



# THE ANTIPHON

The Parish Newsletter of  
St Matthias' Church, Dallas, Texas

FEBRUARY AD 2024

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Beloved in Christ,

*“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”* The Epistle to the Hebrews 10:23-25

**Note:** *This report is in addition to the remarks that I gave at our annual parish meeting on January 21st which can be viewed through a private link on our parish YouTube account. Please email the office for the link to view the video of the meeting and review it if you were unable to be with us at the time that the meeting was “live.”*

It is truly a joy for me to be your rector. I give thanks to Almighty God daily for our parish. I do immensely appreciate your very generous love. Your love toward me has been manifested in all sorts of kindnesses, things both said and done, and all of it is quite encouraging to me. I want to make sure that I tell you of it, as I said, - I do appreciate it immensely! And Karen and I both are also quite grateful for the Christmas Purse that Bob presented to me on your behalf on the Sunday after Christmas Day the Lessons and Carols Mass. Many, many thanks to you

all!!

It is a joy also to labor in this part of God's vineyard with my brother priests. Fr Kraft and Fr. Duncan continue to bless us with the gifts of their priestly ministry. I am extremely grateful for their support and encouragement. Fathers, your presence, support, encouragement, erudition, wit and work among us, is a tremendous blessing to us all! To be able to regularly celebrate Solemn High Mass with a full team of ordained ministers is just wonderful. Likewise, in allowing me to have some time off, Fr. John Kalimi has also been invaluable. Please accept our thanks.

We are still live-streaming our Sunday High Mass. If you look for us on YouTube and hit the subscribe button under the viewer window, the app will send you an email when a new video is posted. I encourage you to do that even if you don't watch the service but come (as you should!). Because, when you are unable to be present then you won't have to figure out how to watch from home. Emails are easy to delete if not needed. I do remain profoundly grateful to Donna Wheeler for her faithful assistance with our streaming, and to Patrick McGehee for coming alongside her to assist as well.

I want to add to my expression of gratitude to Bob Lea for the great help that he has been to me this past year in his capacity as Rector's Warden. Bob's diligence, kindness, insight, experience and his friendship makes him a joy to work with. So too, I want to thank all of the members of our Vestry. You all have my profound gratitude. I continue to be grateful for the very pleasant and constructive way in which we all work together. You are an absolute joy! And that is a testimony to your dedication, your faith, and your good humor! The diocesan canons stipulate that vestries can be constituted of between 6

and 15 members. So today, Tiffany Wright and Bob Priest are rotating off with our thanks. And we are replacing them with, Virginia Wallace and Laura Stotz. We will be having our Vestry Conference on Saturday the 10th of February. My plan is to then commission the new Vestry on Sunday, the 11th the Last Sunday after the Epiphany, thus completing the transition of leadership. The vestry's dedication and faithful service go a very long way in making our parish life the very good thing that it is. It is also my great pleasure to share with you that Bob Lea has agreed to accept my appointment as Rector's Warden again this year.

There is a built-in challenge to serving in the role of People's Warden around here. We have quite a collection of buildings of various ages and a sizable campus. Our thanks are due to Cindi (and her able assistant, Ray) Turnbull, who has been faithful in seeing after the seemingly incessant demands of our physical plant. Thank you both very much! In the past year there have been some challenging physical campus issues - bees taking up residence over the sacristy, repair to our small building by the playground, the south entry to the Admin building, leaks of all sorts, narthex bathroom renovations, tree trimmings, etc., and all of that on top of replacing light bulbs, fixing toilets, alarm systems, and on and on the list can go. We were happy to be able to hire Harrison Hess to do the narthex bathrooms and the redo of the entry into Duncan Hall. There are a number big projects that we hope to be able to tackle this year as well, such as the drainage behind Duncan Hall, painting our woodwork, and repairing our deteriorating parking lot. It's a huge area of responsibility!

**The primary purpose of the Church is to worship Almighty God, the Blessed Trinity.** With very little exception, just about every day of the year, the public worship of the Triune God occurs here in this place. Supportive of this purpose, quite obviously, is our Altar Guild. Last Fall, the leadership of our Altar Guild was passed from Laura Stotz to Cindi Turnbull. Donna Wheeler is now in the role of Assistant Directress. These women especially, but also all of the rest of the members of the Altar Guild, deserve our thanks. This past year we were able to add to our collection of vestments with a new daily Holy Week superfrontal.

