

St. Matthew Messenger



News of and for the Community of
St. Matthew Presbyterian Church

September 2018

Greetings From Leslie!

by Leslie Klingensmith



Happy September, everyone!

I hope everyone had a wonderful summer, with at least a little bit of time set aside to slow down and relax. The summer weeks always seem to fly by, and here we are starting a new program year. Even though I love the (slightly) slower pace of summer, and

the opportunities it brings for rest and relaxation, I am excited for the fall season as well.

We have a great line-up of fall activities coming up - see the rest of the newsletter for detailed information about education, fellowship, and outreach opportunities. I especially want to highlight a volunteer event that is geared for maximum participation and fun. On Sunday, October 14 we will be hosting a meal packing party for RISE AGAINST HUNGER. Rise Against Hunger (you may remember the organization by its former name, Stop Hunger Now) is an organization that is making a global impact by breaking the cycle of hunger and poverty and ensuring that people have the nutrition they need to attend school or have a job.

Above: 2018 Camp Joy crew celebrate completing a new access ramp.

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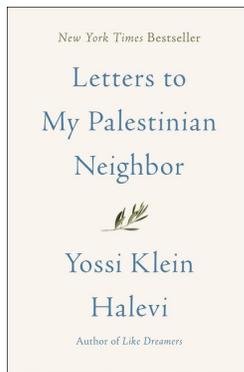
Upcoming Events

Wed., September 12,
Mary Martha Circle

Rise Up Hunger has a very clever process by which we can pack many meals in a short amount of time. The meals have a shelf life of two years and are shipped all over the world to people in need. Some are earmarked for disaster victims where there is no infrastructure and people need food immediately to survive, but the majority of the meals are distributed in partnership with schools, health clinics, and other community service organizations as part of a broader program to lift people out of poverty.



Other things that I want to make sure you are aware of: World Communion Sunday is October 7. We will celebrate the Lord's Supper in conjunction with Christians across the globe, remembering our unity in Christ and our call to be one people.



The Book Discussion group is starting up again! Our first fall meeting will be Wednesday, September 26 at 7:00 PM in the Agnes Wilson Room. We will be reading the first three chapters of *Letters to My Palestinian Neighbor* by Yossi Klein Halevi. If you would like to read more and have interesting conversations about what you read, our book club is a great place to start! Consider joining us to enrich your fall

season.

Be sure to peruse this edition of the newsletter carefully for information on church school, children and youth programs, choir practice, the Mary Martha Circle, and other opportunities for fellowship and service. I look forward to seeing you!

Grace and peace,
Pastor Leslie

St Matthew Improvement Projects

Text and photos: Phil Tamoff, Julia McBee. and Paul Neal

As we enter the fall season, many of our long-anticipated improvement projects have been completed. The railing along the serpentine walk has been replaced. The restrooms in the narthex have been completely replaced. There is a new tile floor in the Commons as well as fresh paint throughout. The cooperation and assistance of the congregation and staff during these hectic times has been greatly appreciated.

First monthly meeting of the new church year. See details in this newsletter.

Thurs., September 13, Adult Choir Rehearsal
First rehearsal of the new church year. All singers are welcome. 7:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary.

Sunday, September 16, Celebration for Leslie.
We will be celebrating Leslie's 25 years of ordained ministry with the Presbyterian Church, USA. Members of the congregation are invited to join with family and friends for a pot-luck luncheon following the morning service. Please bring your favorite dish to share.

Sunday, September 23, Livingstonia Fundraiser

The University of Livingstonia Foundation will be holding its annual fundraising event at 3:00 pm in the Commons.

Wed., September 26, Book Discussion Group
The book discussion group for adults will kick off for the fall season on September 26 at 7:00 pm in the Agnes Wilson Room. Our book for September and October will be *Letters to My Palestinian Neighbor* by Yossi Klein Halevi. For September 26, we will read the first three chapters, pages 1-62.

Sunday, October 9, World Communion We will celebrate the Lord's Supper together with Christians around the globe.

Sunday, October 14, Rise Against Hunger.



Newly tiled and painted Fellowship Hall

To avoid the prohibitive expense of major construction, the restrooms were replaced within the confines of their original walls. However, some of the block at the doorways was cut to create a wider doorway for handicapped access. New grab bars were also installed for handicapped individuals.

We now have two identical unisex restrooms with new fixtures, countertops, and a changing station. Some inquiries have been received regarding the rationale for conversion from gender-specific to non-gender (unisex) facilities.



