

THE WINDOW

MPC Quarterly Newsletter

Season of Stewardship 2021



The Pastor's Page

by Reverend Dr. Luke H. Maybry



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

Contact info:

704.847.4094

matthewspresbyterian.org

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Dear Members and Friends of MPC,

Since the pandemic began in March of 2020, I have written to you specifically about it twenty-seven times. Between newsletters, cancellations, openings, mask mandates, etc... *twenty-seven times*. If I included sermons, it would be at least twice that number. Believe it or not, other things have happened in that time, all of which have been affected by Covid, but none of which has been driven by it.

The only thing that drives anything, the only one who is the subject of everything is... God. Only God is sovereign and God is gracious. We Christians hold fast through thick and thin to the dogged belief in a sovereign God who is gracious. That claim is above our poor power to prove or understand, but it can and has for centuries been believed through faith.

The writer of Hebrews defines faith as the "assurance of things hoped for," which also serves as the theme for this year's stewardship campaign. At the end of the day, our actions, our financial giving, our time, our talents, our very lives matter only because they are given in service to that sovereign and gracious God.

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WELCOME

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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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As such, we have much to give and anticipate. When I first got here, I told a leader in town that we were land-locked and therefore limited. He told me that was nonsense. The church is the only organization in town, he said, that has God on its side. He was right. That does not imply that we can do anything we want, but it does mean that we can give freely and unsparingly in the Lord's work. Last I checked, God's budget never ran a deficit.

This church is in a great spot, literally and figuratively. We have been through some difficult challenges lately. We are living in a new normal and have found that, like the old normal, God is present, sovereign, and good. God is on our side giving us good work to do and meaningful lives to live together. That assurance is worth our investments of time, energy, prayers, and money. Covid or no-Covid, God has given us that for which we have always hoped, but never had the wisdom to want.

MPC is a great community in which we can live out our hope and faith together. You can read in this newsletter of the good things that God is doing here, and you can dream of so much more that God can and will do through our faith and generosity. The big news around here has always been what God is doing. Through God's grace, that headline will remain for an eternally long time.

Yours in Christ,





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.

In the past year, we have been blessed to witness and celebrate several baptisms. Please join us in welcoming the newly baptized:

12/13/2020 Alyce Krahn,
daughter of AJ and Chelsea Krahn

5/9/2021 Gavin Off,
husband of Kara Hammack Off

5/9/2021 Wyatt Off,
son of Gavin and Kara Off



*"Therefore go and make disciples
of all nations, baptizing them
in the name of the Father
and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit."*





With Joy and Thanksgiving, We Welcome New Members!

We have had the great privilege to welcome new members into our church family.

As we begin to gather for more in-person worship services and events, be on the lookout for new members, and give them a warm welcome to MPC.

12/13/2020	AJ and Chelsea Krahn – Reaffirmation of Faith
5/9/2021	Gavin Off – Profession of Faith
6/27/2021	Bill Berkness – Transfer of Letter from First Presbyterian Church, Richmond, VA
6/27/2021	Janice Price – Transfer of Letter from South Mecklenburg Presbyterian Church, Charlotte, NC
10/3/2021	Becky Haynes – Transfer of Letter from Hickory Grove United Methodist Church, Charlotte, NC



Thank you to the staff and congregation members who have stepped up to help fill our sanctuary with music as we begin a search for a new Director of Music Ministries. We would like to extend a special thanks to Tom Kiff, for directing the Chancel and Handbell choirs, and to Nick Wagner, for assisting with our Children and Youth choirs.

A search committee has been formed to find a new Director of Music for MPC. The following members have been selected to serve on the committee:

Brad Goforth, Susan Bryant, Chip Meyers, Nick Wagner,
Carly Novak and Miller Webb.

Please keep the committee members in your prayers as they do this important work in the life of the church.

SHARE



STEWARDSHIP

Managing God's Gifts To Us

Faith Is the Assurance of Things Hoped For

You are part of a legacy of great generosity,
supporting the life and work of MPC— giving of your time, talent,
and treasures to sustain and grow our work and ministries.

We invite you to give in 2022 generously, joyfully, and more boldly
than you have ever given before, so that our ministry will continue to thrive.

*“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for,
the conviction of things not seen. Indeed, by faith our ancestors received approval.
By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God,
so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible.”*

Hebrews 11:1-3

Maintain your giving in three easy ways:

1. Mail your offering to the church:
Matthews Presbyterian Church
P.O. Box 97
Matthews, NC 28106
2. Arrange for automatic draft through your bank
3. Make a pledge payment or gift on the church's website via our secure server.

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.

