

September 2020

Dear Family and Friends of St. Matthew,

This year has certainly been an unprecedented one for most of us individually and as a community. Routines both large and small have been disrupted, plans have been eliminated, and relationships have been strained. But despite it all, St. Matthew has continued to be a parish that seeks to engage the wider community with the love of God, especially during these turbulent times.

So far this year, our story has been largely about making lemonade out of lemons. We have created a reliable virtual Sunday worship schedule that, despite its glitches and simplicity, reaches on average 200 views per Sunday. Our Children's ministry has successfully reimaged itself with weekly Zoom meetings for youth and will be converting to virtual Sunday School this fall. Adult education has included virtual Adult Catechumenate, *Take 30!* reconnection groups, virtual Coffee Hour, and the Summer Time Video Series *Eyes on the Prize*. We have also undertaken new initiatives around Anti-Racism, neighborhood food distribution, and parish development as well as completing the new retaining wall as part of the parking lot replacement project. We even have two parishioners in full discernment processes for Holy Orders.

As we continue to work our way through these times, it is clear that everything we can do to help keep the parish vital while we are not physically gathering will help us when it is time to physically gather again. Here are a few ways you can help:

1. Pray. Pray for peace, strength, and guidance. Pray for others and pray for yourselves. Pray like it's your last opportunity to give thanks with your final breath. Pray.
2. Work. Work on being present with one another. Work on building up capacity for God in your daily life and routines. Work on maintaining healthy relationships with open communication with your friends, family members, fellow parishioners and your priest. Work.
3. Give. Give in proportion to your gratitude. Give with confidence that your community is here for you and that it is up to you that this community will still be here for others when this crisis is over. Give with your heart and not just your mind remembering that we all live on borrowed time and that all we have is a gift from God. Give.

Many of you have already returned your surveys sent via email letting the Canvass Team know how you wish to be communicated with during this Canvass period. We appreciate all you do in the community and look forward to creatively and generously getting through what may be the most challenging year in the history of the parish. By God's grace, guided by the Holy Spirit, we move forward with love as the Canvass Team connects with you in the weeks to come.

Peace in Christ,



Rich Gould  
Canvass Team Chairperson



Fr. Kendall Haynes  
Rector