

June 2021

# The Messenger

**St. Matthew's Episcopal Church**

9349 E. 65<sup>th</sup> Street, Raytown, Missouri 64133  
Phone: 816.353.4592 Email: stmattsrayment@gmail.com



## St. Matthew's Staff

Sherry Minzey  
Remote  
Admin. Assistant

Patti McGill  
Music Director

## Officers

Judy Taylor  
Senior Warden

Carl Turlin  
Junior Warden

David Macey  
Treasurer

Linda Gerding  
Secretary

## Service Times

10:00 a.m.  
Sunday Service  
First & Third Sundays  
Holy Eucharist  
Rite II  
Second and Fourth  
Sundays  
Morning Prayer

## *Sr. Warden's Message*

Happy June, St. Matthew's! Thanks to everyone who came to our May 30<sup>th</sup> Morning Prayer service, our first service back in the church since November 2020. In addition to the inside service, we continue to transmit to cars in the parking lot by tuning to FM station 88.7 and online via Zoom. There's no longer any excuse not to come to church, even due to bad weather!

We continue our search for a new priest, praying for the right and perfect fit for our congregation and to help us grow. Vestry, at the suggestion of Jr. Warden Carl Turlin, is praying every day for one month the Prayer for St. Matthew's and the Prayer for Guidance in Choosing a New Priest that we pray each Sunday at church. We believe that focused, specific prayers for what we want, and need, will result in positive outcomes for our church. Following are both prayers. Will you join us?

### A Prayer for St. Matthews:

Heavenly Father, Pour Down your Holy Spirit upon this Parish, and grant us a new vision of your glory, a new experience of your power, a new faithfulness to your word, a new consecration to your service, so that, through our renewed witness, your Holy Name may be glorified and your kingdom advanced, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen*

### A Prayer for Guidance in Choosing a New Priest:

Almighty God, we pray for the guidance of your Holy Spirit as we seek a new priest for St. Matthew's. You know our special needs and the task that lies to our hand. Direct us in our search and give us insight to perceive the leader you would choose for us. And we further pray, O Lord, that in this time of waiting we may all devote ourselves afresh to your service, so that nothing be lost of the faithful work of the past, but rather that it may be brought to a rich harvest in the years to come. This we ask in the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen*.

---

Continued from page 1

As we search for our new priest, we are alternating Eucharist services with morning prayer. This month we had the pleasure of having two supply priests for our Eucharist services, Mtr. Elisabeth Sinclair on May 2<sup>nd</sup> and Fr. Eric Anderson for Pentecost on May 23<sup>rd</sup>. Fr. Eric gave his sermon on the Holy Spirit. It was so inspirational that I asked him if we could get a copy for the newsletter. He agreed, and you can read his Pentecost sermon below.

You will read in Fr. Eric's May sermon a suggestion that we have a small group spiritual retreat. We will look into that possibility, maybe in conjunction with Prayer Group and Daughters of the King. If this sounds like something you would be interested in, please mention your interest to me, Linda Gerding, Linda Batson or Zella Forsythe.

As you may recall, St. Matthew's was awarded a grant to purchase equipment to offer streaming of our services. The equipment is in and we will soon be streaming our services online. This will replace Zoom for Sunday services and allow us to increase our reach throughout the community and even throughout the country. We've had several people attend our Zoom services from other states, and having a You Tube and Facebook Live presence will help ours members and others reach us as the service is streaming live as well as later at their leisure.

Starting in April, St. Matthew's held a five-session Uncomfortable Conversations With a Black Man book study, hosted by Jason Brooks and Carlos Arroyo, with input from family members Christina Brooks and Tish and Madison Arroyo. Carlos and his family were out of town during two sessions of the study, but Carlos was able to access Zoom for both the Sunday service and to co-host the book study. We had great discussions, with all of us coming away with greater insight into issues facing people of color. We've agreed to continue our discussions through additional book studies to raise awareness of the issues. (More information will be provided once we've selected a book.)

