



THE KEY

ST. MATTHEW'S PARISH

BEDFORD N.Y.



February

P A R I S H N E W S

2026

A Lenten Word from the Rector

People are sometimes surprised to hear that Lent is my favorite season in the church year. They associate it with morbidity. I, on the other hand, associate it with depth and honesty. Christianity is not a religion that simply operates on the surface of things. No, instead it plumbs the very depths of life and death. And Lent drives all of those themes home.

First and foremost, Lent calls out the presence of sin in our lives. It does not pretend that everything is hunky-dory where human nature is concerned. The honesty of it all is profoundly refreshing, and, frankly, I find the assertion to be undeniable. When William Faulkner received his Nobel Prize for Literature, he said: "The only thing worth writing about is the human heart in conflict with itself." Lent agrees.

Secondly, Lent brings atonement front and center. It posits a once-and-for-all scapegoat and the promise of total exoneration. Christ doesn't just die for no reason; he dies for us. Lent makes explicit the reach and sincerity of God's love. Love that is not willing to suffer is shallow. So, in Christ's cross, we learn of a love unfathomable, which is what we are all craving in the end. You remember the hymn, "O love that will not let me go, I rest my weary soul in thee...."

Other religions call for our best. But Lent takes the opposite tack. It calls to us when we've soiled our proverbial diaper: "Cleanse me with hyssop and I will be washed clean indeed (Psalm 51)."

Of course, Lent would be an exercise in futility if Easter wasn't waiting in the wings. But, for the time being, from Feb. 18 (Ash Wednesday) until Apr. 3 (Holy Saturday, the day before Easter), dwell on the heaviness, and thank God that you've found a God who encourages just that.

Go deep (in Christ),

Adult Ed: The Lord's Prayer

Starting Feb. 1, Matt and John will be leading a class on The Lord's Prayer: A Survey and Template for Prayer. Over the course of three Sundays, we will study the prayer in depth and learn from it how better to pray. Join us in the Vestry Room on Feb. 1, 8 & 15 from 9-9:45 a.m. All are welcome.

Notice of Annual Meeting!

The Annual Meeting of the parish for 2025 will take place in person at 11 a.m. on Sun., Feb. 8. All persons 18 years of age or older who belong to the parish, who have been baptized and are regular attendees at worship, and who have contributed to its support for at least 12 months prior to the meeting are qualified to vote at the meeting. In order to vote, one must be present in-person.

At the meeting, the parishioners present will consider the 2026 Annual Budget and the following Vestry slate for 2026, which was put forth by the Vestry.

· **Scott Brown** has been nominated to serve his third two-year term as Junior Warden.

· **Sam Boe** has been nominated to serve his first three-year term as Vestry member.

· **Chris Lacovaro** has been nominated to serve his first three-year term as Vestry member.

· **Rick Mast** has been nominated to serve his first three-year term as Vestry member.

· **Janet Schloat** has been nominated to serve her first three-year term as Vestry member.

We will also be thanking our outgoing Vestry members Kathy Brenner, Tara Deeks, Bill Fagan, and Dave McCree, who have been dedicated members of the Vestry and have served in many capacities at St. Matthew's over the years.

(See page 7 for bios of the proposed new vestry.)



LENTEN Film Series

Every Sunday during Lent!
Bedford Playhouse
6:00 p.m.

Discussion and Q & A with Rev. John Zahl, following each film!

February 22 "Lease of Life" (1954)

March 1 "The King of Kong" (2007)

March 8 "The Browning Version" (1951)

March 15 "The Book of Eli" (2010)

March 22 "The Gospel According to Matthew" (1964)

Tickets and information available at www.bedfordplayhouse.org

Join John Zahl for our fourth annual "Lenten Film Series: Faith in Film" at the Bedford Playhouse on Sunday nights at 6 p.m., Feb. 22 – March 22, featuring an edifying and thought-provoking selection of special movies, exploring themes of conversion, humility, forgiveness, faith in the midst of suffering, and grace. Tickets can be purchased in advance at www.bedfordplayhouse.org. John will give a brief introduction, followed by a short discussion afterwards for those who can stick around.