Thanks be to God for His gift to us that is Dick Abrahamson. Dick, what a blessing your ministry is among us! The worship the parish offers to God has been marvelously enhanced by your efforts. And I remain so pleased to have someone so easy to work with in you. We are blessed by the talents of our Choral Scholars. The talent of Lisa Wells and Erick Reich shared with us enriches the liturgical offering we make Sunday by Sunday. Likewise Lisa Crain is singing with us again from the loft. Thank you to both of our Lisas! I am very grateful to all of them for their gifts shared with us.

The other components of our worship team are also essential to the quality of our liturgical life here. They are the Guild of Adult Servers, our lectors, and our acolytes. The members of the guild have my deep gratitude for their dedication and service. Their service at the Altar, day by day, has a definite positive impact upon our entire parish, even if it is just a few of us at Mass on any given morning. A substantial number of the men of the parish render to God the precious sacrifice of time (and that includes sleep!). Their commitment helps to ensure that the sacrifice of the Mass is offered practically every day and the intercessions

of the parish are made. And just to be sure that I don't let an opportunity pass - if you are interested in joining the Guild of Adult Servers, please speak to me. Thank you also to our lectors and ushers. I especially want to thank Cindi Turnbull for her continuing oversight of the Ushers' ministry, and likewise to Jim Nugent for the Greeters' ministry. It takes all of us working together to make our worship here the fine thing that it is.

Supportive of the primary purpose, the secondary purpose of the Church is to make saints - so that our worship of Almighty God might be as pure and as sincere as we can possibly make it. The process of sanctification involves our ongoing personal daily surrender to the lordship of Jesus, allowing him to shape us more fully into his likeness. And part of that process is our education in the Faith "once and for all delivered to the saints." I want to express my great thanks also to Donna Wheeler for her continued leadership of our Christian Education endeavors, and to Fathers Ivor & Duncan, and to Bob Lea for teaching this past year. Come to Christian Ed this Sunday at 9:10! Donna's Tuesday evening Class continues to meet. My Tuesday Evening Basic Christianity Class is on hold for the present. I would welcome the opportunity to begin with a new class. If you are interested, please speak to me and we can get the ball rolling. As Donna indicated in her report to you, we are grateful to our current group of teachers for the youth classes, and we are asking for more. Can you help? Please speak to Donna Wheeler.

Another part of the process of our becoming the saints we were created to be has to do with our relationship to things, specifically to our money. As you have already heard, we were able to adopt a "balanced" budget for 2024. And due to your faithful stewardship we ended the year well financially. The meeting of our budget always requires all of us to be both

faithful givers and careful stewards of our resources. We have been blessed in the last few years by donations at year's end exceeding the amount pledged. But our budget is formulated based upon the stewardship declarations we make in the Fall and what we know that we can cover. It is therefore vital that we all do what we can to honor our stewardship declarations. If you have not made a financial declaration for 2024 yet, it is not too late. If your circumstances change - affecting your giving, you need to be sure to communicate that to our Stewardship officer so that the Vestry can make the necessary adjustments. A word of thanks at this point to Susan McQueen for her continued willingness to serve in that capacity. Susan, we appreciate your careful and diligent ministry. The tithe (10%) is the standard of Christian giving and if you are not there yet, my prayer is that you will continue to move toward that as your level of giving.

**The third purpose of the Church is to reach out to the world around us in order to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with those who are not yet Christians, that they might be brought into the Body of Christ - in order to make them saints - so that our worship of Almighty God might be even greater.**

In part, we attempt to accomplish that third purpose here through the work of our Evangelism commission and the various other parish Outreach efforts - A quick look at the report on pages 14 through 16 of your packet will show you the range of the Outreach efforts of our parish and that they involve a significant portion of our membership. I am very grateful to Don Conley for his leadership of our Outreach Commission this past year in coordinating these efforts. Especially, I would like to thank the ladies of our Prayers and Squares ministry and to Nita Hinshaw in particular. The steady flow of quilts from here and out into the community are a tangible expression of

love and comfort - over 300 now and counting. We are also very blessed by the participation of a sizable number of our membership in preparing and providing meals for the Austin Street Shelter - and that includes the makers of sandwiches for the monthly meals. I am very proud of the ministry of our parish to those outside of our congregation. We continue to financially support the Centurion Project with the Diocese of Northern Malawi, our Companion Diocese. Our centurion is Fr. Joseph Marama for whom we pray at every celebration of the Mass along with the clergy of St. Matthias’.

It is a canonical instruction to the clergy of our diocese to remind our people that they should have a will. We are directed to ask that the church be remembered in your estate planning. At the very least, we should make it known to the executors of our estate that if possible, we desire to fulfill the the financial pledge that we have made for the current year. So, as I do annually, I am making that appeal formal, asking to you to make some provision in your estate planning for your parish family. It is my hope that we will be able to provide us all with some instruction this year as to how we might be able to contribute in retirement in a way that is tax-advantageous to us. Stay tuned for more info about that. We continue to be immensely blessed by the financial provision that Patsy McClellan made for us through the foundation she established.