Youth Mission Project: Operation Nursing Home

Two years ago, a few of our youth started a mission project to support a local nursing home in Gary, WV where we visit each year for a summer mission trip. This year, they are once again planning to do a project. They will be raising money and collecting donations to make activity boxes for all the residents. The boxes will include coloring books, crayons, colored pencils, pens, activity books, a devotional, and a puzzle or board game. If you would like to sponsor a box or boxes, make a financial donation, or donate a new puzzle or board game, please contact Kylie Drake, Miller Webb, Andrew Perry or James Gatlin for more details. You can also contact the church office to make a donation. These boxes will be given when we return to Gary, WV this December for the Christmas toy drive.



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

Thanksgiving Baskets: The Mission Committee is once again putting together Thanksgiving baskets to distribute to recipients to our local mission partners. Each basket is filled with a turkey and all the fixings for a dinner that will feed 6-8 people. Last year, through the generosity of our church family, we were able to provide 50 baskets with canned goods to spare that went to the Matthews Help Center Food Pantry and the Food Bank in Gary, WV. You may donate items through Sign Up Genius (a link is provided in the weekly church email) or call the church office to donate canned goods or monetarily to fill 50 baskets again this year.

For more information, contact Steffani Hardesty or Rick Abee.

Gary, WV Toy Drive: Late November will bring the opportunity to help out by donating toys for the children in Gary, WV. Watch for details soon!

Blessed Assurance Adult Day Care Center: In December, we will be collecting items to make Christmas gift bags for the folks at Blessed Assurance Adult Day Care. Be watching for ways you can participate in this special mission.

Habitat for Humanity: Matthews Presbyterian supports the work of Habitat for Humanity Matthews both financially and physically. This year, we will be working with other local churches to build a home for a loving family. We hope you will prayerfully consider contributing your time and talents to this wonderful mission opportunity.

Digging Deeper

by Pastor Luke

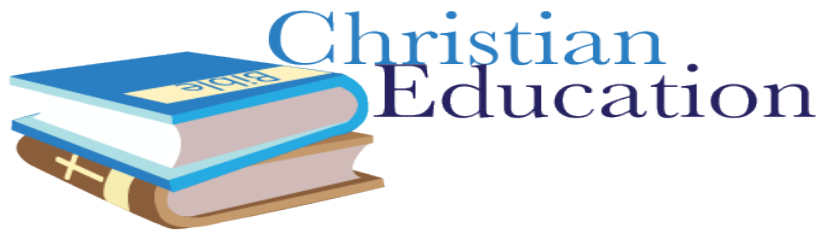
The American experiment is one of self-government. Can a government be truly of, by, and for the people? Can people come together to rule themselves? Compared to other nations, even now, after almost two hundred years, we are a young nation, and the results of that experiment remain to be seen. So far, at least, the answer is a resounding yes. Not only can we govern ourselves, but self-government is by far the best kind of government to have.

The other, less known, American experiment is about the church. Before American self-government, governments were always connected to a church, and – more importantly – the church was connected to them. When people of those nations paid taxes, those taxes supported the church. Stewardship campaigns were nothing more than tax bills. The experiment for the American church, then, is could it support itself without government and taxpayer support?

Much like the experiment on self-government, the result has been a resounding “yes”. In fact, the church has flourished in America much more so that it has in Europe, where it remains supported by the government. In other words, people respond much better in freedom than coercion.

Yet, that experiment is still early. The church has been supported by governments for most of its existence, since Roman Emperor Constantine converted to Christianity in 325. So this uniquely American experiment still remains to be seen. Can the church live and thrive with free-will offerings, especially in these days when the church seems to have lost its central place in culture?

We Christians hold fast to the idea that this is God’s Church, that God has created, ordained, anointed, and will maintain it. The answer to the experiment, then, is still “yes” but only because God is faithful. Will the church remain faithful, too? That is the big question that we must answer for such a time and place as this.



Sunday School

Sunday school this year is off to a safe and cautious start! Both the Explorers and the Living and Learning God's Word class are meeting in person with masks and offering a virtual option on Zoom. The Explorers class just finished up the book of Job, and are picking a new topic to explore. The Living and Learning class is beginning their exploration of 1 Thessalonians.

This year we decided not to have Sunday School for kids in our elementary and middle/high school groups due to low attendance. In lieu of this, we are doing 5th Sunday events that are intergenerational immediately after church. There is a 5th Sunday in October that falls on Halloween, because of this we've decided to host this event on Sunday, Nov 7th instead after worship from 11:30-12:15. Everyone is invited to come and make cards to go in this year's Thanksgiving baskets that MPC will be giving to families in need. We will also be working on Chrismon ornaments that will go on the tree in the chapel building.

