



# NEWSLETTER

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## St. Matthew's *by the Sea* United Methodist Church

February 2026

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### *Our Mission:*

To make, nurture, and inspire followers of Jesus Christ who grow in their love for God and neighbor.



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Fenwick Island, DE 19944



(302) 537-1402



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smbts.org

### *Our Vision:*

With God's grace and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, St. Matthew's by the Sea will love boldly, serve joyfully, and lead courageously.





## *From the Pastor's Desk*

*"Lent is a journey, so  
let's journey together."*



Lent is here, friends! We are now entering a season in the life of the church that begins with Ash Wednesday and concludes on Holy Saturday, which is the day before Easter.

The season ahead can be one where we take time to focus on spiritual disciplines that help us to grow and mature in our faith. Ultimately, we want to be followers of Christ who love God and love neighbor.

Lent is a time for us to consider those places where you and I have fallen short of God's commands, repent, pray and listen for God's voice. Often in lent, people will "give up" something for 40 days and replace that "something" with scripture reading, prayer, fasting, etc. Other's will "take on" something like showing a daily act of compassion, journaling, serving in the community, etc.

Let's take time to re-examine our spiritual lives and practices so that we can continually strive to be a reflection of Christ in the community. Lent is a journey, so let's journey together! Let us not forget that this journey through lent leads us to the cross once again, and we all remember what happened three days later...

Grace and peace,

Jake



# Neighbors Helping Neighbors

**Neighbors Helping Neighbors and Missions Committee** have joined forces to coordinate both hands-on service projects as well as the distribution of donations throughout the year at St. Matthew's by the Sea. Both activities provide opportunities for our church to live into the call to 'love your neighbor as yourself'.

## Upcoming Plans Include:

*"A Little Luvs for Little Loves"*



**Thanks to You,**  
SMBTS supports the following organizations with financial gifts:

- Pyle Center Fuel Assistance
- Food Assistance
- J-1 Students \*
- Sussex Cty Crises Housing
- Sussex County Pregnancy Center
- Missionaries
- Worldlink International Ministries
- Red Bird School
- The Way Home
- Mission Aviation Fellowship
- SOSA
- Halo Ministries
- CropWalk
- UMC Mission Shares

This is a diaper drive for client families of the Pyle Center. Please bring donations to the narthex **by the end of February.**

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## *Society of St. Andrew Lenten Giving*




SOSA is a nationwide organization with a Delmarva presence that strives to help cure food insecurity in America. During Lent, Devotionals and Giving Envelopes will be available for those who would like to participate in supporting this ministry.



## *Hospitality Team*

**The Hospitality Team** is something we are all a part of at St. Matthew's as we strive to welcome all who come to worship with us! In addition to being your friendly self, there are 2 specific areas where we can use some help:

1. **Coffee In Clendaniel** - please consider signing up in the Narthex to host a week (or two) for our weekly time of fellowship. It's an easy task: simply arrive a few minutes early to start the coffee (instructions are in the kitchen) and bring some goodies. Sign up solo or with a friend! This a great time to visit with one another and newcomers!
  2. **Join the Baking Brigade** - It's a St. Matthew's tradition to send our visitors home with bread, so each week we have a basket of mini-loaves ready for our ushers to distribute. Each loaf has a sticker with our church name and website, along with the phrase 'You Are Welcome Here'. If you are interested in adding to our bread supply, please contact **Kelly Rymer**.
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*Church  
Council*

**Church Council** is made up of Committee Chairs and other Church Leaders. Happy 2026 St. Matthew's By-the-Sea! I am happy to report that our Committees are kicking off the New Year with plans and activities, the Council is on schedule with a full slate!

If you have a question or would like to know more about a specific ministry, please reach out!

All are welcome to attend Church Council Meetings. We are scheduled to meet quarterly in the Miller Meeting Room. Our first meeting of the year was earlier this month. The rest of our meetings are scheduled for Apr 26<sup>th</sup>, July 20<sup>th</sup>, Oct 19<sup>th</sup> at 11:45 a.m.

\*God is Good! All the Time!

Kelly Rymer  
Church Council Chair





*Church  
Council*

## 2026 Church Council

### Chairperson

Kelly Rymer, [ckrymer@comcast.net](mailto:ckrymer@comcast.net)

### Lay Leader

Dave Edwards, [Djedwards18@msn.com](mailto:Djedwards18@msn.com)

### Staff Parish Relations

Marilyn Wockley, [wockley@mindspring.com](mailto:wockley@mindspring.com)

### Trustees

Terry Wildermuth, [wildermut@aol.com](mailto:wildermut@aol.com)

### Finance

Bill Rymer, [wsrymer@comcast.net](mailto:wsrymer@comcast.net)

### Treasurer

Tandy Morgan, [Tjune2954@gmail.com](mailto:Tjune2954@gmail.com)

### UWiF

Sherry VanDyke, [vandyke.sharon@gmail.com](mailto:vandyke.sharon@gmail.com)

### UMM

Mark Silvestri, [marksilvestri29@gmail.com](mailto:marksilvestri29@gmail.com)

### Worship

Vicki Daisey, [veed419@aol.com](mailto:veed419@aol.com)

Sue Clark, [fenwicksuel@gmail.com](mailto:fenwicksuel@gmail.com)