2/22 *Lease of Life* (1954) – The vicar of a small rural community knows he is dying. It makes him reconsider his life so far and what he can still do to help the community. This film is full of heart, and offers a classic, unvarnished portrait of ministry in the Church of England.

3/1 *The King of Kong: A Fistful of Quarters* (2007) – In this hilarious, critically-acclaimed arcade showdown, an unprecedented rivalry rocks the video game world to its core! Join novice gamer Steve Wiebe on his quest to destroy the top score of gaming legend Billy Mitchell, the uncontested champion of the Donkey Kong world for over 20 years. A must-see documentary, featuring one of the greatest real-life villains ever to be filmed.

3/8 *The Browning Version* (1951) – Michael Redgrave gives the performance of his career in Anthony Asquith's adaptation of Terence Rattigan's unforgettable play. Redgrave portrays Andrew Crocker-Harris, an embittered, middle-aged schoolmaster who begins to feel that his life has been a failure. Diminished by poor health, a crumbling marriage, and the derision of his pupils, the once brilliant scholar is compelled to reexamine his life when a young student offers an unexpected gesture of kindness. A true-to-life story of repentance and atonement, *The Browning Version* is a classic of British realism and the winner of best actor and best screenplay honors at the 1951 Cannes Film Festival.

3/15 *The Book of Eli* (2010) – Eli (Denzel Washington) walks alone in post-apocalyptic America, carrying the last copy of a book that could become the wellspring of a revived society. Eli keeps his blade sharp and survival instincts sharper, as he navigates a savage wasteland ruled by a menacing warrior (Gary Oldman).

3/22 *The Gospel According to Matthew* (1964) – A biblical epic that only the legendary Pier Paolo Pasolini could make. It is an intensely faithful adaptation of Saint Matthew's Gospel depicting the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, whose unwavering compassion for the poor and defiant condemnation of moral hypocrisy make him a perhaps unexpected embodiment of the director's own worldview. Stunningly shot amid the timeless landscapes of southern Italy and set to a soundtrack that encompasses everything from Bach to Black spirituals, *The Gospel According to Matthew* cuts past dogma and straight to the core of the Good News.... This is the ultimate cherry on top of our Lenten-Faith-in-Film sundae.

Church School: Parables upon Parables...

We've kicked off 2026 in Church School with hearing the stories Jesus told. What do these old lessons still teach us today? How many other modern stories that we recognize come from these parables? The Three Little Pigs, The Tortoise and the Hare and so many other beloved children's stories are rooted in these parables. Watching the children have "light bulb" moments when they see their real-life experiences in the context of the stories they are learning in Church School, is an amazing experience. All children, Kindergarten – 5th Grade are welcome and invited to join the conversation at Church School anytime!

The Super Bowl Bake Sale (Feb. 8) will be the Parish House. Donate items to sell, or just come and purchase some wonderful baked goods and snacks to enjoy during the big game! This is a fundraiser to benefit Hour Children (Bedford Hills Correctional Facility), an organization that supports families during a mother's incarceration and after release. Learn more at <https://hourchildren.org>.

Shrove Tuesday: Pancakes and Bingo! (Feb. 17) in the Fellowship Room. Let's celebrate the start of Lent enjoying a pancake bar and playing some bingo together.

Ash Wednesday Family Service (Feb. 18 at 4 p.m.) in the Children's Chapel. Begin the season of Lent with a time of praise and reflection and receive ashes together as a family.

Melissa Torres, Children's Ministry Coordinator

Super Bowl BAKE SALE

Sunday
February 8 at 11 a.m.
Led by the Church School!

Funds to benefit
hourchildren

Shrove Tuesday
PANCAKES, & BINGO!