Don't forget The Wildwood Boys will be at St. Matt's on Saturday, June 5<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. in the parking lot to perform great blue grass music and a few old gospel tunes. Bring your lawn chairs, a drink, and a snack. Rick Roberts will work with the AA folks to get access to the old church building for 50 cent sodas.

As tough as this pandemic has been for all of us, there is a silver lining for St. Matthew's. We were forced to think of new ways to keep us together, and as a result, we're finding new ways to reach others with God's Word and also helping ourselves to stay connected. We look forward to seeing everyone back inside for church. Remember, coffee hour resumes June 6<sup>th</sup>! We will see you then!!

Best wishes,  
Judy Taylor  
Sr. Warden

---

**PRNTECOST SUNDAY**  
**SAINT MATTHEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH**  
**MAY 23, 2021**

Today we enter into the season of Pentecost. The church has six seasons in its liturgical calendar year, and Pentecost season takes up nearly half the calendar year. Pentecost Sunday is a high feast day in the calendar year. However, unlike Christmas, we don't celebrate with presents, or Easter with colorful eggs and candy.

Why the Church hasn't celebrated this day with more fanfare is unclear to me? As for why society doesn't celebrate this day, it is because they don't believe in the Holy Spirit because the Holy Spirit like wind cannot be controlled or manipulated.

When I was the Assistant Rector in Washington DC, on Pentecost Sunday I would rent a helium tank and the youth group would decorate the church in 100 red balloons. It was like being in a forest of balloons. I was so glad to see when I pulled into the parking lot here to see many red balloons surrounding the altar. For me these particular red balloons on Pentecost Sunday represent an outward and visible sign of inward and spiritual grace, reminding all who have eyes to see that the Holy Spirit is truly present with us in the here and now.

One thing that I learned and still remember from my days as a seminarian was from my Hebrew language class. When I talk about the Holy Spirit, I always use the feminine pronoun because in the Hebrew Scriptures the word for Spirit is written in the feminine pronoun.

Pentecost Sunday is one of the seven traditional days for the Church to baptize. If we had our BOC today, I may have chosen to preach on our Baptism Covenant, it is in our baptism that we are **sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked as Christ forever.**

- Several years ago, I lived and worked in Japan. One day I was in Tokyo visiting an art museum and a young Japanese man came up to me and said hello. We sat down with a cup of coffee and began to talk. He told me he had recently spent a year in Italy going to college there and as he was walking around the churches there looking at the art, he would stop to listen to the priest give their sermons and he had questions about the Christian faith. His name was Kouichi. He told me he was from a strict Buddhist family and never heard of a loving and forgiving God growing up. He asked me if I would teach him more about God, and I said yes. I bought Kouichi a Bible and began teaching him the gospels and I invited him to go to the Episcopal Japanese church with me called Nippon Se ko Ki. As my work was coming to an end in Japan, he asked me if I would baptize him, but not in Japan, he wanted to come to my church in the States to be baptized, again I said yes. I told Kouichi it was common to choose a new baptismal name. He thought about that and wanted his baptismal name to be John. I asked him why John? He said because I would like to be like John the Baptist and proclaim to the Japanese people the coming of Christ. Kouichi had met my parents in Japan and asked them to be his Godparents. It was at Christmas time he flew out to Kansas, and he was baptized at the Christmas eve service. Upon being baptized he started to glow, really glow, as the Holy Spirit light upon him. His smile was contagious and there was a wonderful extra happiness in that church that Christmas night.

Continued on page 4-5

---

In our Gospel (John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15) today we learn about the Holy Trinity. Here the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit are all mentioned. We hear about One God with three unique persons or characteristics. In this sermon we will look at the unique characteristics of the Holy Spirit.


Jesus told his disciples “Unless I go away the Counselor will not come”. Jesus doesn’t say Why, but he clearly taught that the saving work on the cross was necessary to the sending of the Spirit. The cross was God’s judgement on this world. Satan, the ruler of this world would see the cross as his triumph. In fact, it was his defeat.

The word Counselor here is a legal term that means Advocate. The Holy Spirit will always stand by the Christian person especially when we call upon her for help especially in times of suffering, illness, persecution, guidance, and making difficult decisions.

