

# LEADERSHIP REPORTS

- 1. Interim Rector Report**
- 2. Senior Warden Report**
- 3. Junior Warden Report**
- 4. Nominating Committee Report**
- 5. Report on Diocesan Annual Council**

# INTERIM RECTOR REPORT

## Interim Rector

Mother Pat Miller

You all know that the mission of St. Matthew's is to "continue the incarnation of Jesus Christ". That is the short version of the mission statement, but it is the action part, and you have worked to live that mission every day. That mission to continue the incarnation of Jesus has guided the work and ministry of all the various committees and leadership groups of the parish.

During 2022, St. Matthew's was able to worship in-person for all Sunday and weekday services and all ministries resumed in-person activities. In addition, the parish was able to live-stream broadcast the principle service on Sunday and several funeral services at the request of families. All scheduled worship services were held without cancellations due to weather or due to the pandemic.

During 2022, the Office Staff worked from the parish offices and not remotely. The Office Staff job descriptions were revised and hours adjusted to provide the greatest coverage for support of the parish. Susan Carson, Administrative Support for Worship and Communications now works T, W, & Th 9 am to 2 pm. Mary Vore, Registrar and Office support for Vestry & ministry committees works Mon 9 am to 1 pm and T & W 10 am to 1 pm. Both positions are cross-trained to allow ministry support to be uninterrupted during vacations and other absences. This level of part-time staff coverage provides needed support to the parish without the expense of a full-time office administrator. Mary Vore replaced Lindsay Wheeler who took a full-time position with a health care company over the summer.

During 2022, the Director of Music/Organist has encouraged the choirs growth and handbells have also resumed under new leadership. See additional details in the Music Director's report. Also, the Pastoral Care Committee which is the steering and coordinating group for all the various in-reach ministries such as crisis meal delivery, card ministry, transportation needs and pastoral visits to sick and homebound members met monthly to coordinate the important work of parish support. We trained 7 Lay Eucharistic Visitors who now visit many of our homebound members taking communion to them about every other month. This group coordinates various concerns and requests from members of the parish who need support due to illness, disability, or resources. The Pastoral Care Committee also supports the newly established Grief Support Group whose members gather to share and support each other as they deal with the loss of a family member. This ministry is coordinated by the Clergy and the Vestry liaison for Pastoral Ministries.

The Worship Committee has also been active this year with representatives from AV, Choirs, Acolytes, Servers, Vergers, Altar Guild, Flower Guild, Music Director, Lectors, and other interested individuals. This working group is coordinated by the Clergy and together the worship committee plans seasonal liturgical events and worship. Susan Carson is the office support person for the worship bulletins and other worship resources.

Now the year in numbers: Average Sunday Attendance has risen to 109 per Sunday, Midweek Children's Chapel attendance averages 70/week and the Wednesday Public Service of Healing and Eucharist averages 8/week. We had 9 deaths of parish members this year and 2 funerals for non-parish members and unchurched community members. Two baptisms, one confirmation and one reception into the Episcopal Church were part of our common life in 2022. In addition, you will see in the financial report that we were able to provide resources for all parish ministries and activities including two youth interns who helped our adult volunteers with programming for the youth. You will find additional detail for all parish ministries in the annual reports included in this package.

It has been my delight to share ministry with everyone at St. Matthew's and as my time as your Interim Rector draws to a close on Dec 31st, I leave you knowing that you are busy doing God's work and that St. Matthew's has a bright future continuing the incarnation of Jesus Christ. Blessings on your 2023 ministries.

Mother Pat Miller+

# SENIOR WARDEN REPORT

## Senior Warden

Trisha Voiles / [tvoiles@att.net](mailto:tvoiles@att.net)

Hello, St. Matthews Family!

As in previous years, the Annual Meeting Report is the collection of reports from the Rector, the Senior Warden, the Finance Committee, and all committees that influenced the life of St. Matthews during the previous year. The reports represent the time, talent, treasures that have been spent in each ministry the previous year and to highlight the plans for the coming year.

