

ST. MATTHEW'S EC CHURCH

WHITE DOVE FLYER

"A faithful family reaching out to serve Christ"



AUGUST 2025

Secretary Office Hours are:

Mon., Wed., Thurs. 10am—2pm

Phone: 610-381-2442

Email: stmatts@ptd.net

Website: stmattsecckunkletown.com

WORSHIP SERVICE

9:00 AM SUNDAY

CIA CLASS IN CLASSROOM

10:30 AM SUNDAY

SERVICE

RJ Cramer

Council President

Rick Rufenacht

Interim Pastor

Wil Hoffman

Assist. Pastor

Starlene Barr

Treasurer

Renée Keiper

Church Secretary

Dan Smale

Music Director

Tiffany Lakatosh

Children's Ministry

DATED MATERIAL. PLEASE DO NOT HOLD



Kunkletown, Pa 18058

102 Church Road

St. Matthew's Church

LEHIGHTON, PA 18235

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Worship in Focus: The Assurance of Pardon

Part 4 in our Series on the Elements of Worship

Each Sunday, after we have acknowledged our sin before God in the *Confession of Sin*, we are immediately met with **one of the most comforting and powerful elements of the worship service: *The Assurance of Pardon***. This is not just a liturgical formality or a transitional moment—it is **the very heart of the gospel on display**.

***The Assurance of Pardon* proclaims the good news that, in Christ Jesus, our sins are truly forgiven. Our shame is past, our guilt is gone, and divine mercy has been poured out upon us. Because Jesus bore our punishment on the cross, we now stand before God as those clothed in his righteousness. United to Christ by faith, we are as precious to God as his own Son. This moment in worship gives us the opportunity to rest in that truth and rejoice in it.**

Historically, some Protestant churches have hesitated to include a formal Assurance of Pardon out of concern that it might resemble Roman Catholic absolution—a practice where a priest declares forgiveness. However, such concerns can be resolved with clarity. **The minister is not granting pardon, but announcing what God has already promised to those who repent and believe.** The language used in this part of the service should reflect that truth: “*Hear now the good news of the gospel,*” or “*Hear the pardon God grants you through Christ.*” This keeps the **focus on God as the source of grace**, not the minister as a mediator.

The Assurance of Pardon can be expressed in many ways—through the reading of Scripture, in song, as part of a prayer, or in a responsive reading with the congregation. However it is delivered, **it should always point to the certainty of God's mercy in Christ**. A simple congregational response like “*Thanks be to God*” can help reinforce the joy and gratitude that naturally flows from the reception of such good news.

Assurances of Pardon in Scripture

“For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.”
(Psalm 103:11-12)

“Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Romans 5:1)

“There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” (Romans 8:1)

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9)

This moment should not feel routine or muted. When the minister speaks words of pardon, they should do so with warmth, conviction, and joy. The tone, expression, and posture of the one delivering the assurance should reflect the love and compassion of the Father. Hurting hearts need more than a quiet recitation—they need to hear the gospel with life and light.

Ultimately, **The Assurance of Pardon is not just a reminder that we are forgiven—it is a declaration that the gospel is real, active, and deeply personal. It proclaims peace to the weary, hope to the guilty, and grace to the repentant. In a world burdened by shame and striving, the church gathers to hear these life-giving words week after week: “*In Christ, you are forgiven.*”**

Next month, we will explore *The Doxology*—our sung response of praise to the God who blesses and forgives.

ROAD TRIP VBS 2025

What an incredible week we had at Road Trip VBS 2025! Our church was filled with excitement, joy, and the love of God as the children gathered to explore the Bible through fun activities, powerful stories, and meaningful fellowship. This year's theme reminded us that no matter where life takes us, God is always with us.

Each day, we stopped at a new Bible "destination," teaching us something important about our faith journey. We began with Abraham and Sarah in Genesis 12:1–9, learning to trust God even when we don't know where the road will lead. Next, we traveled with the Israelites in Exodus 13:17–22, discovering that God sometimes takes us the long way around for a reason—and He never leaves our side. We visited Mary and Elizabeth in Luke 1:39–56, celebrating the joy of friendship and faith as they shared God's promises. We met Zacchaeus in Luke 19:1–10 and saw how Jesus notices each of us and changes our hearts. Finally, we joined Paul in Acts 18:1–11 and were reminded to boldly share God's love wherever the road takes us.

