gary trip at the beginning of August. There will be bi-weekly events for the youth to stay connected to one another, while we take a break from Sunday night youth group. We have an exciting summer ahead for the children, as well. Join us for Creation Camp VBS this year, July 25-29. We will learn about all of God's creations and how we can be good stewards of God's good earth.



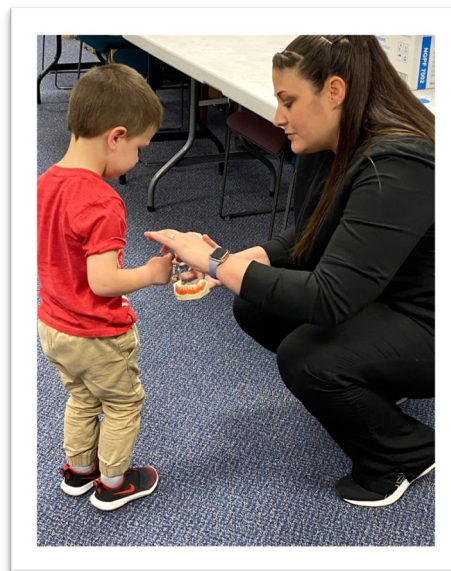
Matthews Presbyterian Child Development Center is ready for April showers to bring May flowers. Signs of spring, creepy crawlies, Earth Day, and Easter will be filling the hallways and classroom walls. Art is the most anticipated time of day for our preschoolers and the messier the better! We hope you're able to take a peek at these works of art.

We are happy to say we have started bringing field trips back to MPC-CDC. Our 4 year old class visited Matthews Playhouse in February to see The Rainbow Fish Musical. They loved every minute! We hope to extend this field trip to our 3 year old class next year.

The 3 and 4 year old classes had a great time when the dentist visited on March 23rd. The hygienist from Indian Trail Family Dentistry taught the children how to properly brush their teeth. She used a model of teeth and let the children practice brushing the correct way. The highlight of the visit had to be the dentist's friend, Dusty, the squirting dragon!

Once again, we will be watching the wonders of nature this spring. Our 4 year old class will watch caterpillars form their chrysalises and transform into beautiful butterflies. The 2 and 3 year old classes will watch ladybug larva transform into adult pink-spotted ladybugs! This is always an exciting time in our classrooms.

We are continuing the registration process for fall as we do have room for a few new friends. If you would like to set up a tour or have any questions, please feel free to contact Heather Efird at the Child Development Center. The direct line is 704-847-5564 and the website is www.matthewsprespreschool.com



Calendar of Special Worship Services and Events

April 10th Palm Sunday

- Worship 10:30 in Sanctuary / Children's Egg Hunt following worship

April 14th Maundy Thursday

- Worship 7:00 in Sanctuary - Dramatic Reenactment of The Last Supper; Communion will be observed

April 15th Good Friday

- Worship 7:00 in Sanctuary

April 17th Easter Sunday

- Sunrise Service 6:30 am outside in the small parking lot
Worship 10:30 in the Sanctuary; Communion will be observed

Join us for worship each Sunday:

In-person service @ 10:30am - masks are optional.

Online worship via Facebook Live @ 10:30am - worship services are recorded weekly, and are available for viewing following the service at www.matthewspresbyterian.org.

Matthews Presbyterian Church

A community for you.



Reverend Dr. Luke H. Maybry - Pastor
Marcy Doak - Associate Pastor & Office Manager
Sarah Evans Shetley - Director of
Children and Youth Ministries
Tom Kiff - Organist
April Taylor - Financial Secretary

Worship Schedule

Sunday School 9:30 am

Worship 10:30 am

* Transportation available upon request

Please contact us for more
information about our worship
schedule and programs.

Matthews Presbyterian Church

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www.matthewspresbyterian.org