Newly renovated unisex restroom in the Sanctuary

One St. Matthew member described the importance of these changes this way: *"If we allow for more fluid and accommodating life experiences, we include transgender people, people with disabilities, and other unconventional situations. There are multiple ways of examining a social justice issue. We encourage members to look beyond their personal experience and consider different ways of life. We strive to make our church as hospitable as possible."*

In short, the gender-neutral restrooms are yet another demonstration that St. Matthew's accepts individuals of all ages and supports gender equality.

There is more work to be done as funds become available. The most obvious steps are the carpet in the sanctuary and the kitchen for the narthex. Let's celebrate these completed tasks and hope these renewed facilities enhance our ability to serve God.

St. Matthew will sponsor a meal-packing event for Rise Against Hunger. We will gather in the Fellowship Hall right after the worship service. See article in newsletter for more details. Plan to join us for a fun and rewarding experience!

Celebration for Leslie



We will be celebrating Pastor Leslie's 25th year of ordained ministry with the Presbyterian Church, USA on Sunday, September 16. Pastor Leslie was ordained in 1993 at Westminster Presbyterian Church, Alexandria, VA. She was installed as pastor of St. Matthew in 2002. Members of the congregation are invited to join with family and friends in celebrating this special occasion.

A pot-luck luncheon in the Commons will follow the morning service.

Please bring your favorite dish to share. Dessert and drinks will be provided. We will need



Fall Church School

Sunday, September 9

marked the start of St Matthew's fall church school. All children should meet their teachers in the narthex after the children's story and go directly to their classroom. We are asking that ALL CHILDREN (5th grade and

under) be picked up at the class door.

Our Church School Team:

Preschool: Louise Boyle

1st - 2nd: Jody Hursh, Divine Gui-Diby and Mary Beth Thompson

3rd - 5th: Esemé Koge, Maisie Lynch

Middle school/ High School: John Meyer and Deeds Wells

HELP NEEDED:

We still need several teachers and helpers to complete our staff. If you are willing to HELP please see Konni.

2018 Vacation Bible School

This year our theme was "God's Puzzle". For the first time, our concentration was on women of faith. Once again we partnered with St. John's Lutheran church to provide a meaningful, fun, and exciting week for the children of our community.

It truly took many hands to create such a memorable week. Thanks to all who participated- from the planning to the moving of the sanctuary and narthex furniture, to the donation of all the various strange but necessary "stuff", to the teachers, marketplace volunteers, games lady, mission team, refreshment providers, AV experts, music leadership, time keeper, cleanup crew, and everyone in between. We really could not have had such a successful program without your help.

Summer Lunch Program

volunteers to help with set-up and clean-up. Please contact Glenda De Jong, Julia McBee, or Ida Leong for more information.

Livingstonia Event



The University of Livingstonia

Foundation will be holding its annual fundraiser on Sunday, September 23 at 3:00 pm in the Commons. St. Matthew has been a long-time supporter of the University of Livingstonia in Malawi, and the Foundation raises funds in the United States to support scholarships, purchase of IT and science equipment, and other needs of the University.

So far in 2018 we have raised over \$30,000 to help support 54 students, with over \$26,000 for students still to be named, have paid workshop stipends for faculty, have contributed towards the building of a worship center/classroom. Please join us for an afternoon of education, music, food and fellowship. Then help support this worthy cause as you can.

- Donna Chirwa

Thanks to the generosity of our church, we were able to carry out the 5th summer of our Summer Lunch Program. Through this program, we were able to provide and deliver a well balanced, nutritious lunch, twice a week for 26 children.



Shout outs go to everyone who supplied the food, packed, and delivered:

- The VBS crew, Betsy Leffingwell, Jody and Steve Hursh, Leslie Klingensmith and family, Kit Boyle and family, Arleen Dookwah, Vitu Ngwira, the Acosta family, the Winter family, and the church school children.
- Ruth Bugos-Sasscer who communicated with our families and translated all the necessary information.
- And a special thank you to those who created, built, planted, maintained and harvested our garden.

Summer Church School



Erin Whaley.

This summer our church school revolved around the stories of Dr. Seuss. Our children seemed to enjoy unique program, stories and projects. It was fun to look at the messages contained in his lively books.

Thanks to all those who helped! Esemé Koge, Louise Boyle, Abby Hartley, Amy Brantner, Jody Hursh, Wendy and Ron Berry, and

Fall and Winter Ushers



We are starting the Fall/Winter usher season. Ushers serve once a month from September to January. It is a much needed service to the church. If you have never done it before we will be glad to provide you with basic training. Please contact Ida Leong if you are interested or have any questions. We would love to have you join the team.