Tuesday, February 17

5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Fellowship Room
An All Parish Event

Art Show: Bedford Dazzles



Beckoning on a freezing cold winter night, waiting for a mega snow storm, was the bright glow and warmth of the Art Show: Bedford Preview Party. Parishioners, friends and artists gathered around beautiful paintings, photographs, pottery, carved bowls, jewelry and other artworks, munching on culinary delights by Happiness Is, being served drinks by the Men of St. Matthew's and enjoying the music of Mark Weigel and his band. Despite attendees all agreeing that they didn't have any more room in their homes to add one more piece of art, there WAS that one piece that proved irresistible and the Art Show cashiers were kept busy. How can one resist a must-have especially if part of the proceeds go to a local charity. And who doesn't want a chance to win a special item from the Silent Auction!



Many thanks to the Art Show Committee for another spectacular show and working so hard for several months to plan all the aspects of the show and Preview Party to ensure its success.



St. Matthew's Preschool

Happy Valentines Day! The winter months are a magical time of growth and learning in Preschool. We try to get outside as much as possible, but often weather and bitter cold temperatures keep us in. During these days you see children's playtime focus and interactions with peers growing. Theme-related-projects take on new meaning as children work for longer periods of time on both teacher-directed and independent activities. Although excited voices and laughter still waft out into the halls, there is also a new sense of calm and purpose.

January was filled with classes learning about snow activities and various arctic animals. We had snowmen of various colors, shapes and sizes, polar bears, walruses, penguins and snow foxes. Although kindness and working together are always a theme at St. Matthew's Preschool, learning a little about Martin Luther King brought a droplet of understanding about accepting differences and the wonderful things that make us the same. February is busting with pink and red hearts as children scurry to make valentine projects and presents for mom and dad.

Liz Peck, Director

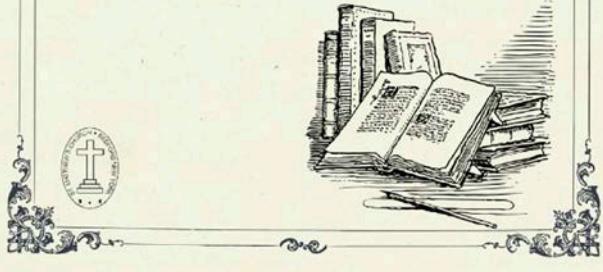


**ST. MATTHEW'S
BOOK CLUB**
God, Literature, and You.

Feb. 5 *Children of Men* by P.D. James
Feb. 26 *Murder in the Cathedral* by T.S. Eliot
Mar. 26 *Peace Like a River* by Leif Enger
Apr. 30 *The End of the Affair* by Graham Greene
May. 28 *Silence* by Shusako Endo
June. 25 *Piranesi* by Susanna Clarke

**All meetings at 3 p.m. in the Vestry Room.*

Join Matt for a lively discussion of good books over tea.
We'll consider what each book offers on the question:
What does it mean to be human?



