

# Church of St. Matthew - Bulletin Insert

December 24, 2023  
Fourth Sunday of Advent

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent

Saturday, December 23 – 4:15 pm

Sunday, December 24 – 10:15 am

### Christmas Eve

Vigil, Sunday, December 24 – 4:15 pm

### Christmas Day

Monday, December 25 – 10:15 am

### The Feast of the Holy Family

Saturday, December 30 – 4:15 pm

Sunday, December 31 – 10:15 am

### Solemnity of Mary, The Holy Mother of God

Monday, January 1, 2024 – 10:15 am

## From the Parish Council



St. Matthew's Parish Council met on December 7. Here are a few highlights:

- Listening Sunday – We received a comment that kneelers are too close together and there is not enough room to accommodate people comfortably. We're looking at how to space out the kneelers so people don't feel crowded.
- Future Planning – Building on the recent synod process, the council discussed ideas to engage the parish community around the questions:

*What do we want St. Matthew's parish to look like in three years and what would we need to do to achieve that vision?*

- St. Matthew's Youth Group – Council members hosted a kick off meeting in November where parents and young people shared their ideas for a youth group. A second event was scheduled for December 17<sup>th</sup> when youth group members helped pack Isaac's Blessings Bags in the Social Hall.

Complete meeting notes will be approved at the next meeting on January 25, and posted on St. Matt's website. If you have questions or comments to share with the Parish Council, you can send an email to [parishcouncil@st-matts.org](mailto:parishcouncil@st-matts.org).

*Kathy Goldenstein and Maggie Lee*  
St. Matthew Parish Council Co-Chairs

## Grief Support Group Meeting

The next Grief Support Group meeting is **Thursday, December 28 at 6:00 PM** in the Parish Center.

Please note the date change. Email Mary Leibl ([mleibl@st-matts.org](mailto:mleibl@st-matts.org)) with any questions.



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## Thin-Veil Moments

This year we are experiencing the shortest Advent season possible. We celebrate the fourth Sunday of Advent in the morning, and gather again the very same evening for our Christmas Eve service.

Tonight, around the country and around the world our churches will all be packed. And I am so grateful for this. People come to celebrate with family, to honor loved ones, or possibly, to search for something they haven't connected with in a long time. And sometimes, those of us who attend weekly services can make light of this fact. Here come the "Poinsettia and Lily Catholics."

But if we examine this statement more closely, there are so many reasons why people choose not to attend Mass weekly, often due to a traumatic event in their spiritual lives. But here they come. And I have a thought about why.

I believe Christmas is a "thin-veil" moment. A night when old scrooges are visited by happy spirits, perhaps. Or when each of us is visited by the happy spirits in our own lives. We can sense and connect more deeply with the love we've experienced. And so, we come. To celebrate. To give thanks. To remember. To connect.

So, let's welcome all those who come to celebrate this sacred time and sacred space. And know that these visitors help us enter into our own thin spaces and grow in love in our own hearts.

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas.

*Cristina Czaia*  
Director of Music and Liturgy  
[cczaia@st-matts.org](mailto:cczaia@st-matts.org)



## Security Update

Our new security system is almost complete! Task force members recently met with our vendor, and we learned more about how the system works. Parts are already "live" and others will be within a short time. I'm pleased that we're making things safer here at St. Matt's.

Thanks again to everyone whose contributions during the past two November Giving Thanks fundraisers have made this progress possible!

*Phil Grant*

## The Treasure within Our Tears: Reflections on Grief, Hope and Resurrection

by William C. Wacker (local author)

Parishioners have found this book to be helpful when dealing with grief and loss.

A copy of the book is available at a special holiday pricing of \$5 (normally \$10) through Thursday, December 28. If you are interested in purchasing this book, contact **Matt Wacker at 651-324-6308**.

*You will be able to pick it up in the Parish Center during normal business hours, Monday through Thursday from 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM. The office is closed on Monday and Tuesday, December 25 and 26.*

