

SAINT MATTHIAS

EPISCOPAL CHURCH

The Saint Matthias Messenger

Published Monthly

Volume 17 Issue 2 - February 2020



Saint Matthias Episcopal Church
7056 Washington Avenue
Whittier, CA 90602
(562) 698-9741

Office Hours:
Monday - Friday
9:00^{AM} - 4:00^{PM}

Rector
The Rev. Bill Garrison
Bill@stmatthiaswhittier.org

Church e-mail:
office@stmatthiaswhittier.org
Web Page:

<http://www.stmatthiaswhittier.org>

Sunday Worship Services
8:00^{AM} - Holy Eucharist
10:00^{AM} - Holy Eucharist

Saturday Worship Service
The First Saturday of the Month
5:00pm - Healing Service

Wednesday Bible Study
10:00^{AM}
Wednesday Eucharist
11:00^{AM} - Holy Eucharist



Prayer

We soon will be heading into Lent and it's probably a good time to think about prayer. I recently had lunch with the Reverends Carole Horton-Howe and Carolyn Estrada and we were talking about possible subjects for our upcoming Lenten Series. Reverend Carolyn had previously sent me some of her notes about prayer and I had lost track of them, so she sent me those same notes again. They are the basis for this article and some of the words I use, and heartily endorse, that follow are hers and not my own. Also please know we will be forming a prayer study group in the near future to study and experience prayer in its many forms.

What is prayer? It is the intentional bringing of oneself into the presence of God. Prayer can be spoken or silent. There are categories of prayer. Yet there are no rules concerning prayer and no judgment attached to how we pray.

Prayer space can be important. These are places where we can go and leave the world behind. Specific times to pray are helpful for some people too. The Episcopal Prayer Book is a great aid for individuals and families in ordering prayer life.

One form of prayer you may have heard of Contemplative Prayer. It's prayer without words. The idea is that we bring ourselves into God's presence to listen, to hear God in the silence of our lives.

Another is praying with Icons. This comes from an Eastern Orthodox tradition and is very sacred. The Icons are viewed as windows into the divine. When a person prays with an Icon they generally kneel or are seated comfortably while focusing on the icon and feeling drawn into the scene.

Lectio Divina is related to contemplative prayer through the use of scripture. Whereas previously we talked about using an icon to focus in this form of prayer we use scripture in Lectio Divina.

Body Prayer is another way to come into contact with the Holy. One might use a Rosary, or a labyrinth, or take a trip to a holy site to facilitate the movement into the Holy.

There are many other ways we can pray. Some are formal and some are spontaneous. I often suggest people use everyday experience to prompt prayer. For example pray in the shower or when you touch the door of your car.

However we pray it's important. It's a little like exercise. The more we do it the healthier we become and the better able we are to weather the storms of life that inevitably come upon us. Besides that being with God can be just about as good as it gets.

Please keep your eyes and ears open for upcoming opportunities to learn more about this important subject.

Fr. Bill+



MATTHEW 17:4, ESV

Stephen Ministry

Following are some "ATTENTION-GRABBERS" that describe your Stephen Ministry program at St. Matthias.

CONFIDENTIAL

This is exactly what Stephen Ministry is. Everything a person tells his or her Stephen Minister is kept in strict confidence. People are very often afraid that if they tell someone what is troubling them, word will get around and others will look down on them. Through the very intense training a Stephen Minister receives, they keep everything a care receiver shares confidential, and through this sharing God works miracles of healing and peace.

LISTEN

This is exactly what a Stephen Minister does. They have gone through 50 hours of training in providing Christian care so that they can focus on your needs and listen to what you really have to say.

ALL ALONE?

You don't have to be alone. God does not want us to be all alone. He wants us to turn to others when things are bothering us. Stephen Ministers will walk with you through your troubles and be there when you need them.

FEELING DOWN?

Our Stephen Ministry can help. Stephen Ministers aren't just there for "big" crises. They're also available for the little ones, because many times the little things can really add up. So don't wait until you have a big crisis: consider Stephen Ministry if the little things have you feeling down.