The Holy Spirit is also known as the Spirit of Truth. She wants to be in a loving relationship with us. We are to feel and experience the Holy Spirit in our heart, not just to think about and analyze her in our mind. Through experiencing the Holy Spirit, our spirit is set free like the wind and we come to know God in a new and profoundly growing relationship.

In this sermon I want to share two stories of experiencing the Holy Spirit. One story is my own personal story and the other is about a patient I visited when I was a hospital chaplain.

- When I was thirty-one years old, I had a focal-point seizure coming home from church. I called my doctor and told him what happened and he told me to meet him at the hospital. When I arrived, they immediately had me do a CT scan. My doctor met me after the scan and told me that this didn’t look good and that I could even die from this. With this information I was put into a hospital room. That day and evening I had so many friends visit me that by the end of the day my room looked like a floral shop. When the last person left the room, the room was finally quiet and dark. I was tired so I rolled over in my bed and began to say my night time prayers. I have always begun these prayers with, now I lay me down to sleep. Then I heard a gentle voice that told me, “You will be sick for a long time, but you will not die from this”. I said thank you and closed my eyes and fell asleep. In the morning, my doctor came into my room and told me the results of the scan telling me I had a brain tumor. My response to him was, “a brain tumor, I have a brain tumor, thank God only a brain tumor”. I knew brain tumors could be removed and I knew I wasn't going die from this because the Spirit of Truth had told me. A couple of weeks later I had my first brain surgery to discover what kind of tumor I had. It was an astro-cytoma in my motor cortex. A very deadly tumor that was at the time of diagnoses non operable and every doctor who worked on my case told me that I would die from this brain tumor. I was sick for about five years where my life basically stops and what I learned in this time was how to live in the moment. I would eventually be the first person to undergo experimental surgery to remove my tumor and be healed; a true spiritual and medical magical.

- 
- 
- Another story I like to share on experiencing the Holy Spirit took place when I was a hospital chaplain in KCMO. I specialized as a heart transplant chaplain. In this vocation I did spiritual assessments on people being considered for heart transplant. I came to know these patients very well before, during and after their heart transplant. There was a patient who I got to know very well because his heart condition was so critical, he could not wait at home for a heart like most patients do, but he had to be an inpatient and stay in the ICU. In my visits with him I came to know he was a quiet man, but a man of deep faith. One day he requested me to come and visit him. He told me, I think God is telling me it is time for me to go back to my house and die. I asked him why he thought that? He said, “because I have been here so long and I still haven’t received a heart and, in my prayers, I hear nothing”. I said to him, “There are other ways for us to hear God's voice and that is by what God is saying through another person. I went on to ask him what God was saying to him through his wife?” This patient had a kind of ‘me and Jesus’ relationship. He said to me, “that’s very interesting. I haven’t thought about it in that way.” The next day he asked me to visit him again. He told me that his wife had a long conversation with him and he had made the decision not to go home but to wait there for his new heart which came several days after our visit. I continued to see this patient on his checkup visits and he is living a healthy life.

The Holy Spirit wants us to hear and know her love for us and one another.

Some of the ways that I strengthen my relationship with the Holy Spirit, and I encourage you to do the same, is through daily prayer, meditation, and attending a silent retreat at a monastery. A silent retreat to a monastery can be an individual experience or done as a small group church group experience. It allows you the time, space, and quietness to enable your spirit to be in communion with God in a sacred space.

I also encourage you to share your personal experiences and stories you have had with the Holy Spirit with family and friends and with strangers. With the help of the Holy Spirit, go out into the world and proclaim the love of God through your actions and words.

Amen,

The Reverend Eric A. Anderson

---

Starting May 30<sup>th</sup>, St. Matthew’s Sunday Services will move back inside the church. Services will remain the same with the First & Third Sundays being Holy Eucharist. The Second and Fourth Sundays will be Morning Prayer. All Services start at 10:00 a.m.