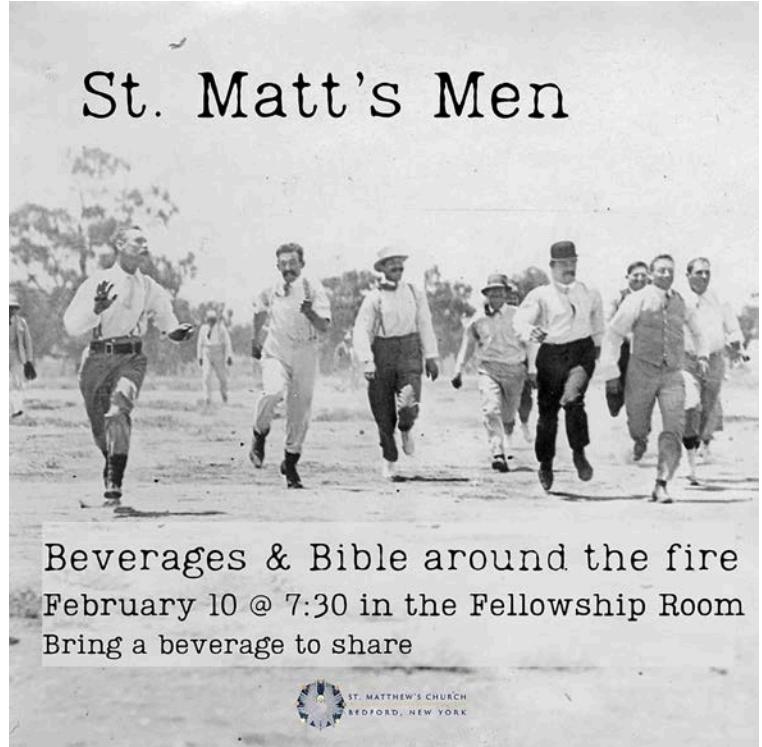
John Zahl provides an overview of the church's pilgrimage to England



Beefsteak Fest

Nearly 60 men from across the parish gathered in the Parish Hall on Sat., Jan. 10 for the first annual St. Matthew's Beefsteak Dinner. It was a rousing success, a night filled with delicious food, spirited singing, merry fellowship, and a dearth of flatware. Immense gratitude is due to Gavin McGlaughlin and his team who went above and beyond with both the food and the atmosphere. Men in their thirties shared hymnals with men in their eighties, aprons were stained

with charcoal-darkened juices, and respected parish patriarchs donned fake mustaches and crooned a classic 80's power ballad. It felt, in the end, like a kind of dress rehearsal for "that table where your saints feast forever in your heavenly home" (BCP, p. 430), a preview of that great banquet table that God has prepared for all those who are in Christ. We hope to have even more men join us next year (and at many more ministry events before then) to get a glimpse!





Rector's Bible Study meets on Wednesdays at 11:00 a.m.

Lent & Easter Season 2026

Ash Wednesday Service	12 p.m.	Wednesday, Feb. 18
Children's Ash Wednesday Service	4 p.m.	Wednesday, Feb. 18
Lenten Films at Bedford Playhouse	6 p.m.	Every Sunday in Lent
Men's Lenten Breakfast	7:30 a.m.	Every Sat. in Lent
Matins and Quiet Lenten Retreat	10 a.m.	Saturday, April 5
Procession of the Palms	10 a.m.	Sunday, March 29
Children's Holy Week Service	5:30 p.m.	Thursday, April 2
Maundy Thursday Potluck Supper	6 p.m.	Thursday, April 2
Stripping of the Altar	7:30 p.m.	Thursday, April 2
Gethsemane Watch	8p.m.-7 a.m.	Thurs.- Fri., April 2-3
Good Friday Services	12 & 7 p.m.	Friday, April 3
Holy Saturday Hike	10 a.m.	Saturday, April 4
Easter Sunday Services	7:30, 9 & 11 a.m.	Sunday, April 5
Easter Egg Hunt	10 a.m.	Sunday, April 5

Confirmation Retreat

Seventeen confirmands and two fearless parent chaperones made the trek to Wisdom House Retreat Center in Litchfield, CT on Jan. 24 for our Confirmation Retreat. The wild weather forced some adjustments, but it didn't stop us! There was plenty of fun, including a movie night and lots of hide and seek in the labyrinthine house, but our confirmands also had a formative weekend of teaching and time for silent reflection, including praying the Daily Office together.

Perhaps most importantly, many were introduced for the first time to the delicacies of Taco Bell at a late night food run on the way home. It was a great way to kick off the second half of the year of Confirmation prep, which includes five more sessions of teaching culminating in the Bishop's visit to confirm 19 students on Sunday, April 26.