A special highlight of the week was Thursday's field trip to Bear Rock Junction, where the fun continued outside of church! The kids enjoyed a train ride, raced around the go-kart track, and showcased their putting skills on the mini-golf course. It was a wonderful afternoon filled with laughter, teamwork, and the creation of lasting memories.

Friday wrapped up the week with a joyful picnic at the Grove, where everyone enjoyed delicious food and warm fellowship. The fire company came and sprayed water, allowing the kids to run around and play. It was a perfect way to celebrate a week of faith, fun, and friendship, sharing smiles and stories in God's beautiful creation.

In addition to our Bible stories and special events, each day was packed with hands-on fun and learning. The kids danced to inspiring music, made creative crafts—including pretend driver's licenses, cross key-chains, photo frames, and wooden cars to take home as reminders of their journey. During science time, they engaged in exciting hands-on experiments. Snacks were also a big hit, with everyone enjoying cookies, string cheese, Goldfish crackers, watermelon, and other tasty treats that kept us fueled and happy. Games provided time for play and teamwork, and each day was filled with laughter and learning through delightful skits featuring Scout the dog puppet and Ms. Cheryl.

For our mission this year, we collected monetary donations for Twin Pines. We are happy to announce that we surpassed our \$200 goal, collecting \$307.15.

We are so thankful for every child who attended, every family who participated, and every volunteer who dedicated their time, energy, and love to make VBS a success.





Prayer Concerns for Shut ins:

Shirley Kuntz—Getz Personal Care Home, 1026 Scenic Dr, Kunkletown PA 18058

James Borger—526 Wood Street, Apt 439, Bethlehem PA 18018-4463

Larry Hahn—Gracedale, 2 Gracedale Ave, Nazareth PA 18064

Leah Jane Sterner—300 Covered Bridge Rd, Kunkletown PA 18058

Kay Frable—Liza's House, 1357 Blue Mountain, Danielsville PA 18038

Kyle Frable—104 5K Lane, Kunkletown PA 18058

Gladys Meixsell—Pleasant Valley Manor, 4227 Manor Dr, Stroudsburg PA 18360

Velma Silfies—Mrs. Bush's Personal Care, 302 Kunkletown Rd,
Kunkletown PA 18058

Joann Hunsicker—Mrs. Bush's Personal Care—2W, P.O. Box 327,
Kunkletown PA 18058

Jacqueline Mock—Mrs. Bush's Personal Care—P.O. Box 327,
Kunkletown, PA 18058

Tom Barr Sr.—Brookmont Healthcare Ctr, 510 Brookmont Dr, Effort PA 18330

Jesse Ziegenfus—Brookmont Healthcare Ctr, 510 Brookmont Dr, Effort PA 18330

St. Matthew's Prayer List – July 27, 2025

KINGDOM WORK:

Sister Helena – Zambia - Save the chicks

Randy & Deb Sheagley – Touch the World website

MILITARY:

Logan Mackes (Grandson of Rose Fritz): Serving in the U.S. Army in Fort Hood, TX for next 2½ years from Jan. 30, 2025

Joe Osinski (RJ's friend): Serving as an International Guard in Guam until October.

Conner Wise (Hal's cousin's son): U.S. Marine deployed to Iwakuni, Japan (via Hawaii & Guam) for 6-9 months.

LONG-TERM NEEDS:

Conner Bittenbender: (Bittenbender Family Member): Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy; lab test results & healing

Gene Borger: Strength and healing

Roberta Heffley (Eleanor Long's Sister): Cancer

Shannon Osinski (wife of James Osinski) Ehlers Danlos Syndrome**

Marlette Palermo: is home and meeting with cardiologist to regulate medication

Sheila Sherer (Eleanor Long's Niece): Fluid on her brain

Hudson Stewart (Bittenbender Family Member): Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy; no symptoms yet

BEREAVEMENT:

Family of Betty Correll: Margaret Hahn's sister/1

Family of Faye Kibler: friend of St. Matthew's/1

Family of Shirley Leinthall: Janet Smith's Sister/3

Huber Family: for the loss of George's nephew Bobby/3

NEW NEEDS:

Lindsey Blundetto: (Connie and George Morte's daughter) at home recovering from foot surgery/5**

Marjorie Borger: injury from fall; recovering at home/4

Butch Drew: (friend of the Hubers) diagnosed with cancer/5**

Bruce Eckhart: recovering from surgery/4

Margie Hinkel (friend of Joyce Fusner) kidney failure due to diabetes/5**

Wade Koehler (friend of Vivian Smith) having reactions to chemo treatments/5**

Greg Mackes: doing well after rotator cuff surgery (Rose Fritz's son-in-law)/5**

Rick Sherer: is home and doing well/5**

Louie Smith (son-in-law of Barbara and Richard Getz) has kidney cancer/5**

Gary Werner: (husband of Eleanor Long's coworker) was diagnosed with ALS/1

JOYS:

Mark and Brandi Bittenbender: new grandson/5**

Shoebox deadline is in 3 1/2 months.

