



THE KEY

ST. MATTHEW'S PARISH

BEDFORD N.Y.



October

P A R I S H N E W S

2025

A Word from the Rector

I hope that you will notice the wide and varied reach of our ministry this fall. We have entered this new program year with gusto and excitement, as we look to see how God will animate our parish. Allow me to provide a glimpse of things.

Our new Sunday morning Book of Prayer Book class is underway, each Sunday between services (9-9:45 a.m. through Oct. 12). Each Wednesday we have a weekly service of Holy Communion at 10 a.m., followed by the Rector's Bible Study in the Vestry Room at 11am. Likewise, our Women's Bible Study with Susannah Leighton is every Monday at 9:30 a.m. As always, all are welcome.

Jacob Gruss, our new Director of Music, is off to a wonderful start, and is in the process of growing our choir. Along those lines, we now offer child care in the nursery, starting at 9 a.m. each Sunday, so that parents can more easily participate in choir practice from 9 -9:45 a.m. Do let him know if you like to sing and are interested in joining the choir.

As you'll see in the pages that follow, our Church School & Youth Group are cooking with gas under Rev. Matt Rossi's and Melissa Torres' wonderful leadership. On top of this, we have over 20 kids in this year's Confirmation Class, making it our largest in quite a while. And it's not too late to add more.

On Sun., Oct. 19 at 9 a.m. in the Children's Chapel, our Children's Choir will have their first practice with Heymin Sohn. Children age 4 through 5th grade are welcome to attend. We can't wait to hear them sing on the first Sundays of each month, when the children from Church School join their parents for Communion.

The Men of St. Matthew's monthly Saturday morning breakfast gatherings happen on the third Saturday of each month in the Fellowship Room, and the Women of St. Matthew's have a full calendar of upcoming events planned. Also, don't miss Rev. Matt's Book Club on Oct. 17 and Nov. 21.

In the spirit of trying new things, we're also launching a Sermon Podcast: "St. Matthew's Pulpit Pod" with which you can revisit your favorite sermons or discover older ones that you may have missed.

And then there are the more social, parish-wide celebrations that punctuate the year. Our annual Blessing of the Pets is at 4 p.m. on Oct. 5 in the Chapel-in-the-Woods. Plus, on Oct. 26, note that we're adding a Trunk or Treat to this Year's Haunted Hike, making it a full-blown All Hallow's Fest bonanza. Invite your friends and neighbors for a night of pure fun.

On Oct. 19, I head to the UK with 30 parishioners for our "Anglican Heritage" pilgrimage. We will start up north in York, making our way south through Cambridge, all the way to Canterbury before returning home, having learned much about our history and identity as Anglican Christians. Pray for us and for a most enriching adventure. We'll tell you all about it next month.

Finally, and as always, if you need pastoral care, prayer, or a home visit from our wonderful Lay Eucharistic Visitors, please just call the office and we'll be in touch.

Many of you know that I'm fond of quoting Jesus' line: "a good tree bears good fruit." I think that you can see why.

Grace & Peace in Christ,

St. Matthew's All Hallow's Festival

We are excited to announce that this year we are expanding our annual Haunted Hike evening to include a Trunk or Treat at the St. Matthew's on Oct. 26. Our hope is to enlist folks across the parish to fill a bucket with some candy or knick-knacks, park their cars in our lot, and open their trunks to young trick or treaters from St. Matthew's and beyond. The Trunk or Treat will start at 5 p.m., and we'll have lawn games, music, pizza, and s'mores going as we head to the Haunted Hike in the Church Yard at 6 p.m. It will be a night for the whole parish! Don't have a trick or treat at home? Sign up to be a "trunk" and stick around for some pizza, potions, and maybe even a poltergeist!

ST. MATTHEW'S
ALL HALLOW'S FEST
 SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26
 TRUNK OR TREAT @ 5PM
 HAUNTED HIKE @ 6PM
 PIZZA, GAMES, S'MORES,
 AND FUN FOR THE WHOLE PARISH!

