



THE KEY

ST. MATTHEW'S PARISH

BEDFORD N.Y.



A Thought from the Rector

After a very long and cold winter, things have finally warmed up. With the seasonal change in mind, we are finally able to make use of our beautiful Chapel-in-the-Woods again. This means that, in June, we move our 10 a.m. service outdoors. It's a shift that I look forward to every year. Please note: the 8 a.m. service will still be held inside the church through the end of June. We will have only one Sunday service at 9 a.m. in July and August. But can I refresh your memory on a little piece of our history?

In 1939, St. Matthew's Vestry allotted \$239 to build an outdoor chapel in the glebe. God blessed their foresight, not just in blessing us with a lovely Chapel-in-the-Woods, but, in particular, by providing us a with a place where we could safely gather during the 2020 pandemic. They could never have known what a crucial move they were making at the time.

Think of the many services, and especially all of the sacred baptisms, weddings, and funerals that have taken place in the Chapel-in-the-Woods in subsequent years. Thanks to the generous vision-casting of a previous few generations, thousands of subsequent parishioners have been blessed.

I believe there is a lesson here. That when we give of ourselves for the sake of others, that God cradles our gift, usually adding some divine twist as well. Our job as Christians is not to foresee the things of God; it is instead to put ourselves in a position where God can take the reins. We plan the plan, not the outcome. We pony up, only to allow God to handle the wrapping and delivery (and timing). Giving is not an opportunity to retain control, but rather and chance to relinquish such control for the sake of God's greater glory and kingdom. So a question for us is: what can we do to ensure that future members of St. Matthew's will be blessed in the ways that our forebears have so blessed us?

I look forward to seeing you in the woods!
Grace & Peace,

Summer Sunday Schedule

June	8 a.m.	Church
	10 a.m.	Chapel-in-the-Woods*
July-August	9 a.m.	Chapel-in-the-Woods*
September	8 a.m.	Church
	10 a.m.	Church

*weather permitting

ANNUAL PARISH PICNIC

SUNDAY, JUNE 7TH
5:00 P.M.

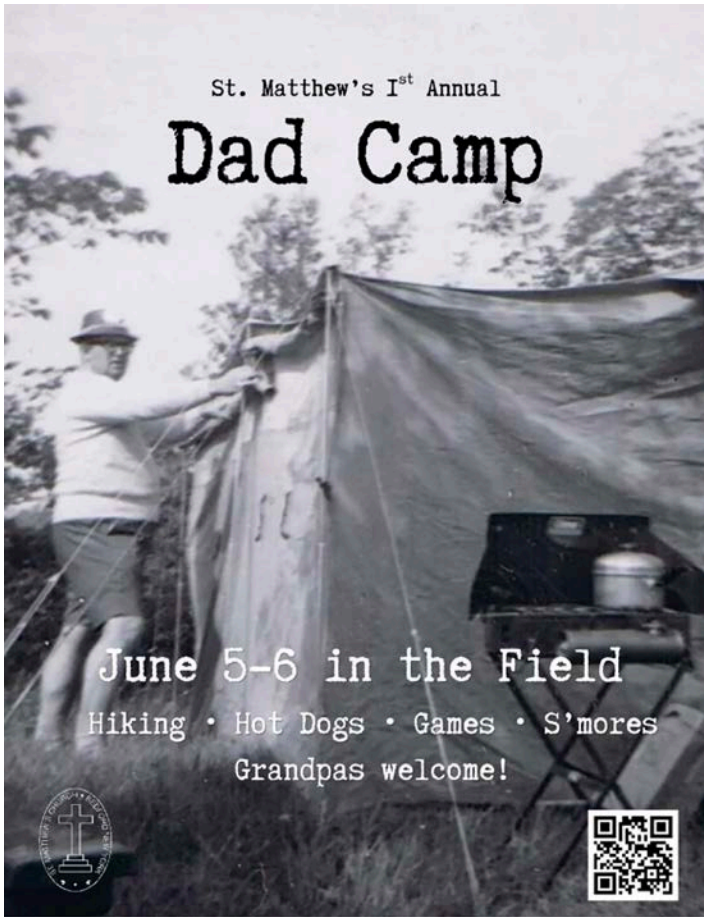
GREAT FOOD, TREATS & GAMES!