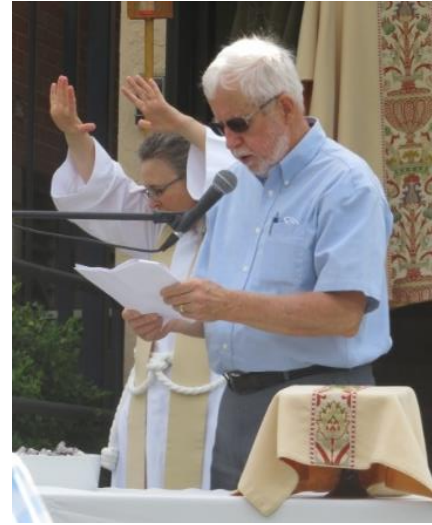


---

## TOGETHER AGAIN...BUT STILL OUTSIDE

On May 2, 2021 St. Matthew's parishioners were able to once again gather together on the parking lot to worship. The last time we had worshipped together inside was on November 15, 2020 with Fr. Eric Anderson as Supply Priest. COVID numbers began to rise again and we had to revert to using Zoom for our services.

This was a Eucharist service and Mt. Elisabeth Sinclair was our Supply Priest. This would be the last time we would be able to have Mt. Sinclair serve for us as she would soon leave to pursue a position as a Priest in Mexico City, Mexico. St. Matthew's had been very fortunate to have Mt. Sinclair worship over 10 times with us as our Supply Priest during the past seven months. This was a beautiful Sunday to be back together and to say farewell to Mt. Elisabeth.



---

## St. Matthew's Book Study "Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man"

At the recommendation of the Diocese, and a 2021 goal of St. Matthew's Vestry, it was reported on the Parochial Report that the Vestry would commit "to work toward racial justice and reconciliation". To begin that work the Vestry offered to the congregation the opportunity to have conversations and do a study of the book "Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man" by Emmanuel Acho.

Beginning on April 11<sup>th</sup> and meeting for five Sundays after church until May 23<sup>rd</sup>, an average of 16 parishioners participated in the study. (12 consistently every Sunday with a high number of 18 for two Sundays) The sessions were facilitated by Carlos Arroyo and Jason Brooks. A couple of the sessions were even Zoomed so Carlos could participate from out-of-town. The Vestry and participating parishioners were very grateful for both men's leadership, shared insight, and candor.

Linda Gerding-Vestry



May 2<sup>nd</sup> Session



May 2<sup>nd</sup> Session



May 23<sup>rd</sup> Session



Pictures continued on page 4.

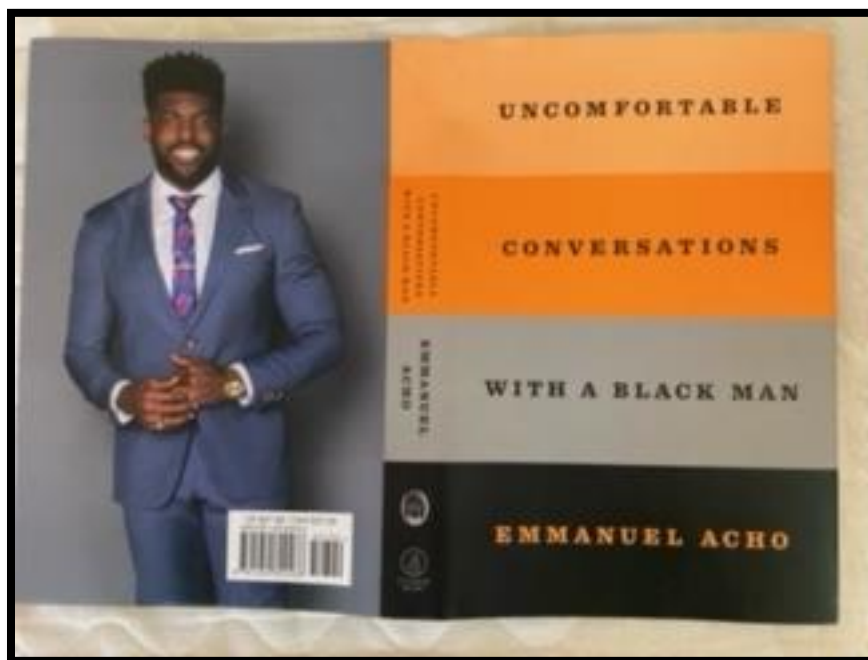


---

Book Study continued.