STEPHEN MINISTRY IS YOUR MINISTRY

Please, please remember that Stephen Ministry is your ministry. It is a very important way that we at St. Matthias care for one another. If you are going through a difficult time, consider having a Stephen Minister. If you know of someone else who is facing difficulties, suggest that they request Stephen Ministry. ***Stephen Ministry Belongs To You.***

Stan Jamieson - Stephen Leader



Hands to God

Hopefully you've already read Fr. Bill's article on Prayer on the front page of this Messenger. After I got a preview of it, I had a chance to think about one aspect of praying with our bodies which is how we use our hands in prayer and how that translates into what we do in worship and in the world.

A beloved Christian writer, Rachel Held Evans in "Searching for Sunday", describes using our hands like this: "All are called. All belong to the holy order of God's beloved. The hands that pass the peace can pass a meal to the man on the street. The hands that cup together to receive Christ in the bread will extend to receive Christ in the immigrant, the refugee, the lonely or the sick. Hands plant and uproot, and cook and caress. They repair, rewire, and change diapers and dress wounds. Hands tickle children and wipe away tears. Hands sanctify all sorts of ordinary things and make them holy."

How we hold our hands as we're praying can shape our interaction with God. Think about what you do with your hands when you're talking with someone during the day. Are you holding onto something...or, especially if you're a parent or caregiver, someone? Do you clasp them together? Put them in your pockets? Do you rest your chin on a hand? Or use a hand to steady yourself on a cane or walker? Are you making notes? Maybe all of the above at one time or another.

When we're talking with God our hands can be an integral part of the conversation whether we have the luxurious joy of setting aside time in a quiet place to pray or we are praying as we do what we need to do through our day. What our hands are doing isn't as incidental to our prayer relationship with God as we might think. We might have hands clasped together in a "traditional" prayer posture or rest them in your lap. We might be moving from one bead to another as we say rosary prayers. We might start in one position and change to another. But I wonder how might your interaction with God would change if you went from say holding your hands clasped closely to you to opening the hands, fingers relaxed and palms up and open? You might experiment with different ways of being with God physically and see how it changes your spiritual experience.

If we're feeling anxious or stressed or overwhelmed we might understand this as having our hands in closed, clenched fists. It's almost impossible to do anything positive like this. Whether you can take quiet time away from your day or are praying with eyes wide open, visualize yourself coming before God and opening your hands into a relaxed position ready to receive with open heart and mind what God might offer you.

A traditional liturgical prayer practice with our hands in the Episcopal church is making the sign of the cross – touching three fingers from forehead to core of the body

Worship at Saint Matthias February 2020

- + 8:00^{AM} - Holy Eucharist, Rite II
- + 9:00^{AM} - Adult Christian Education
- + 10:00^{AM} - Holy Eucharist, Rite II
- + 10:00^{AM} - Children's Education

February 2 The Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

Scripture: Malachi 3:1-4, Hebrews 2:14-18, Luke 2:22-40, Psalm 84

February 9 The Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

Scripture: Isaiah 58:1-12], 1 Corinthians 2:1-12, Matthew 5:13-20, Psalm 112:1-9

February 16 The Sixth Sunday after Epiphany

Scripture: Deuteronomy 30:15-20, 1 Corinthians 3:1-9, Matthew 5:21-37, Psalm 119:1-8

February 23 The Last Sunday after the Epiphany

Scripture: Exodus 24:12-18, 2 Peter 1:16-21, Matthew 17:1-9, Psalm 2

February 26 Ash Wednesday

Scripture: Isaiah 58:1-12, 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10, Matthew 6:1-6,16-21, 103:8-14

and across the heart or tracing a cross on forehead, lips and heart. One priest I know tells a story about a new parishioner coming from a faith tradition where the prayer practice of signing the cross was not practiced. She was eager to learn more about it. "When do I do that?" she asked. The priest explained to her the various ways it might enhance her worship experience. The woman listened carefully and said, "Okay. When do I do that?" It's a relatable story but the "when" isn't as important as the "how" of making meaning in our relationship with the divine.

Some feel it gives physical expression to our commitment to be open to God's love coming into our minds and hearts in all we think, say, feel and do. For me it's a prayerful affirmation of the wonder and power of the Trinity, a physical way to acknowledge my commitment to serve God, remember the words of Jesus we hear in the gospel and the sacrifice he made for us. It acknowledges at the conclusion of worship the Holy work that has taken place and the love of God that we have received to carry out into the world with us.