PLEASE BRING A SIDE OR SALAD!

Church School STREAM STOMP

WEAR YOUR WELLIES!

SUNDAY JUNE 7TH
10:00AM SERVICE
CHAPEL-IN-THE-WOODS



Dad Camp

Dads, grandpas, and kids are all invited to our very first “Dad Camp” at St. Matthew’s. We’ll gather in the field starting at 5pm on Friday night, June 5, set up tents, and spend the evening hiking, playing games, roasting hot dogs and s’mores, and singing songs around the campfire. We’ll send everyone off with breakfast in the morning. You won’t want to miss it! [Sign up here.](#)



Fireside Chat

We had a wonderful group gather on May 3 in the Fellowship Room for a “fireside chat” discussing how to talk to your kids about God. John and Matt shared the importance of parents’ faith in the lives of their children, some stories from their own childhood, and offered some thoughts on how to broach challenging conversations about God, death, and spirituality with kids. If you missed it, don’t worry! This was the start of a new series of offerings on faith in the home which we’ll be continuing in the Fall. More info to come on that in due course!

Our Parish Was Blooming May 10 for Our Annual Flowering of the Cross



What a Year in Children's Ministry!

As the Church School year comes to an end, I hope you will join me in expressing gratitude to the Church School teachers. Programming would not be possible without them! I am so thankful I get to serve along-side this fabulous group of leaders who share their love of God and gifts of service as they lead and engage with the children. I've also seen some beautiful friendships form this year between the kids and their leaders. Thank you to Anne Benefico, Sam Booth, Robbin Bongiorno, Will Bongiorno, Katey Chapman, Pip Garten, Traci Toll-Griffin, Brodie Kent, Mackenzie Kent, Meredith Kent, Christopher Lacovara, Amanda Olberg, Modupe Otelaja, Phebe Robertson, Christie Sasso, Sophia Sasso, Betsy Seng, Chas Slingluff and Lydia Snyder for serving this Church School year! And an extra special thanks to our Children's and Youth Commission members – Andi Ahrens, Amanda Olberg, Sam Booth, Ted Jacobi, Meredith Kent – I am so grateful for your leadership and vision as you share your love of this church, this ministry, and our children.

Also, a huge thank you to Nell Appleby-Griffiths, Franki Braun, Allie Lusthaus and Lanie Murphy for leading the littles so well in the Nursery and Pre-Church School programming, and to the 2025-26 confirmands for serving alongside them!

If you're interested in joining the Church School volunteer team, or know anyone who might be a good fit for our Nursery Staff, let me know!

Our last Sunday of programming will be June 7 in the Chapel in the Woods for the annual Steam Stomp. More information can be found in the Youth and Family Newsletter that goes out on Wednesdays. Don't receive the YF Newsletter? E-mail me to be added to those weekly updates that will resume in September. [See the latest issue here!](#)

Sit-Together Summer

Pre-Church and Church School will resume in September. Until then, please enjoy church as a family this summer. Nursery care will be available each week for children under 6 years old.

Melissa Torres, Children's Ministry Coordinator

A History Lesson at St. Mary's



Well-known author Judy Culbreth spoke on the life of Eloise Payne Luquer, whose father served as pastor of St. Matthew's Episcopal Church for more than 50 years. Eloise was an amazing woman of her times who left a lasting legacy in Bedford and environs. She along with her close friend Delia Marble founded the District Nursing Association, which evolved into the Northern Westchester Hospital, instrumental in founding The Bedford Free Library, Bedford Garden Club and the Bedford Historical Society, and helped create one of the nation's first nature trails at Ward Pound Ridge Reservation. Eloise was also a botanist and watercolor painter of wildflowers, 200 of which are held at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden.