Adult Class: Book of Common Prayer

Our class on the BCP has enjoyed strong attendance and robust discussion about the Prayer Book, that rich resource of Anglican worship and theology. Beginning with a discussion of prayer as a fundamental distinction of human identity (humans are “praying animals”!), the class learned how the Prayer Book began as a project, spearheaded by Archbishop Thomas Cranmer, to teach Christians to pray together simply, beautifully, and most importantly, with the words of Scripture in our ears and on our tongues – a unifier of the land. In line with those aims, we’ve gone on to explore how to make use of the treasure trove of services and prayers between the book’s covers, opening up its riches to continue to fund our spiritual lives in the 21st century and beyond. The class remains open to all through its conclusion on Oct. 12.



BLESSING OF THE PETS

All proceeds will benefit Old Friends Senior Dog Sanctuary.

Sun., Oct. 5 at 4 p.m.
Chapel-in-the-Woods

Check Your Mail!

Our annual stewardship campaign is about to commence. Check for announcement communications and make your pledge early!

St. Mary's: Learn about Protecting Clean Water!

St. Mary's will have an interesting service on Sun., Oct. 5, 5:30 p.m. when Marc Yaggi the CEO Waterkeeper Alliance will speak. Recognized internationally, Waterkeeper Alliance is a global movement united for clean, healthy, and abundant water for all people and the planet.



Yaggi will speak about Waterkeeper's mission and core beliefs: water is life; healthy watersheds connect and sustain us all; and clean water is a basic right for all living beings. He will provide insights into how Waterkeepers are guardians of this right, fiercely defending, enforcing, and promoting just and equitable clean water laws, and will speak to local issues affecting our Long Island Sound and Hudson River watersheds.

Under Marc's leadership, Waterkeeper Alliance has amassed significant legal and advocacy victories, including stopping dirty fossil fuel projects, securing rules to prevent industrial agriculture slaughterhouse pollution, holding coal-fired power plants accountable for pollution, protecting coastal wetland forests, eliminating regulatory loopholes for pesticides, and securing human health protections from mercury pollution.

A reception will follow the service.



Youth Group

We had an awesome kickoff event with over 40 parents and students up in the field at St. Matthew's for food, games, and fun (I promise I'll get better at taking pictures: this one doesn't do it justice!). A huge thanks to everyone who attended, and especially to Meredith and Ryan Kent, Paul Sturz, and Dale Akinla for their help with food and setup! It was a great start to what's shaping up to be an exciting Fall for Youth Ministry. Make sure to sign up for the Youth and Family Newsletter here if you want regular updates on what's happening with the Youth at St. Matthew's!

Matt Rossi

Church School: Ask and You Shall Receive

We started the programming year in need of so many leaders, we prayed, asked and trusted in God to tug at the hearts of those who were meant to step into these roles. And God provided! We've welcomed seven new teachers so far to this team and have already seen God and work in each connection they are making with the children. A first-grade boy whispered to his friend "Our teacher is a big kid," excited to be led by a youth. A mother is an assistant teacher and her youth daughter is the lead teacher in the class, a role reversal that is enriching for both. We have a family where mom, dad and youth are all teaching. Two of our new teachers are grandmothers and no longer have littles (or even big ones) at home. We are witnessing the church family come together in Intergenerational ministry to lead this new generation. It is truly beautiful! If this is something you'd like to be a part of, there is still a spot for you! Reach out to me for more information.

If you haven't yet, scan this QR code or visit <https://www.stmatthewsbedford.org/church-school> to register your children for the 2025-26 programming year.



Looking Ahead.

This month we will continue learning in the Old Testament. Each week children will be given opportunities to connect big faith concepts to their everyday lives in fun and engaging ways. We are so excited to explore these truths together with the children of St. Matthew's. We'll close out the month with The Blessing of the Costumes and a Costume Party during Church School on Oct. 26!

St. Matthew's All Hallow's Fest!

Later that afternoon, let the Ghoul times roll at this spook-tacular event with a Trunk or Treat, Haunted Hike, Pizza, S'mores and more! Join the skele-ton of fun starting at 5 p.m.! Want to be "a trunk"? Sign up with me.

I am always happy to answer any questions about our Children's Ministry!

Melissa Torres, Children's Ministry Coordinator

Confirmation

Our informational meeting for Youth Confirmation was buzzing with energy on Sun., Sept. 14. We've currently got 20 students signed up for confirmation for the 2025-2026 year, with two five-week segments of class, one in the Fall and one in the Spring. The Fall will be focusing on building relationships and developing familiarity with the big story of Scripture, and the Spring will explore some classic themes of Christian catechesis and Episcopal identity through the Book of Common Prayer. It's a big step for our eighth graders as they make a "mature, public affirmation of their faith and commitment to the responsibilities of their Baptism" (BCP, 412). Please pray for our big group of confirmands this year!