Please start thinking about filling the shoe boxes you took last year.

Fill them to the brim with lots of toys, crafts, needed items.

Check the board in the Gathering Room for ideas.

You do not need a red and green box to fill with items.

Any shoe box will do. We provide the labels.

Please be age and gender specific, as it helps with the processing.



June Offering

June 1, 2025 70 attending \$1,881

June 8, 2025 65 attending \$2,270

June 15, 2025 Festival \$2,196

June 22, 2025 55 attending \$2,432

June 29, 2025 109 attending \$2,001

Total \$10,780

June 2, 2024 83 attending \$2,307

June 9, 2024 51 attending \$2,120

June 16, 2024 Festival \$3,513

June 23, 2024 40 attending \$1,115

June 30, 2024 78 attending \$2,735

Total \$11,790

NEW MEMBER CLASSES WILL TAKE PLACE IN SEPTEMBER

MORE INFORMATION TO FOLLOW ABOUT DATES AND TIMES

PLEASE SEE PASTOR RICK OR PASTOR WIL IF YOU WISH TO JOIN ST. MATTHEW'S



COME SEE US AT
OUR CHURCH
STAND ON THE
MAIN MIDWAY
NEXT TO THE
FUNNEL CAKE
STAND

CIA Cook's Corner

Amish Sunday Savior Casserole—Gabby Bentley

Main Ingredients:

- 1 lb ground beef
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 cup carrots, sliced
- 1 cup celery, sliced
- 1 cup frozen peas
- 2 cups cooked egg noodles
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup
 - ½ cup milk
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese, divided

Instructions:

1. Cook the Beef & Vegetables

- Heat a large skillet over medium heat.
- Add the ground beef and chopped onion. Cook until the beef is browned, breaking it apart with a spoon.
- Stir in the carrots, celery, and frozen peas, cooking for a few minutes until slightly softened.

2. Prepare the Casserole Mixture

- Add the cooked egg noodles to the skillet.
- Pour in the cream of mushroom soup and milk, stirring until everything is well combined.
- Mix in ½ cup of shredded cheddar cheese, stirring until melted into the mixture.

3. Assemble & Bake

- Transfer the mixture to a greased 9×13-inch baking dish, spreading it evenly.
- Sprinkle the remaining ½ cup of shredded cheddar cheese over the top.
- Bake in a preheated oven at 350°F (175°C) for 25-30 minutes, or until the cheese is golden and bubbly.

4. Serve & Enjoy

- Let the casserole cool for a few minutes before serving.
- Enjoy it on its own or pair with a fresh salad or crusty bread!

Servings: 6

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time: 30 minutes



August 2025—FAIR WEEK 17—23

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11 <i>Council</i> 7pm	12	13	14	15	16
17 	18 	19 	20 	21	22 	23 
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31 5th Sunday B&B						

August birthdays

- | | |
|---|---------------------|
| 3 Joyce Fusner | 21 Patricia Martin |
| 4 Leanne Sitler, Clinton Smith | 22 Ashton Smith |
| 6 Judy Smith | 24 Cheryl Dorshimer |
| 7 Tammy Strunk | 25 Dan Pawlicki |
| 8 Laurie Kratz, Michael Meckes | 26 Jason Borger |
| 10 Paul LoMonaco | 29 Kristan Heckman |
| 11 Taylor Cope | 31 Alissa Mathisen |
| 12 Tonya Peddigree | |
| 13 Nicholas Kaufmann | |
| 14 Allison Borger, Lydia Borger | |
| 18 Chris Barlieb, Carl Frantz | |
| 19 Brooke Beck, Louise Shupp, Rosemarie Stranahan | |
| 20 Nancy Byerley, Randy Cramer, William Hosler, Ruby Voorhees | |