Lent will soon be upon us. My prayer for all of us is that our physical prayers will draw us closer to God, that we will feel ourselves beloved and make real for us God's love working in us. Rachel Held Evans finishes her chapter: "Through touch, God gave us the power to injure or heal, to wage war or wash feet. Let us not forget the gravity of that. Let us not forget the call." Amen.

Carole+



From The Senior Warden's Desk...

I hope all of you had an enjoyable and memorable holiday season, rejoicing in the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ!

A couple of month's ago, I promised that I would give you an update on participation in the Annual Diocesan Convention in November. I was sidetracked by the holidays and now I will share a bit of our experience with you. The convention was held at the Riverside Convention Center, last November 15 and 16. Our official delegation included Kathy Adams, Doug Overstreet, and me. Barbara Khan and Stan Jamieson attended as alternate lay delegates. Ellen Mykkanen was also in attendance and shared responsibility for Convention Altar Guild duties in addition to participating in the Convention Choir. Fr. Bill Garrison and Rev. Carole Horton-Howe were present as our clergy delegates.

The theme of the convention was "The Lifelong Way of Love". The program focused on three components to this theme. Presence - Quieting the Self to Hear the Other; Kindness - Being the Peace of Christ in Anxious Times; Wisdom - Forming Well Educated Christians. Bishop Taylor opened the two-day program with a nod to St. Stephen's parish in Santa Clarita which only the day before found itself in the midst of a community tragedy that claimed the lives of three Saugus High School students. During his opening address he proclaimed his "reckless optimism" about our church and its future.

Bishop Taylor was followed by equally inspiring presentations from Bishop Suffragan Diane Jardine Bruce and Canon to the Ordinary Melissa McCarthy. Bishop Bruce cited the Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop Michael Curry's Way of Love practices - turn, learn, pray, worship, bless, go, rest - to factor into every aspect of our common life. Canon McCarthy shared her goal to visit as many churches as she can, because knowing our congregations makes her a more effective administrator.

There were speakers from a number of ministries within the Diocese. Dolores Huerta, our biannual Margaret Parker Memorial lecturer, gave a rousing presentation, and we closed Saturday afternoon with a beautiful Eucharist including over 800 participants.

I can't find words to give the convention the credit it deserves. It serves as an opportunity to learn so much about other Episcopal congregations, the workings of our Church at large, and it opens the doors to so many ways in which we can become personally involved with those efforts. The convention is open to everyone. I hope you will consider attending next year. It will be held November 13-14, 2020, again, at the Riverside Convention Center.

We are fast approaching our Lenten Season. Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper will be held on Tuesday, February 25, 2020 from 6:30PM to 8:00PM. Ash Wednesday services will be conducted on February 26, 2020 at 12PM and 7PM. Fr. Bill will lead a Lenten Series and Potluck every Thursday beginning March 5, 2020 from 6:30PM to 8PM in Chase Hall. Make it a point to be a part of these events.

And another date to mark on your calendars and to make an effort to attend is February 23, 2020 for the Annual Congregational Meeting. It will be held immediately following the 10AM service in the Sanctuary. I hope to see all of you there.

2019 was a year filled with challenges. 2020 will no doubt be the same in many ways. I hope you will join me in fierce and continuing prayer for strength for our Rector and Associate Pastor in their untiring efforts to make St. Matthias a welcoming congregation to all and a beacon in our community.

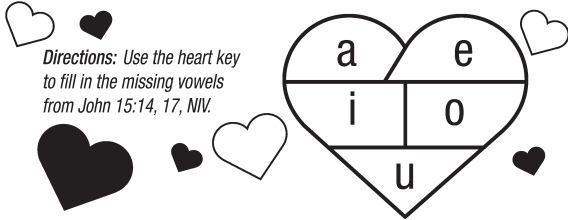
*Happy New Year!,
Tim+*





A friend in Jesus

In the Bible, Jesus shares what it means to be a true friend.



Directions: Use the heart key to fill in the missing vowels from John 15:14, 17, NIV.

“Y _ _ r _ my fr _ _ nds _ f
y _ _ d _ wh _ t _ c _ mm _ nd. ...

Th _ s _ s my c _ mm _ nd:

L _ v _ _ ch _ th _ r.”