Children's Choir

Children's Choir Forming – the Sweet Sound of Young Voices

Under the talented hand of fellow parishioner Heymin Sohn, a concert pianist, piano teacher and piano accompanist for the Byram Hills School District, a Children's Choir is taking shape. Open to children from four years to fifth grade, the Children's Choir will sing the anthem on the first Sunday of every month beginning on Nov. 2. What a joyful way to start a Sunday!

Parents, we hope that you will encourage your young, to-be choristers to join the choir. Rehearsals, held in the Children's Chapel, will be twice a month, on the last and first Sunday of every month from 9 to 9:45 a.m., with the children singing the anthem at that first 10 a.m. service of the month. To kick off the choir, there will be a sign-up/orientation/rehearsal on Sun., Oct. 19 in the Children's Chapel to answer questions and give the children time to get acclimated to the choir. If you have any questions, please email Heymin. Babysitting will be provided by the church for future to-be choristers, i.e., those under the age of 4.

We are truly fortunate to have Heymin leading the Children's Choir and sharing her musical talents with us. A pianist from the age of 4, she lives in Bedford with her family – her husband Andrew and children Christine (8th grade) and Elliott (4th grade) and a graduate of St. Matthew's Preschool). As well as seeing her at church, you may have also seen her performing with Deanna MacLean and Jennifer Buschman at our Family Concerts.



...While Adult Choir Wows Us Every Week





Preschool

On Sept. 4, our doors opened for another exciting year at St. Matthew's Preschool. The children burst in with so much enthusiasm! It was heartwarming and thrilling. Off they went to new classrooms; new children joined the pack as if they had always been there; and our little twos braved through a few tears, then settled into play with happy smiles. Our teachers, scooped up, redirected, walked through new schedules and routines, doled out snack, gave hugs, wiped noses, guided rigorous climbing, read stories and sent our children home happy and tired. We are off to a great start! Classes are focusing on friends and family and creating projects from favorite books. Our walls are covered with Pete the Cat, Rainbow Fish, and Chica Chica Boom Boom.

September was a busy month filled with new enrichment activities, "Parent's night," class photos, and in early October, Grandparents/special visitors' day. Father Matt has also been captivating our little ones at Thursday morning chapel. Although we all seem to want to hold on to summer one of my biggest joys is watching the school engine start up again bringing the promise of another wonderful year and the joy of watching children discover, be surprised and smile with accomplishment.

Liz Peck, Director



Welcome Sunday

It was a wonderful and warm welcome back on Sept. 7.

Backpacks were blessed and a wonderful Coffee Hour was again hosted by the Saunders.



Harvest Fair

What a glorious fall day as the Parish celebrated the new Church year and the gathering of the St. Matthew's family. The food, the hayride, the ice cream truck, the games, but most especially the spirit of fellowship were picture perfect.



A View of the Women of St. Matthew's

The Women of St. Matthew's is the largest volunteer arm of St. Matthew's Church — if you have joined St. Matthew's, you are a member of WSM. We have hundreds of members, and we are here for you. If you are new, we welcome YOU!! If you have been here for years and want to be involved, we welcome YOU!!

There are a multitude of ways WSM gathers together and supports our vibrant Parish, and have fun in faith together over the year:

We do the Coffee Hour that welcomes everyone with smiles and treats after each 10 a.m. service September through June.

We do the Christmas Brunch and decorate the Fellowship Room for Advent/Christmas.

We do Wine & Wreaths when we gather during a winter evening and prepare our hearts and homes for the festive Advent season by decorating wreaths with designer-made bows and beautiful trimmings.

We support our parish by creating beautifully decorated wreaths for sale at the SMC tree sale — and provide hot cocoa for the kids at the tree sale!

We do Maundy Thursday Potluck and a Lenten Quiet Day.

We do the Easter Egg Hunt and throw a huge Easter Celebration for ALL!

We do the Spring Luncheon with a keynote speaker and bring together our members and friends to be inspired by our faith and fellowship.

We do the Summer Garden Gathering — enjoy a glorious day, meet new friends, tour a beautiful garden, and look forward to another year of volunteering together.

We do a Fall Tea & Gallery Tour — and Fireside Poetry Evenings.