Zoom Book Study





---

## ST. MATTHEW'S COMMUNITY OF CHAPLAINS May 2, 2021

Mary Cease was the Host for the May Circle of Care meeting for St. Matthew's Community of Chaplains. The Chaplains were excited to actually be meeting again in-person on the Parish lawn. Everyone brought their lunch and enjoyed the "picnic" atmosphere. After some brief business and discussion Mary had everyone read a paragraph in a chapter from the book The Gift of Years, Growing Older Gracefully by Joan Chittister. This is a wonderful and insightful book which the Chaplains are determined to finish together...we are getting close.

Blessings,  
Linda Gerding  
COC Chaplain



L-R Linda Gerding's chair, Marci Turlin, Carl Turlin, Zella Forsythe, Mary Cease, Patti McGill  
(not pictured: Brenda & Jim Laney)



---

## ST. MATT'S SPRING YARD WORK DAY 2021



Carl Turlin

On Saturday May 1st Carl Turlin, Jr. Warden, organized a Spring work day on the lawn and gardens. Due to COVID in 2020, not much had been able to be accomplished in the upkeep of the Parish grounds. The following pictures help show some of the work that was done by the “Magnificent Seven” who showed up to work. A REALLY BIG THANKS to everyone who helped!!



Linda Gerding & Judy Taylor



Jason & Dominic Brooks  
Nicolas Turlin, Bill Noone



Nicolas Turlin  
Dominic Brooks, Judy Taylor



Bill Noon & Jason Brooks



Bill Noone



---

# Flying Solo



Flying solo was held at the Cook's home on May 15th. There were 14 in attendance. We shared pizza and had a lot of laughs. Come and join us Saturday, June 5 for the Wildwood Boys at 4pm at St. Matthew's parking lot. Bring a lawn chair and a friend and enjoy some bluegrass!





---

## RAYTOWN SUMMER LUNCH MINISTRY-2021 COVID-19 STRATGEY CONTINUES

Dear Parish Family,

Again, this year St. Matthew's has the opportunity to participate in "The Raytown Summer Lunch Ministry". This program currently involves local congregations working together to share the love of Jesus by feeding hungry children in Raytown during summer vacation.

Again, this year the program will supply food for breakfasts and lunches in grocery bags that may be picked up once a week every Tuesday. Grocery sacks of food will be distributed to the community starting on June 8<sup>th</sup> from the parking lot of Raytown Christian Church. Distribution times will be 4:00-6:00pm. Volunteers are being limited and no children are allowed to help again this year.

The Service & Outreach Commission would like to ask St. Matthew's Parish to help support this program.

**You can send a check, in any amount (\$5.00?), to the following:**

### **Raytown Christian Church**


**Summer Lunch Program**

**6108 Blue Ridge Blvd.**

**Raytown, MO 64133**

**In the memo line of the check write "Summer Lunch"**

**Thank you for your support.  
Service & Outreach Commission**



**Your Food for Breakfasts and Lunches is in the Grocery Bag!!!  
Once A Week  
Every Tuesday, 4-6 pm  
(or until supply gone)**

**Raytown Summer Lunch Ministry, 2021  
at  
Raytown Christian Church  
6108 Blue Ridge Blvd  
(across from Raytown High School)**

<b>June 8</b>	<b>July 6</b>	<b>August 3</b>
<b>June 15</b>	<b>July 13</b>	<b>August 10</b>
<b>June 22</b>	<b>July 20</b>	<b>August 17</b>
<b>June 29</b>	<b>July 27</b>	<b>August 24</b>

Due to continued restrictions related to Covid-19, Raytown Summer Lunch Ministry volunteers will NOT be coming to your neighborhood this summer to distribute lunches. However, your family can pick up a FREE bag of groceries EACH week until school starts again in the fall.

Groceries are delivered to your car curbside in the parking lot by the ramped entrance. Families with children (of any age) in the Raytown School District are welcome. You do not need an ID to receive a bag of groceries.