- Ida Leong

Mary Martha Circle



All the women of the church, including members, visitors, and friends are invited to the first meeting of the 2018-2019 season of the Mary Martha Circle. It will be held this coming Wednesday, September 12, at 10:30 a.m. in the home of Rogie Colston. Her address is 3210 N. Leisure World Blvd. Apt. 906.

Our monthly meetings include Bible Study (lively discussions!) followed by a time of fellowship and lunch. Each person brings her own sandwich

Camp JOY, July 2018



2018 Camp Joy crew in action (bird's eye view)

Once again this year, St. Matthew's youth and adults journeyed to Berkeley Springs West Virginia to participate in CAMP JOY, the 29th year of this youth oriented work camp.

The 2018 Camp Joy Crew consisted of:

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| David Aquino | Kit Boyle |
| Kanayo Duru | Louise Boyle |
| Koge Koge | Rhesyo Bembo |
| Doreen Malta | Jose DeJesus |
| Ashleigh Nelson | Abby Hartley |
| Rochelle Nelson | Devin Hartley |
| Damali Ondiek | Eseme Koge |
| Yuri Sack | Tom Benedict |
| Yohann Sack | Eddie Brantner |
| Kelly Seqanish | Konni Brantner |
| Greer Taylor | Steve Colgate |
| Sam Taylor | Stephen Winkler |

During the week we worked on four major and one minor project. Each of the homeowners have to qualify for

(or salad), but dessert and beverages are provided. The theme of this year's Bible study is "God's Promise: I am with you." Ruth Burgos-Sasscer will lead the first lesson. Please call Ruth (301-598-2288) if you have any questions about our group, or need directions to Rogie Colston's house in Leisureworld.

If you would like a ride to the meeting, please let Ruth or Julia McBee (301-603-0450) know and we will arrange for someone to pick you up. We look forward to seeing old members and welcoming new ones on Wednesday!

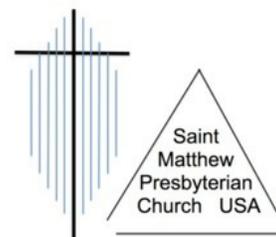
- Millie Ames

St. Matthew Nursery



The St. Matthew nursery welcomes babies and toddlers 3 years and younger. Hours are 9:30 am until the end of service. Any questions/concerns should be directed to Ida Leong.

Important Links



Leslie Klingensmith,

the program. The basic criteria is proof that they cannot physically or financially manage to maintain their homes.

A big thank you to our transportation and set up help- Susan Wilson, Phil Henjum, Leith Speiden, Terry DeJong, and John Meyer. Be on the lookout for pictures once the The Commons returns to normal.



St. Matthew's 2018 Camp Joy crew

Pastor
301-598-4400

Konni Brantner,
Director of Youth
Education and Outreach
301-871-6275

Jeremy Young,
Director of Music
and Organist
301-681-8013

Al Conner,
Church Office
Administrative Assistant
301-598-4400

Janet Froom,
Clerk of Session
301-461-2968

Bill and Julia McBee,
Newsletter Editors
301-603-0450

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for the next issue of the *St. Matthew Messenger* is October 5. Please send your articles and pictures to Bill McBee <whmcbec@gmail.com>. Thank you!

Congregational Notes



Pledges: Time to Catch Up

by Paul Neal

It's been a busy summer with our Property Improvement Projects (which are just about complete) as well as our usual monthly operating expenses. With summer vacations and missed Sundays, it's easy to fall behind with your pledge. As of September 2 we are \$9,000 dollars

behind where we should be in our pledge revenue at this time of year. We would like to try to close that gap before we get far into the fall.

Please check your pledge status in Breeze by going to your profile clicking on Contributions on the left then on Pledges to see where you are or ask Terry or Glenda DeJong for an update. You can reach Terry and Glenda at 301 460 8523 or dejongt@verizon.net. Your efforts to get us back on track this fall are greatly appreciated.

**Meal Packing
Event, Sunday,
October 14**

**St. Matthew's
Mission**

Commission will be sponsoring another meal packing event

for Stop Hunger Now (recently renamed Rise Against Hunger) on Sunday, October 14. Our goal will be to pack 15,000 meals to be sent to hungry people all over the world.



Our goal for this two-hour event is to pack 15,000 meals. We need between 90-100 volunteers to make it happen. Once the room is set up and everyone is in place with their jobs, we can pack the meals in about two hours. So, get some coffee after church and head over to the fellowship hall. If we are started packing by 11:30 AM we will finish no later than 2:00 PM, including clean up. Feel free to bring friends and neighbors. There are literally jobs that everyone can do, and no one is too old or too young. Plus it is a whole lot of fun! Watch your email over the next week for a sign-up link.