Women of St. Matthew's Events

After hosting the beautiful Confirmation Coffee Hour on April 30, the WSM and friends gathered together on a gorgeous day for its annual Spring Luncheon on May 8. We learned about ways to handle some of the noise in our daily lives from the compassionate and revelatory Dr. Angelina Lipman. We shared how our faith helps us handle the day-to-day stress, ate a scrumptious lunch and prayed together the Lord's Prayer. Many thanks to Jackie Dailey and Amy Keeler for co-chairing this special event.



Fun to Look Forward To!

Join the Women of St. Matthew's for a summer Garden Gathering on June 25, from 10 a.m. to noon at the Santomeros' lovely Rabbit Hill Farm, 393 Guard Hill Road, Bedford.

Iced tea and mimosas will be served along with chocolate croissants and scones. Optional activities include: a Rabbit Hill garden tour, flower picking & arranging, and a special workshop in creating floral gel prints on beautiful Japanese paper.

*Please come, and bring a friend! ALL are welcome!!
RSVP at wsm@stmatthewsbedford.org.*

Preschool Ending on a High

What an amazing year this has been. Our Pre-K children will soon be graduating with all the pomp and circumstance they deserve, namely family, bubbles and ice cream! It is fun to see these little ones now so full of spice and confidence, but it is always a little sad to let them go. We do look forward to seeing our rising 3's and pre-K's return in the fall and look forward to welcoming our new 2's classes. I am so happy that we are a family school and often as one graduates another is coming down the pike.

At the end of April, we had our big fundraiser kick off for our new playground. The Parent Association put on a beautiful cocktail party complete with a raw bar that included different kinds of oysters, crab, clams and shrimp, and delicious stone fired pizza made on site. Bidding fun was had by all as parents tried to grab their most desired auction items. As most of you know, the playground for St. Matthew's children and the Preschool will be revamped and beautified this summer, along with the installation of two new pieces of playground equipment including a free-standing tire swing. As we say, never a dull moment. Cheers to the warm weather and the excitement of another summer.

Liz Peck, Director




Mary Farley, Dale Akinla and June Blanc went to St. Bartholomew's Church on May 8 to celebrate RMM's 45 Anniversary and also the 35th Anniversary of Rev. Richard Witt as Executive Director of RMM reception honoring 35 years of service.

Romans Summer Sermons

You have heard it said that St. Matthew's slows down a bit over the summer, but I say to you that the pulpit is about to go warp speed. That's because John and Matt are taking on the richest, densest, most theologically fearsome book in the whole New Testament this summer in a preaching series on St. Paul's letter to the Romans for our Sunday sermons. It's widely considered the most important piece of Christian theology ever written, a veritable powder keg sitting right under our noses and the lectionary gives us a huge chunk of readings from Romans all through the summer. We hope you'll consider joining us on Sundays (or tuning into our Sunday podcasts) as John and Matt mine the riches of this amazing letter and help uncover what it might have to say afresh to us today.


St. Matthew's Book Club

God, Literature, and You



Thursdays at 3 p.m in the Vestry Room
June 25
Piranesi by Suzanne Clarke
July 30
to be announced

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



ST. MATTHEW'S CHURCH
BEDFORD, NEW YORK

St. Matthew's Receives Hope's Door 2026 Community Honoree Award

On May 7, community leaders, clients and supporters came to Hope's Door Gala of Hope at the Mamaroneck Beach Club to raise funds and honor St. Matthew's Church for its long-time support. In presenting the award, CarlLa Horton, Executive Director stated:

"At Hope's Door Community Honorees raise the bar for all of us. They not only believe in the mission, but share our values and become an integral part of ending domestic violence in the lives of our clients. They help us build shelter and open doors to Hope. Tonight's honoree has stood side by side with us while laying the foundation for a future free of domestic violence. In 1979, members of the Junior League of Northern Westchester...identified domestic violence as a compelling issue of deep concern." A parishioner of

St. Matthew's and member of JLNW, Elizabeth Carlton, serves as chair and founding member in establishing the Northern Westchester Shelter (later known as Hope's Door), along with other parishioners, Lloyd Bedford Cox and Rev. Margaret-Ann Muncie.