Information is available on facebook at: Raytown Summer Lunch Ministry

---

## Some Privileges of Racial Power

I am reasonably confident that even in the face of an affordable housing crisis, I can find a neighborhood where I can afford to live, with reasonable assurance that my neighbors will be neutral or pleasant toward me.

I can see many people of my race widely represented in virtually all communication media, in positive and often powerful roles.

When I read or hear about our national heritage or “Western Civilization,” I am shown that people of my color made it what it is.

I can be sure that my children will be given curricular materials in school that testify to the existence and contributions of my race.

I can readily find a hairdresser or barber in my community who knows how to deal with my hair.

Whether I use checks, credit cards, or cash, I can be sure that my skin color will not detract from my appearance of financial responsibility.

In my community I can easily buy books, posters, greeting cards, and magazines from nearly every retailer of these items that feature people of my race.

I can take a job with any employer without wondering – or worrying about my co-workers thinking – whether I got the job because of my race.

I am free of implications that my shape, my bearing, or by body odor are reflections of my race.

When I express concern about racism, I tend to be credited with empathy or even charity, generosity, and love for my neighbor, rather than thought of as self-interested – unless, of course, I am totally discounted as being “out of date” or “living in the past.”

If I need legal, medical, or other professional help, I can be sure to find a competent professional of my own race within reasonably close distance and that my race will not work against me.

I can be late to a meeting without having my tardiness attributed to my race.

I can arrange my life so that I will never have to experience feelings of rejection owing to my race.

I can do well in a challenging situation without being called a credit to my race.

---

Continued from page 9

I can appear unkempt, I can fail to promptly answer letters or emails, or I can curse and be obnoxious without having people attribute these choices to the morality, poverty, or illiteracy of my race.

I am rarely or never asked to speak for all the people of my racial group, or assumed, in my opinions, or behavior, to represent my racial group.

Even in an age when diversity is often affirmed publicly, I can remain oblivious to the language and customs of persons from cultures other than my own without penalty or sanction.

With exceptions that remain rare, I can be fairly certain that if I demand to speak the highest authority in an institution, I will be facing a person of my race.

If I am stopped by a traffic police officer or audited by the IRS, I can be pretty sure that I have not been racially profiled.

I can consider a vast range of options – social, political, professional, or imaginative – without needing to ask whether a person of my race would be accepted or allowed to do what I want to do.

I have no difficulty finding a convenient house of worship whose leaders, and all (or virtually all) members, share my racial identity, and where the founders of my faith are portrayed in art as if they could be related to me.

I can generally be assured that my children will learn about history and culture from the point of view that affirms power for people who look like me.

These may seem like odd statements to you. Sadly, they represent serious issues which you will hear more about next month. Please ponder these statements in your heart and watch for the follow up in July.

Barbara Wegener & Cristina Brooks



---

## Prayer of Wisdom and Understanding

As I wrestle with the doubts concerning the issues I face today, I recall my abilities of wisdom and understanding that always reside within me.

I honor my heart's desire to know the Truth, just as the apostle Thomas doubted because he yearned for greater understanding, for the knowing that arises from beyond the material.

I trust in the spiritual guidance that I receive in prayer, which reveals greater insight and a higher vantage point from which to perceive my current circumstances.

The scope of my vision has expanded, and I use wisdom to evaluate my options so I can proceed with decisive actions that serves the highest good of all involved.

I am wise and judge rightly with an intuitive knowing of the potential for good in all experiences. I see the world from an enlightened perspective, and I am at piece.

Rev. Jeanmarie Eck

Linda Batson, Daughters of the King



---

## GIVING REMINDER



Just a reminder that you have options on how you can send in your pledge.

By mail: Dave Macey's address: 2200 NW  
Summerfield Dr., Lee's Summit, MO 64081

Online: Online Giving Link: <http://stmatthewsraytown.org/>

---

**AIDS WALK 2021**



Final amount collected for AIDS Walk from St. Matthew's parishioners: **\$200.00**

Thank you Parish!

Linda Gerding  
Service & Community Outreach



**June 23<sup>rd</sup>**  
**July Messenger &  
Calendar Deadline**