In 2022, we worked with the Vestry to build a community with the common goal of working together to celebrate God, Life, and Our Church Family. We began the year making sure we had all positions filled, committees and chairpersons in place. Outreach had the plans we use to follow helping our neighbors and community. The Nominating Committee began their diligent task of finding a new rector with implementing a church-wide survey and developing a church profile. Long Range Planning shared goals for us to reach towards. As Spring brought the emergent of new life in nature, St. Matthews began emerging with new life on our campus. Fellowship began planning more in-person events in the community and at St. Matthews. Youth attended Diocese and church wide events. Little did we know in the Spring, the youth were getting a glimpse of our future. Building & Grounds completed the Undercroft project and began making sure our campus was ready for a full opening with Safety and Security a priority. AV Communications completed the AV Booth project to enhance our virtual service. The greatest accomplishment for Spring was the lifting of the mask requirement yet leaving masks optional for those who choose! Worship Committee planned for our choice of Intinction or Common Cup. As summer approached, we began seeing the increase in the unexpected loss of loved ones of the parish. We planned many wonderful Life Celebrations to honor our members. Our Inreach/Pastoral Care team was involved in making sure parishioners were being contacted and a Grief Group was established for those suffering losses. We looked forward to the Fall and our continued increase in numbers. We began the new school year with a Christian Ed Circus Celebration followed by a St. Matthews Day Luncheon and Ministry Fair Celebration. Stewardship asked us to Listen to God for where we are to share our Spiritual Gifts of Time, Talent, and Treasures. Once again, St. Matthews campus was alive with excitement which only continued through weekly Worship services, Thanksgiving Luncheon, Lessons & Carols, Advent activities, and Christmas Services.

WOW! Looking back over the year, we have come a long way and accomplished so many things that the individual ministries will cover in their reports for 2022. We are encouraged with our pledges and increased numbers in the pews. We would love for all to see St. Matthew's as a place where vital relationships are formed and a place to foster spiritual growth and community. Allow 2023 to be the year we all grow closer to God together as a St. Matthew's Family.

Peace and Prayers,

Trisha Voiles, Senior Warden

# JUNIOR WARDEN REPORT

## Junior Warden

Jack Denton / [jackdenton@faithrealty.com](mailto:jackdenton@faithrealty.com)

2022 has been a definite year of significant changes at St. Matthews. We have essentially arisen from the Pandemic, but we are still experiencing periods of higher than normal infections, while moving forward to try to get back to some form of normalcy. As the liaison of the Finance Committee, I have seen our financial picture go through ups and downs, but, with the hard work of the committee, we have had more ups than downs. But as we all know we must stay vigilant through 2023 and beyond.

This past year we challenged the Vestry to be more responsible for their own ministry budgets. We asked them to submit a budget based on what their expected activities and ministry needs will be for 2023. This not only helps in the planning for activities for the coming year, but also gives them some ownership for their future plans. By going through this budget process, we will be invigorating our Ministries and as a result more folks will become interested in getting involved.

I think our challenge for this year and in the future is to reach out to those folks we haven't seen for such a long while. Currently, we are doing this by way of zoom Sunday morning worship services and by our other communication outlets, such as the Friday E-letter and our website.

One of the most important ingredients for our future this past year was the calling of our new Rector, Father Tim Myers and the bringing together of the parish to support him in all his future plans for us. Our goal this coming year will be to work closely with Father Tim to begin to reach out through "invitational Ministry" and personally invite folks to come and join us again. The nominating committee worked tirelessly and did a great job in leading us to call Father Tim to St. Matthews. We are so excited to see what the future holds for us and Father Tim in this new position for him and his family.

2022 was indeed a challenging year but the future of St. Matthews looks extremely bright. Let's all work together, strengthened by prayer and togetherness, to make 2023 a great year for all of us here at SMEC.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jack Denton

Junior Warden

# NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORT

## **Vestry Liaison**

Joan Kengla / [jk2ridge@comcast.net](mailto:jk2ridge@comcast.net)

## **Committee Chair**

Bernie Waller / [berniewaller@hotmail.com](mailto:berniewaller@hotmail.com)

**Number of Active Participants on this Committee:** 12

## **What is the purpose of this Ministry?**

Our goal was to receive feedback from the parish and build a profile of the needs of the church. This was accomplished by the Holy Cow survey.

The position was posted on various sites, then the work began to find a new rector.

Interviews followed with many discussions.

## **What were your Ministry's most significant accomplishments this year?**

We were able to recommend a highly qualified candidate to the vestry.