"The community of St. Matthew's as a whole continues to support Hope's Door and never sways from their commitment to our shared values and mission. Their dedication...has led not only to meaningful and necessary financial support but also to the commitment of many...to serve on our board, on the Friends Committee or to volunteer with us. They all have been part of a community of safety and shelter for over 46 years that has changed the lives of tens of thousands of individuals – of neighbors."



John Zahl receives the Community Honoree Award on behalf of St. Matthew's Church from CarlLa Horton and Patti D'Agastino of Hope's Door.

Faith and Fandom: Passing Our Passions on to Our Kids

by Matt Rossi

When I arrived at St. Matthew's and started working with Melissa Torres on our Youth and Family ministry, we decided to double down on the "family" piece--emphasizing that the foundation of lifelong faith is laid (perhaps surprisingly) much more in the home than in the church. I've been writing about this all year in our Youth and Family newsletter that goes out each week, and wanted to offer what I've found to be a helpful image for understanding why and how parents play such a crucial role in passing faith down to their kids.

Many of you are, like me, avid sports fans of at least some team. It's important to me that my kids grow up to love the Chicago Cubs, all the more so because we live in New York and I'm terrified of them becoming Yankees fans. But how do I make that happen? How do I turn my kids into lifelong Cubs fans? Certainly not by sending them out of the room when a game is on TV, or by never talking about the Cubs, or by waiting until they are old enough to understand all the rules to introduce them to the game. I also don't just tell them "we root for the Cubs" only to never watch a game, wear a ballcap, or talk about the team around them. Right now, my kids have no idea where Chicago is, they don't know the intricacies of baseball, and usually if we're watching a game, I need



Hugo Rossi, a Cub's fan for life

to tell them which team we're cheering for. But as we watch games together and my kids see that Cubs baseball is something I really care about, they start to catch my love for the team. They see that I love it, that it's important to me, and because they love and trust me, it slowly becomes something that's important to them. And I don't need to be a professional athlete or an expert in the rules of the game to pass on that love.

Sports fandom is somewhat trivial in the grand scheme of things, but I think our lives of faith function in much the same way. Our kids don't need us to be theologians or professional Christians to begin to catch the Christian faith from us, they simply need to see that we love Jesus, that our faith is important to us, and to experience what it's like to share in that love with us. When we bring them into our own lives of faith, when they identify Christianity as something their parents love, more

often than not it's something that takes root in their lives too. If it really matters to you, and you let your kids see that, then there's a good chance it will matter to them too. You might feel like you don't have enough knowledge of God to pass on to your kids--that's okay! Try instead passing on your love of God. In the long run, that's what will make all the difference.

Peonies, Palomas and Plenty of Fun



RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE



Save a
life!

Save a
life!

FRIDAY, JUNE 26

10:30 A.M. – 3:30 P.M.

St. Matthew's Fellowship Room

To sign up, visit www.redcrossblood.org
and enter "BedfordNY" as the location

Comings & Goings

New & Returning Parishioners:

Ms. Allegra Miele
191 Broad Brook Road
Bedford Hills, NY 10507

Ms. Carrie Livingston
94 Honey Hollow Road
Pound Ridge, NY 10576

Holy Baptism

Received into Christ's Holy Church

Jane Atkins Jorgensen, May 3, 2026

Anne Colby Dwyer, May 3, 2026

Bruce Adrian Murphy, May 3, 2026