Our membership in the parish is something much more significant than simple affiliation. St. Paul says that we are members one of another. The parish is the local and immediate manifestation of the Body of Christ where we are *“to stir one another up to love and good works”* as Hebrews says, *“encouraging one another.”* Fundamentally, our attention needs to be about precisely that. Mutual encouragement!!

Saint Matthew's Gospel ends with what is called the **Great Commission** - Our Lord's parting words to his disciples - *"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age."*

**That's the mission of the Church**, to go and to make disciples. It is our mission to grow the Church. We are the Church. We have to intentionally accept the charge that we are **all** to be involved in the business of making disciples of Jesus Christ. Embracing our mission means that we all need to be intentionally looking to invite others we may meet, or know, to come and share what we have here. The Vestry and I are certainly open to providing opportunities to make that possible. And we will also be engaging that topic as we make our annual Vestry conference in a couple of weeks. My hearty thanks to Tiffany Wright for her leadership of our Evangelism Commission this past year.

The Gospel has always been most effectively spread by one on one contact; by our extending the invitation to those around us. Even if we do nothing, some visitors will come out of curiosity. And the welcome we extend to them must be genuine and deep. Someone new in our midst must know and feel that their participation is valued and that they can have a real share in our common life.

Our heavenly Father has given us something very precious here. It is up to all of us to make sure that we don't hide what we have. It is up to us to see that we share it with those around us who do not know it yet. We need to be sure that we are busy giving what has been given to us away. And what that is, is the wonderful



experience of the love of God poured out for us. It is the Gospel, the Good News of Jesus Christ. With God's blessing and your prayers and faithful witness, we will grow and change in good ways in the year ahead.

To return to where I began, it is my honor and joy to serve here as your priest, and I am grateful for your love. And I do indeed, love you in return.

God bless you all,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Fr. Chris" followed by a small cross symbol.

## PRAYERS AND SQUARES MINISTRY

The Prayers and Squares Ministry will meet Thursday, February 15th at 6:30pm. We have given over 300 quilts and many prayers to those in need. If you know someone who would benefit from extra prayers and support, please consider a quilt for them. Contact [nitahinshaw@aol.com](mailto:nitahinshaw@aol.com) to make a request.



# FEBRUARY FELLOWSHIP SUPPER

“Valentine’s Day”

Last chance to get some treats before Lent!

Cindi and Ray Turnbull will host the February Fellowship Supper on Saturday, February 10th at 6:00 PM in the Great Hall. Co-hosts will be Megan and Patrick McGehee.

Bring your honey and a favorite dish and don’t be late. To make your reservation, please complete the form in the Sunday bulletin.

**If your last name begins with**

A through H

I through P

Q through Z

**Bring either**

Vegetable or Main Dish

Salad or Main Dish

Dessert or Main Dish



# SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE SUPPER



Save the date for the Annual “Brit Potter” Memorial Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper at St Matthias’ on **Tuesday, February 13th**. Dinner will be served beginning at 6:30pm and is free to all (although we will be accepting “free will offerings.”) By the way, it’s a GREAT opportunity to introduce your family, friends and neighbors who may NOT be members of our parish to the wonderfulness of St Matthias’.

## FEBRUARY COMMUNITY MINISTRY

The Turnbull team is scheduled to prepare the meal for Austin Street Center on February 18. The team will gather @ 2:00 to prepare the meal and the sandwiches need to be at the church no later than 3:00.

**Shelter Team:** Cindi Turnbull, Ray Turnbull, Donna Jarecke, Megan McGehee, Patrick McGehee, Danelle Harris\* and Randy Hinshaw\*. (\*Every month)

**Sandwich Makers:** Diane and Dick Couch, Fr. Dwight Duncan, Suzanne Jackson, Robert Lea, Tommy Marr, Megan and Patrick McGehee, Robyn and Bob Priest and Rachel Hess (if in DFW). **From JANUARY:** Lori Luckey, Deborah and Jim Nugent and Donna Wheeler.



## FELLOWSHIP / PARISH ACTIVITY MINISTRY

We are looking for a few good men and women to help with coffee host duties for Christian Ed (9:10) and High Mass (10:30 / 10:00). Currently there are three volunteers for both time slots.

Also looking for volunteers for the Sunday Treats ministry, to supplement the donuts each week. Currently there are only three volunteers.

Please contact F/PA or Don Conley if you would like to volunteer for either of these exciting opportunities.