### NHN/Missions

Dave Robinson, [Davidross12@comcast.net](mailto:Davidross12@comcast.net)

Kelly Rymer, [ckrymer@comcast.net](mailto:ckrymer@comcast.net)

### Checkerboard

Vicki Daisey, [veed419@aol.com](mailto:veed419@aol.com)

### Shepherds

Jake Macklin, [rev.jakemacklin@gmail.com](mailto:rev.jakemacklin@gmail.com)

### Music Ministry

Cindi Mather, [matherclm@comcast.net](mailto:matherclm@comcast.net)

### Hospitality Team

Kelly Rymer, [ckrymer@comcast.net](mailto:ckrymer@comcast.net)

### Community Connections

Kelly Rymer, [ckrymer@comcast.net](mailto:ckrymer@comcast.net)

### Member-At-Large

Michele Overend, [levelfive21@hotmail.com](mailto:levelfive21@hotmail.com)





## *Finance Minute*

**The Finance Committee** would like to share that finances of the church remain in a very strong position. Combined offerings and contributions received during 2025 exceeded the budget expectations. Overall expenses were consistent with the annual budget with the exception of utility and insurance costs which were higher than anticipated. Interest income of \$19,000 helped reduce the budgeted negative operating results (annual expenses were budgeted to exceed offerings/inflows by \$23,000). Total cash reserves were \$685,000 as of December 31. FY2025 was a good year financially for SMBTS and our church has an excellent foundation as we head into FY2026.





# Trustees

**We begin 2026 with a new class of Trustees.**

Please Welcome:

- Cherie Edwards
- Tom Rogers
- Mike Sabin
- Sherry Van Dyke

Other Trustees are:

- Vicki Daisy
- Anne Hodges
- Dave Lewis
- Denny Mather
- Terry Wildermuth

## Trustees and You in 2026

Happy New Year!

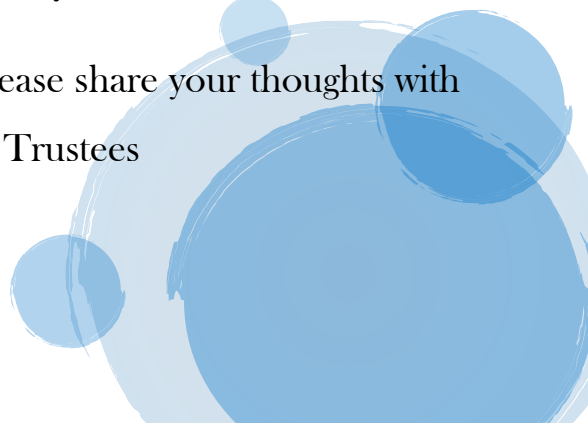
We want to start by looking back and giving Thanks to Gary Ward and Butch Perkins who served as SMBTS Trustees! Your service was an integral and essential part of keeping St. Matthew's running! We miss you and your contributions to our team and the Church. Thank you very much for serving!

Also in 2025, many of you served by helping clean out the attics and storage rooms, doing landscaping, cleaning the inside of the church, painting, helping with the summer 8AM service, getting ready for the "Sand-iversary" and many, many other activities and projects. We couldn't have done it without you!

Thank you for serving too!

You may not be aware that St. Matthew's has a Gift Policy. The purpose is to describe the gifts that can be donated and the manner in which they can be accepted. It lists several opportunities for giving that you may not have considered before. If you'd like a copy please see or call Sandy in the Church office.

We are here to serve! Please share your thoughts with us! In His Service, Your Trustees



# Checkerboard

**Checkerboard** had a wonderful afternoon celebrating the Birth of Jesus on December 7.

Seventy people, including our Checkerboard Friends, their family members, and our committee members attended. This group knows how to have fun!

We also had a fun afternoon of bowling on Sunday, February 8 at Millsboro Lanes.

If you know someone with special needs who would like to join Checkerboard, or if you are interested in joining the committee, please call 410-251-0836.

Vicki Daisey (Checkerboard Chair)





*Worship  
Committee*

## **Greetings from the worship committee!**

The book to order flower dedications has been placed back in the Narthex. You may order flowers to be placed in church on a Sunday by completing the information in the book or by calling the church office.

The Church is now using Bethany Florist and the price of each arrangement is \$35.00. Payment can be made in the church office, in the tithe offering in a separate envelope marked “flowers,” or you can mail a check to the church.

Please contact the church office at 302-537-1402 if you have any questions.

Vicki Daisey and Sue Clark (Worship Chairs)





*United  
Women  
in Faith*

## **The United Women in Faith (UWIF)**

Our Purpose is:

To be a community of women whose goals are to connect more closely with God and each other, as well as supporting the needs of women, children and youth with an emphasis on spiritual enrichment, fellowship and education for the residents of Sussex and Worcester counties.

Monthly meetings are held on the second Tuesday of the month, beginning at 12:30 p.m.

The Christmas bazaar was very successful, not only in money raised but evidenced in the comradery and fellowship among the volunteers.

The women's retreat was held on Saturday, January 24 at St. Matthew's with the theme of "The Lord is my light." It was a wonderful time!



*United  
Women  
in Faith*

A couple photos from the woman's retreat!



Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Van Dyke