Come with us and come do with the WSM.

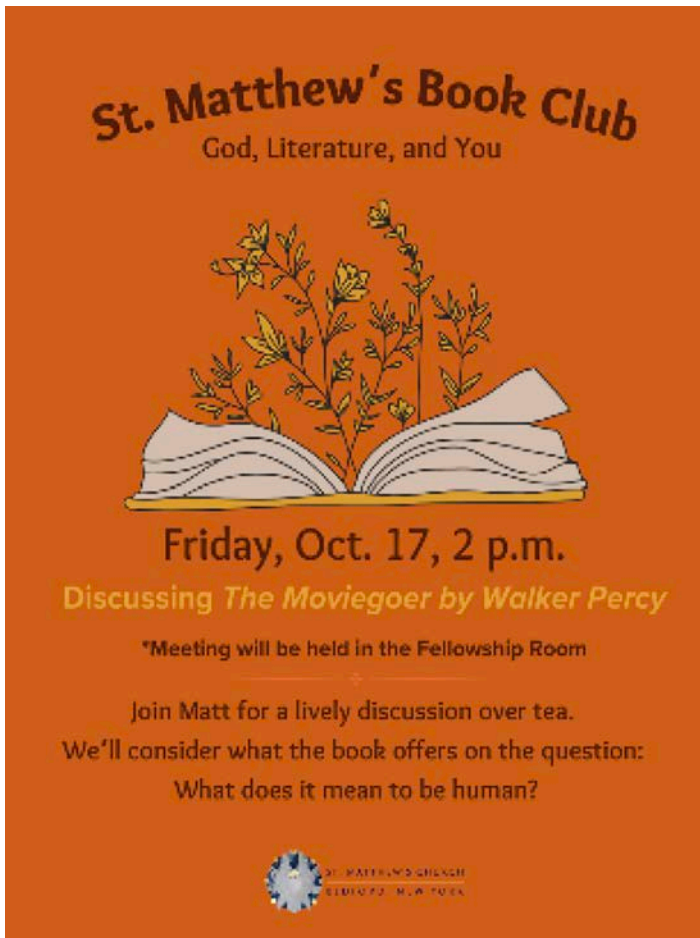
To join our mailing list, volunteer, or have any questions about upcoming programs, please email: wsm@stmatthewsbedford.org
WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

In faith and love,

Deanna MacLean & Abby Langalis
President and Vice President of the
Women of St. Matthew's Church

Joint Service with Antioch Baptist Church, St. Mary's and St. Matthew's, Oct. 19

Join three parishes for this wonderful annual service at Antioch Baptist Church in Bedford Hills on Oct. 19 at 10:20 a.m. for a joyful celebration of music, fellowship, and community. Antioch's Reverend Merle McJunkin will be joined on the altar by St. Matthew's Reverend Matt Rossi. Antioch Baptist Church is one of Bedford's longest-standing churches. Antioch's choir is extraordinary and, with Antioch's Music Director James Farley on the keyboard and Earl Brown on the organ, this is always an inspired and moving service!



Habitat for Humanity

The St. Matthew's Habitat for Humanity group is going strong. The next volunteer day is Thurs., Oct. 16. Please let Bonnie Tisi or Roger Vincent know if you will be coming.

Helping with a fence! The City of Newburgh recently initiated a citywide program to help existing homeowners improve porches and fences. The St. Matthew's H4H team embraced this program. Recently, they were introduced to an elderly homeowner in her backyard. Her perimeter stockade fence upon our arrival looked as if the project should have been to tear it down. Five hours later with the application of two coats of deck stain the fence looked brand new. The homeowner's smile of gratitude was a great reward for that day's efforts.



Pilgrims to UK Getting Ready

John Zahl and Geoff Robinson give final directions to St. Matthew's pilgrims as they prepare to go the UK to visit significant cathedrals, abbeys, gardens, Cambridge University and other key sites. The trip starts in York on Oct. 20 and returns on Oct. 31 from Windsor.



Jacob Gruss Performance

St Matthew's choir members, Jim Bourke, Deanna MacLean, and Doug Kim, along with Catherine Bourke who attends Trinity, at the 28th Annual Albert Schweitzer Organ Festival on the evening of Sept. 27, where the winner of last year's competition, Jacob Gruss, performed on opening night. The competition is held in Hartford in the Chapel at Trinity College.