Introducing Our Proposed New Vestry

Janet Schloat

Janet was born and raised in Pasadena, CA but has spent the rest of her life in New York. Her first job was as at the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, followed by The Cloisters. After her marriage, she and her ex started an educational publishing house in Pleasantville. Best of all she produced three spectacular sons David, Ben, and Michael, which brought along three super daughters-In-law and six grandchildren. She was a member of St. Mark's Church in Mount Kisco and served on its Vestry until she joined St. Matthew's 30 or so years ago. At St. Matthew's, she has been Chair of the Welcome Commission, worked as an Office Assistant, member of a Coffee Hour team chair and is currently a member of the Fair Linens Committee of the Altar Guild. Of St. Matthew's, she says: "I loved finding my spiritual home here and feel truly blessed."



Janet with her eldest son David

Richard (Rick) Mast

Bedford residents Rick and his wife, Natasha, moved to Bedford from Brooklyn in 2016. They have two children, Sebastian and Sawyer, both baptized at St. Matthew's. Their older, Sebastian, was recently confirmed in 2025. Their children currently attend school at Byram Hills and Wampus. Rick is a founder and owner of Mast, a family market and cafe with locations in Bedford Village and the Upper West Side. Born and raised in Iowa,



Rick Mast and family

Rick attended Luther College where he studied classical music and business. He is also a graduate of the Institute of Culinary Education in New York City. He and his brother, Michael Mast, began their company in Brooklyn in 2007.

Sam Boe

Roy L. M. Boe, Jr., better known as Sam, is a lifelong Episcopalian having been baptized at St Luke's Church in Darien, Ct. He and his wife Karol have been regularly attending St Matthews 8 a.m. service for well over 25 years. They each still enjoy ushering (Sam) and serving on the altar guild (Karol). His daughter Tyler Boe Drexler, was married at Chapel-in-the-Woods in 2016 to Eric Drexler of New Canaan. Their 3 boys, James (7), Will (5) and Peter (4), were all baptized at St Matthew's as well. Sam and his wife Karol founded Tyler Boe in 2006



Sam & Karol

Chris Lacovara

Chris Lacovara has been attending St. Matthew's since 2019 with his spouse, Sam Green and their twins, Kate and Alex. The welcoming spirit of the parish was a major factor in the family's decision to relocate to Bedford from New York City. Chris serves as an usher and on the Property Commission, and teaches in the Church School, which Kate and Alex attend. Chris has been active in the Episcopal Church and was for many years a member of the vestry and treasurer of a parish on New York's Upper West Side. Chris spent two decades as an investment banker and private equity executive before earning a law degree and launching a second career in the non-profit sector. From 2015 to 2024, he served as chief financial officer and led real estate development for a New York City nonprofit that develops housing for the homeless. In 2025, Chris was named Chief Financial Officer of The Episcopal Church, reporting to Presiding Bishop Sean Rowe.



Chris Lacovara and children



Choral
EVENSONG

SUNG BY ST. MATTHEW'S PARISH CHOIR

Starting Sunday, February 1
at 5:00 pm
Sunday, February 22
Sunday, March 22

St. Matthew's
382 Cantitoe Street
Bedford, NY 10506

Calling Polar Bears, Mar. 14



On March 14 the men of the parish are invited to a Polar Bear Eucharist in the Chapel in the Woods. We'll have a service of Holy Communion outdoors, followed by a cold plunge in the creek. We'll finish by warming ourselves by the fire in the parish house with hot drinks and chili provided by John and Matt. We hope you'll join us for a bracing service!

Comings & Goings

New & Returning Parishioners:

Mr. Peter Reca & Mrs. Maura Cyr
87 Cross Pond Road
Pound Ridge, NY 10576

Mr. Jake Skinner & Mrs. Amanda Siebert Skinner
35 Salem Road
Pound Ridge, NY 10576

Mr. Peter Hall-Risko & Mrs. Ashley Risko
4 Brook Farm Circle
Bedford, NY 10506

Holy Baptism *Received into Christ's Holy Church*

Albert Montgomery Guard, January 11, 2026