

LEADERSHIP REPORTS

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RECTOR REPORT

Rector

Father Tim Myers/ rector@stmatthewssnellville.org

2023 has been quite a year at St. Matthew's. From the moment I celebrated my first eucharist in the community to our first Christmas together, it has been an absolute joy to be with you as your rector. Coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic and the interim has presented many hurdles and obstacles as we regathered and looked ahead to the future. I am grateful for our parish leadership, especially the vestry and wardens, that helped the community through the past few years of transition and challenges.

Over the past year, I have learned much about St. Matthew's and what makes our parish community special and unique. Undoubtedly, the motto "It's the People" is reflected throughout every part of the campus and community. I have observed many programs, committees, and ministries with tremendous leadership and guidance, such as the Fellowship Committee, the Flower and Altar Guilds, the Brotherhood of St. Andrew, the Daughters of the King (who wrote our beautiful Prayers of the People during Advent) and the music ministries. The willingness of many people to become involved and help lead existing ministries, such as our Children and Youth Sunday School classes, impressed me. Our parish takes pride in its life and how we continue to preach the Gospel and help others experience the love of Jesus Christ. I am incredibly blessed to be with a community that cares deeply for each other and those who find St. Matthew's a welcoming place for everyone.

Your parish staff and vestry work hard every week to lead and support the community's life and ministries. Matthew Edwards's leadership as our parish musician blesses us each week with his talent and coordination of the music ministries. Susan Carson and Mary Vore's tireless work in the parish office is a gift to me and many parish leaders and parishioners. Our youth interns, Jessie Hurst and Caroline Bowen, continue to grow in their ministries and help our youth program. Your vestry, under the leadership of Trisha Voiles, Senior Warden, and Clay Olbon, Junior Warden, is heavily involved in the various aspects of our parish. And when I say each vestry member knows the parish deeply and participates in the community's life, I genuinely mean it.

Our community welcomes every person into the community. Our average Sunday attendance for 2023 is around 150 every Sunday, which is terrific. We continue to see and welcome newcomers and visitors into the community. We also see people who have been away from the parish for a while returning to the community and seeking to become more involved. I am encouraged that people continue to gather for worship and participate in the life of the parish, whether it is attending a Bible or book study, cooking breakfast on a Sunday morning, or caring for people by visiting those who need assistance or someone's presence.

As a community of faith, we celebrate during the good times and mourn when we experience loss and death. We've had several funerals, several weddings, and one renewal of wedding vows celebration. We welcomed seven people in the community through the sacrament of baptism throughout the year. We minister to those hurting and experiencing pain and suffering. We even drew closer to God and each other by watching and discussing the excellent streaming series "The Chosen" during Lent and this past fall. We are working toward more participation in our parish financial stewardship. We are exploring ways to care for our campus in the future and help us be more mindful of what we have.

In the Acts of the Apostles, the early church continuously followed the guidance of the Holy Spirit as it sought to discern God's will and grow. I believe St. Matthew's will continue to follow this model and renew and learn new ways of preaching the Gospel and growing in the faith of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. St. Matthew's has a lot to look forward to in 2024. Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your rector and the beautiful opportunities to share the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Blessings to our parish community

Father Tim Meyers

SENIOR WARDEN REPORT

Senior Warden

Trisha Voiles / tvoiles@att.net

Hello, St. Matthews Family!

Writing this Report is a Bittersweet task for me as your Senior Warden. From the first moment I was asked by a very dear friend of the parish to run for the Vestry, after years of hiding from the possibility, to God nudging me to do so, I felt a spark of excitement. My first year, I learned so much about the church although I had attended since 1984. When Mother Pat asked me to be Sr. Warden, I felt honored to serve the St. Matthew's Family. Over these past two years there has been no greater joy than to do just that, Serve St. Matthews. With the loss of two very special family members and caretaking for my brother, I do not take lightly saying that St. Matthews is just that, my family! Thank you for being part of my family and the St. Matthew's Family!

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. I encourage you to read through the reports.

In 2023, we worked with the Vestry to build a community with the common goal of working together to celebrate God, Life, and Our Church Family with laughter, smiles, and looking for the positive. We began the year with a bang as we welcomed our wonderful new rector, Fr Tim Meyers. We have been truly blessed with the Meyers Family. What a welcome the family had with the installation of Fr Tim by Bishop R. Wright and the evening of being transformed into the world of Narnia!