JOHN 15:14, 17, NIV

Answers: “You are my friends if you do what I command. ... This is my command: Love each other.” John 15:14, 17, NIV

We Need To Know

Please let the clergy know of any members of the parish that are unable to come to church and would like to receive communion. **The Office now schedules the Lay Eucharistic Visitors and wants to include all who need a visit. Please contact Dottie or Father Bill in the Parish Office to schedule a visit.**

If you know of someone who has been admitted to a hospital, remember to inform the clergy. With the new privacy laws, the clergy can no longer check the roster for parishioners that may be hospitalized. It is “Better We Know Twice Than Not At All!”

Support Our Advertisers

Each issue of the Saint Matthias Messenger is printed at no cost to our Parish, thanks to C&M Church Publications. They are able to do this by selling a single page of advertising in each issue. Please check the back of each issue’s calendar and if you are in need of a service listed, consider using one of our supporters.

Friendship Squares

This tasty treat doubles as a game to play with a buddy.



What you need:

- Graham crackers
- Chocolate chips
- Microwave-safe bowl
- Zippered baggie
- Scissors
- Raspberries
- Blueberries

What you do:

1. Gently break cracker sheets in half to form squares.
2. Heat chocolate chips in microwave for 30 seconds. Stir, then continue heating for 30 seconds at a time until melted.
3. Spoon melted chocolate into baggie and snip a small triangle from one bottom corner.
4. On each cracker, squeeze chocolate lines to form a Tic-Tac-Toe board. Let cool.
5. Using the fruit as X's and O's, play Tic-Tac-Toe with a friend. The winner gets to eat the treat!

Saint Matthias Staff

Rector

Fr. Bill Garrison

Associate

Rev. Carole Horton-Howe

Associate

Rev. Carolyn Estrada

Deacon

Rev. Kay Lozano

Music Director

Kevin McKelvie

Parish Administrator

Dottie Andersen

Facilities Manager

Ben Gonzalez

Treasurer

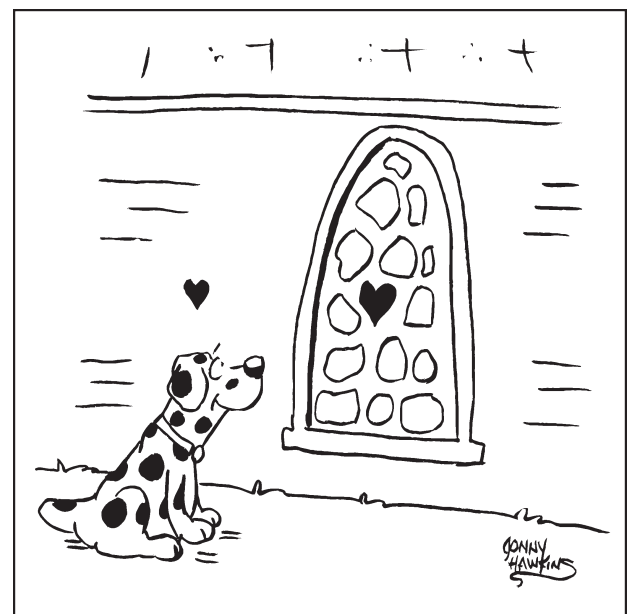
Kathel Harris

Bookkeeper

Kent Meyers

Special Dates in February

- * Valentine’s Day, February 14
- * Presidents Day, February 17
- * Transfiguration of Our Lord, February 23
- * Ash Wednesday, February 26



Funds For The Future

As a long standing member of the Futures Fund Committee I want to assure you that the committee has in the past and will do so in the future do everything we can do to keep you informed on investment strategies and the many, many ways it is possible for each of you to invest in the future of St. Matthias.

This committee will be meeting in the very near future to again look at ways to keep you informed. If there are subjects you would like more information on and would be open to listening to experts on these investment subjects please let me know and we will see what we can do to accommodate your request. It is important that each of you have a say in your commitments to St. Mathias and its future.

We have received the year end statement dated December 31, 2019 regarding our future fund. The results look good and we are pleased with the safe way we have invested your contributions.

- Statement amount as of December 31, 2018 - \$414,856.59
- Statement amount as of December 31, 2019 - \$481,643.11

These figures show a growth in this fund during 2019 of \$66,786.52

Stan Jamieson - Member



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