## **What have been your biggest challenges?**

Conducting this work remotely via zoom.

## **What programs or events does your Ministry have planned for 2023?**

Our ministry is complete with no further action needed.

## **Any other information you would like to share about your work and your Ministry?**

The committee was well formed and represented the diverse needs of the parish well. Everyone was respectful and collaborative.

# REPORT ON DIOCESAN ANNUAL COUNCIL

## Diocesan Delegate

Kenny Adkins / [kadkins@tcsq.edu](mailto:kadkins@tcsq.edu)

This report is compiled from my experiences as a St. Matthews delegate to the Atlanta Diocese' annual Council conducted on November 11-12, 2022. Based on voting tallies, I estimate there were approximately 300 voting members; of which approximately 100 were clergy and 200 were lay delegates. The Council debated and voted on several proposed resolutions. While I will leave the reporting of the resolution debates and votes to others who attended, I would like to focus on three specific observations of mine during the conference. .

### **Observation #1: Bishop Wright is the right person to lead this Diocese at this time.**

As is his responsibility, Bishop Wright chaired the Diocesan Council. While I have seen Bishop Wright officiate church services and preach sermons before, I was struck by his presence at this event. Words such as patient, thoughtful, focused, articulate, informed, and authentic came to mind as I witnessed him masterfully conducting the business of the Council. Several controversial issues were debated during the conference. Bishop Wright navigated the discussion of these issues in a way that respected everyone's opinion. All participants who wanted to comment were allowed to have their opinions heard, yet he did not allow the discussions to become sidetracked by partisan attacks. His sense of humor and wit allowed him to assuage sometimes very emotional discussions. He skillfully navigated the conversations to stay focused and moving forward. We should count ourselves blessed to have had Bishop Wright at the helm of the Atlanta Diocese over the past ten years.

### **Observation #2: We need to encourage increased leadership participation at St. Matthews.**

Early on in the conference, Bishop Wright asked the assembly to raise their hand if this was their first Diocesan Council. Only about 20 of over 300 participants indicated this was their first council; with myself included in the count of 20. That struck me as an incredibly small amount of new blood. That revelation got me to thinking of the leadership at St. Matthews. While we have a group of wonderfully dedicated parishioners serving in leadership roles, there seems to be a lack of new volunteers willing to step up and assume leadership roles within the Parish. Yes, I am including myself in this indictment as I have been a member of St. Matthews for almost 20 years now, yet have not served in any type of leadership role for several years. We seem to be rotating the same small group of volunteers performing parish leadership roles with little diversity. That reminds me of the definition of insanity, doing the same thing over and over, while expecting different results. We absolutely must encourage new talent to serve as parish leaders. However, I believe some of the hesitancy to volunteer for a leadership role in the parish may be rooted in a lack of understanding of what is expected of the volunteer and how they fit into the overall parish governance. While I would love to take credit for the following idea, it was actually Jay Jones who mentioned it in our discussions. Every county in Metro Atlanta encourages community participation in county governance by conducting Leadership Academies. In this training, they expose potential volunteers to the roles and functions of the various county departments and committees. I believe the same concept can be beneficial at St. Matthews. I am convinced that if we offer a St. Matthews Leadership Academy, we can encourage more parishioners to step up and offer their time and talent and assume a leadership role. I believe if, during the Fall months, we offered a short series of informational "classes" focused on the roles, responsibilities, and commitment required of each leadership position within the parish, it will encourage more volunteers with fresh ideas to assume leadership roles within the parish.

### **Observation #3: We must grow our youth participation.**

One of the things that attracted me to St. Matthews was the active youth program in the parish. I would constantly hear the sounds of children's voices and laughter in the congregation. It wasn't distracting; rather I viewed it as evidence of a vibrant church. The sight of youth and teens giggling and enjoying each other's company while they performed acolyte duties was heartwarming. The din of excited youth rejoining the congregation after Children's Chapel was endearing. The stories of youth participation in church activities such as Camp Mikell, Curseo, and New Beginnings was evidence that the congregational youth wanted to be at St. Matthews and learn about God and life in the Church. I remember the difficult conversations we had as a parish in deciding whether we needed a Director of Youth Programs or an Associate Priest. We felt we could not afford both. The conversations centered around whether it would be better to have a paid staff member solely focused on youth development or an Associate Priest who