One of our first missions as a vestry was to develop a new mission statement for St. Matthews with the participation of you, the parishioners. *"For St. Matthews to be a welcoming home for all who seek Jesus Christ, as we share God's Love with the community."* My personal goal for this year was to make sure St. Matthews was the welcoming home! Whether you are a regular member, new member, or visiting member, my prayers was that you felt like you belonged. Prayers have been answered with so many comments over the year which in turn made me feel like I belonged!

Throughout the year we continued many new events and activities and added a new mix. The Wardens, Tim, and Building & Grounds were able to walk the campus in the Spring and Fall to develop plans for two successful Workdays. Check out all the projects in the Building and Grounds report. Fellowship continued our wonderful traditional events and included some exciting off campus events like the baseball game on the party deck, a Derby Party, and the St. Matthew's celebration of Día de San Mateo Luncheon. We had two very successful events which were opened to the community with the Yard & Plant Sale in the Spring and the 1st Annual Trunk or Treat in the Fall. Another addition was two new Scout groups to our outreach to the community. We now have older Scouts, Cub Scouts, and Girl Scouts. The Scout troops provided our campus with 2 Eagle Project completions.

Looking back over the years, we have come a long way and accomplished so many things that the individual ministries will cover in their reports for 2023. 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 2024 to be the year we all grow closer to God together as a St. Matthew's Family. **It has been an honor to be your Senior Warden!!! Thank you for the Opportunity to Serve you!**

Peace and Prayers, Trisha Voiles

JUNIOR WARDEN REPORT

Junior Warden

Clay Olbon / olbonc@yahoo.com

Return to Normalcy

Covid, no church, online church, masks, social distancing, drive-through communion, retiring rector, no rector, interim rector, and finally ... a new rector called. As a vestry and leadership team, we wanted St. Matthew's to get back to normal. Was normal going to look exactly like it did 4 years ago? No, but we would work towards "feeling" normal, keeping the new that works and continuously improving so that we can live up to our new mission statement and truly be "a welcoming home for all who seek Jesus Christ..."

So what did Normal look like in 2023?

Our new rector. We were blessed to call Fr. Tim at the end of 2022, and to have him as our rector for this year. His leadership both spiritually and organizationally has contributed greatly to a feeling of stability within the parish and the vestry.

Our campus. Our workdays (Spring and Fall), along with the great work of our building and grounds committee, flower guild, etc. continued to make our campus an amazing place for worship, education, and fellowship.

Optimism. This may sound weird, but vestry was FUN this year. We dealt with all the normal hard issues, but we did it in a way that was optimistic and forward thinking, and with a fun attitude. And I see that optimism when we talk to our committees and parishioners as well.

Growth Mindset. Going along with that optimism was a focus on growth. We continued the budgeting process from last year, and as usual had to make some choices, but we also made decisions (like across the board pay increases for staff and funding for a youth minister) that were based on optimism and growth.

A "welcoming home"

In 2023 we have made great strides in making St. Matthews a "welcoming home". I look forward to an amazing 2024 where we continue to "seek Jesus Christ as we share God's love with the community".

Clay Olbon

REPORT ON DIOCESAN ANNUAL COUNCIL

Diocesan Delegates

Lindsay Isaacs, Sylvia Langley-George, Caroline Bowen, Bernie Waller, Sharon Hansen (alternate), Susan Jung (alternate)

The Council of the Diocese of Atlanta meets annually in legislative session, as canonically required, to do the business of the diocese at a time established by the previous Council. It also is an opportunity for the diocesan community to gather for worship, for conversation and to strengthen its bonds.

All eligible clergy who are Clerical Members of Council and duly elected Lay Delegates have seat, voice and vote. Each church in the diocese is allocated a number of delegates and alternates. All members of parishes are welcome to attend any part of Council as visitors.

[The 117th Annual Council Recap - Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta \(episcopalatlanta.org\)](https://episcopalatlanta.org/2023-annual-council-recap/)

[2023 Annual Council Resolutions - Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta \(episcopalatlanta.org\)](https://episcopalatlanta.org/2023-annual-council-resolutions/)