Locations:

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

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

Intergenerational Event | Fellowship Hall

Bible Studies

Pastor Luke's Bible study on the book of Ezekiel continues from 6:30-7:30 PM on Wednesday evenings. This class is offered in a hybrid format. You can join the study in person in Room 206 or you may join via Zoom if you prefer to meet virtually. Contact the church office before 1:00 PM on Wednesdays to get the Zoom log in information. The Zoom log in information will change weekly.

A new Bible study on the book of Ephesians begins on November 2nd from 7:00 – 8:00 PM via Zoom. This study is facilitated by Betty Meadows. Please contact Betty (bettym29@gmail.com) for additional details and to get signed up.

Mom's Book Study

Pre-Covid, Sarah Evans was leading a book study for moms, particularly moms of preschool aged children. The group was scheduled so that parents of children in our CDC would be able to attend. This fall they have picked back up, and are learning and growing together. The group is reading *Raising Good Humans*. The book discusses mindful parenting and how to overcome our own stressors, worries, etc. It gives useful strategies of how to parent from a place of understanding, instead of out of initial reactions. The groups meets each Friday from 11:45-12:45 in room 205.

Youth & Children Christian Education News from Sarah Evans:

The youth have had a full schedule this fall! We have done several fun fellowship events such as a corn maze, glow in the dark mini golf, a Halloween party, and we still have more to come! In our discussion nights we've explored how our faith connects us to one another, and how we can help hold one another accountable when we are tempted to act in ways that we know don't line up with our faith. We've also discussed how diversity can bring us closer together and set guidelines for how we want to treat each other in conversation when we may disagree. For our missions, we are working to supply sandwiches and other goodies for The Relatives Youth Crisis Center. We are new to helping this organization, but it is safe for both us and them, as we can prepare donations for them on our campus and have someone deliver the items to them at a later date, decreasing possible Covid exposure. We are excited to work with them, as they serve children and youth similar to the ages of our youth group. The youth are looking forward to Advent, as this year they will have a bigger part in helping decorate the chapel for our Christmas programs and services.

Our children's ministries are running well, and our AMP program has benefitted from being back to a more normal schedule than we were on last year. Each week the children gather for dinner outside, then have a time for music, crafts, a lesson, and for games. They are also currently starting to work on their Christmas play that will be on Wednesday, December 8th. In our lessons this year we have been discussing different theological ideas through children's literature. We have discussed the idea of unity, what it means to be made in God's image, how to overcome division, what to do when we worry, inclusion, and more.

In addition to our AMP program, we also offer Noah's Chapel and worship bags in the sanctuary. The children have been loving the worship bags and parents find them very helpful to aid their children in focusing and learning at church. Each worship bag has a special children's bulletin that works for both readers and non-readers and corresponds with the lectionary text each week.



Matthews Presbyterian Church

Child Development Center



Once again, Matthews Presbyterian Church Child Development Center looks a little different than years past. Even with all the changes, our classrooms continue to be filled with learning and laughter every day! The infant class is enjoying art with lots of footprints and fingerprints. Our toddlers have mastered morning circle time and are learning the names of all their friends. The 2-year-old class celebrated fall by going on a leaf hunt and took their collection home to share with their family. Our 3-year-old class has been learning all about Mat Man and made beautiful fall pictures by painting with apples. The 4-year-olds are deep into the Learning Without Tears curriculum and enjoyed making Halloween slime. The staff at MPC-CDC are enjoying watching these children grow while they are in our care!

MPC-CDC would like to express their thankfulness to all members of the Matthews Presbyterian Church congregation for all of their support this year!



Calendar of Special Worship Services and Events

October 30	Trunk or Treat, 3-5 PM, Church Parking Lot
November 7	All Saints Day observed during worship Intergenerational Mission Event, 11:30 – 12:15 PM, MPC
November 14	Stewardship Dedication Sunday
November 25, 26	Church Office closed. Happy Thanksgiving!
December 8	Children's Christmas Play
December 12	Service of Hope, 6:00 PM, Chapel
December 15	Caroling on John Street, 5:30 PM
December 19	Service of Lessons and Carols, 10:30 worship
December 24	Christmas Eve Services, 5:00 PM, Chapel and 7:00 PM, Sanctuary

Join us for worship each Sunday:

In-person service @ 10:30am - masks strongly recommended.

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

207 W. John Street
Matthews, NC 28105

Church Office
(704) 847-4094
Fax (704) 845-5930

www.matthewspresbyterian.org