could perform a myriad of duties, including running the youth program. We made the difficult decision to eliminate Sally Ulrey's position as Director of Youth Programs. I now believe that decision was wrong. Since then, we've relied on volunteers to run our youth development program. While these volunteers have devoted enormous amounts of time and talent in their devotion to our youth, they may not have had the experience and training needed to manage an effective program that nurtures the development of all of the parish youth through high school. Since we eliminated that paid staff position, our youth programs and participation have suffered mightily. We have very few children in the congregation. We used to have 5-6 youth acolytes at each service. Now, we struggle to have 2. As far as I know, our Children's Chapel program is gone. We no longer have a Cherub Choir. In other words, our youth have very little to look forward to when attending St. Matthews.

Our youth are, and always have been, happiest when interacting with each other in a positive and structured environment. Youth who enjoy their church environment invite their friends to join in. Those new friends encourage their parents to attend the church. It is through a vibrant youth development program that a church attracts new members and families. An active youth program is absolutely the key to success in growing our parish. Without that, we are treading water, at best, and dying as a congregation at worst. St. Matthews conducts a myriad of community outreach and parish inreach initiatives. Both Bishop Wright and the visiting bishop from the Diocese of Oregon, made similar remarks on the importance of engaging our youth in the church. We must be laser focused on increasing our youth presence in the church.

While both the parish and diocese are in stable financial condition right now, we are at risk of losing that stability if we do not increase our congregation numbers. If we don't grow our church, nothing else really matters. We can't be a church run by old folks. Our youth are too important to the continued survival of the church for them not to be one of our primary concerns. That is why I believe we absolutely must invest in our youth programs again by re-funding a full-time Director of Youth Programs position. Is it an expensive proposition? Yes. Will it reduce funds available for other outreach and inreach programs in the parish? Yes, at least in the short term. Can we survive as a congregation if we don't spend the money to focus on our youth? Absolutely not!

### **Final Thoughts:**

I want to thank the parish leadership for selecting me as one of the delegates to represent St. Matthews in this important conference. It has been an honor. The Church relies on a cadre of dedicated volunteers to function. We are blessed to have thoughtful leadership in the parish as well as the diocese. I am excited to see what our new Rector will bring in the form of new ideas and initiatives. We should do our best to match that enthusiasm with a renewed focus on growing our parish.

**Faithfully Submitted,**  
Kenny Adkins

# REPORT ON DIOCESAN ANNUAL COUNCIL

## Diocesan Delegate

Susan Jung / [susanjung@earthlink.net](mailto:susanjung@earthlink.net)

This was the first in-person Council meeting in two years. Upon entering, we were given individual miniature voting machines (smaller than the size of our phones) and then had instruction on how to use them.

An interesting article about what transpired can be found at <https://episcopalatlanta.org/news/regathering-adapting-and-experimenting-are-themes-of-116th-annual-council/>.

## The business side:

The business side included listening to reports – budget, various ministries within the Diocese, Diocesan initiatives, etc.

Action items included:

- Elected deputies for the general convention both clergy and lay
- Elected members of the Standing Committee – cleric and lay
- Elected Board of Governors for Mikell Camp and Conference Center (our own Jay Jones was a candidate)
- Voted on the resolutions that were presented. A copy of all the resolutions can be found at <https://episcopalatlanta.org/2022-annual-council/resolutions/>. All resolutions passed, two were withdrawn. Many people spoke both for and against.

Committee meetings – I attended the Committee on Youth Ministries and learned about many resources available at the Diocesan level.

## The spiritual side:

Worship was truly inspirational, at both the Eucharist and Morning Prayer the next day led by the youth. The music was a highlight of the worship.

## Process

Everyone who spoke (either for or against) was given the utmost respect and courtesy

## Fellowship

Opportunities to see old friends and meet new ones during break times. The Bishop invited us all to a reception, celebrating his 10th anniversary as Bishop.

It was fun to see our own former youth minister, Sally Ulrey in action at her job in the Diocese. Be sure to listen to her recording about congregational vitality on the article link above.

Bishop Rob presided with elegance, grace, humor, respect for rules of order (but used common sense), respect for everyone who spoke. His leadership skills were admirable.

It was an honor to serve St. Matthew's at Council.

Susan Jung