

St. Matthew's United Methodist Church
State of the Church Report
November 6, 2018

2018 has been a year of transition for St. Matthew's United Methodist Church. As a congregation, we began implementation of the Next Level Innovations (NLI) recommendations we received in November 2017. We welcomed a new Associate Pastor, Nickie Moreno Howard, and said good-bye to Grace Han, who served St. Matthew's for over 8 years as an associate pastor, youth director, and dear friend. We also have welcomed new church leaders to chair Church Council, Board of Trustees, Finance Committee, and Staff-Parish Relations Committee.

While St. Matthew's has experienced significant change, 2018 is not unlike many throughout its 60-plus year history. Discerning God's call and being the hands and feet of Jesus always involves change and transition. As Pastor Nickie said in a sermon last month, how we respond to change is part of how we respond to Jesus' call for us to possess a child-like faith. While change is rarely easy, we at St. Matthew's are striving to find our child-like faith and embrace these periods of transition.

Implementation of the NLI recommendations is well underway at St. Matthew's. The Vision Alignment, Worship, and Communications Teams are all meeting regularly and have reached some important milestones. More information on their efforts can be found later in this report. The passion and commitment of St. Matthew's members have been evident throughout these endeavors. In meetings, conversations, and emails, we have shared our ideas and concerns, and understandably we've found areas of agreement and areas of discord. Church Council and the NLI teams are striving to maintain an open and timely process – no small task in a world where we are inundated with information and our volunteers are balancing multiple commitments. Where we've fallen short of these goals, we have appreciated greatly the grace and forgiveness of our congregation. We remain, nonetheless, focused on our shared goal – to bring our efforts closer to our mission of creating disciples of Jesus Christ.

As of October 2018, St. Matthew's 3 worship services average an attendance of 376 people. Thirty new members have joined, which include 21 new professions of faith. More new members will be joining the church in November 2018. An average of 26 small groups meet each week. The average number of persons engaged in mission sits at 58, and the amount given to benevolent causes is currently an average of \$2,238.74 per week.

Looking forward to 2019, we will continue to be blessed with opportunities for change and growth. NLI implementation will in most respects be completed by the end of next year. Church Council will turn our focus to how the NLI recommendations we're implementing can help us reach out to a world that is in desperate need of *agape* love and the peace of God which passes all understanding.

2018 St. Matthew's Committee Reports:

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees has as its mission the oversight, maintenance, and supervision of all locally owned church property. This includes property and equipment acquired by any commission, committee, society, or class within the church. In conjunction with the pastor the Board administers the use of all church buildings and grounds. Typically, our work combines use of volunteers and contractors to maintain all church property.

During 2018 we continued to execute the daily operation and maintenance of the building and parsonage. This included replacing lighting in our sanctuary; replacing several toilets, a water fountain, multiple door handles and locks; cleaning all carpets throughout the building; painting as needed throughout the inside of the building; staining of our sheds; filling pot holes in our parking lot; coordinating with the Fire Marshall in support of hosting a Hypothermia Project in our facility; and fixing faucets and a gas fireplace at the parsonage. Broadly, we continued to ensure our church was clean and inviting to our congregation and guests.

The major activity in 2018 centered on several large capital projects necessary for the long-term care of St. Matthew's UMC.

- **Concrete Work: Project Cost: \$53K:** In the spring we contracted and executed the removal and replacement of our old front sidewalk and stairs at the main entrance of the building. This had become hazardous due to substantial cracking and was an eye sore. This was a major construction project and insured we have a safe, aesthetically pleasing entrance to the church building.
- **Roof Replacement: Project Cost: \$120K (only \$500 from our budget):** In March, a large wind storm damaged the church roof. Following submission of an insurance claim, our insurance company determined the roof needed to be completely replaced. Our previous roof utilized 25 year asphalt composite shingles rated to 60 mph winds. Following a competitive bidding process we were able to install a new roof with upgraded 30 year asphalt composite shingles rated to 110 mph winds. Final budgeted cost for the new roof was only \$513.00 above the insurance claim payment.
- **Doors: Project Cost: \$9K:** During the summer we installed three new doors at different locations around the church. New high-grade Provia brand metal doors were installed at our Adult Wing entrance, classroom 304, and the Weekday School/Children's wing playground entrance. All three doors were in poor condition and had become cold and drafty in cold weather.
- **Kitchen Refrigerators: Project cost \$6K:** We replaced two old commercial grade refrigerators in our kitchen and replaced them with new commercial grade, Turbo brand, refrigerators. The old units were failing and were constantly needing maintenance. The new units are reliable and have been well-received by the congregation.

- Commons Roof/Scuppers: Project cost \$8K: We resealed our flat roof over the Commons, which needs to be resealed every five years to maintain its integrity. We also replaced three water scuppers with new, larger units to eliminate rainwater overflow and flooding in our church courtyard.
- Steeple Cleaning and Painting: Project cost \$3K: We executed a contract to power wash the entire steeple and to paint the trim. This is a challenging project due to the height of our steeple. The steeple is white and had become visibly dirty and the trim was in disrepair. The process brought the steeple back to life and restored its aesthetic appeal.

Finally, we will continue to expand our Capital Project program to insure St. Matthew's UMC is a welcoming church for generations to come.

Children's Ministry Council

Committee Purpose Statement and 2018 Goals: To nurture children in their faith in Christ.

- Provide meaningful opportunities for children and their families to grow in their faith, their relationship to one another, and to our church
- Empower children to share their faith in their daily lives of love and service to others
- Bring Christ's love and the love of St. Matthew's to children in need

Our children's ministries continue to be a strong program reaching out to young families in our community. There are 163 children enrolled in our weekly Christian Education programs this year. The programs include Sunday school, Children's Worship, and our Nursery. We have 75 adult and teen volunteers to lead these programs. Twelve members of the congregation, along with Children's Ministry staff (Carrie Schwab and Christine Moser) make up the Children's Council, and continue to provide vision and leadership for the program.

In our weekly Sunday school and Children's Worship classes, children continue to participate in the Deep Blue program. Deep Blue is a curriculum for children that include exciting stories, science experiments, arts and crafts, animated video storytelling, and active games. These elements work together to help children discover what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.

In addition to weekly programming, the Children's Ministry has focused on family ministry programs and outreach to families in our community. Family programs are hosted monthly and focus on providing opportunities for families to grow together in their faith and for families in our community to develop a relationship with our church. This year's outreach programs have included: Family Game Night, Mardi Gras Party, Easter Egg Hunt, Parents Night Out, Summer Kickoff party, Fall Kickoff, Children's Sabbath, Thanksgiving Feast, Family Advent Celebration, and the Family Christmas Eve Service. In the summer we hosted VBS with the theme "Shipwrecked: Rescued by Jesus," and KAMP: Kids and Mission Projects. A total of 208 Children attended VBS and KAMP. The older children in KAMP served the community by making animal comfort items for the Animal Welfare League, participated with Arlingtonians for a Clean Environment by helping with a creek clean up, Volunteered at Food for Others and the DC Diaper Bank, and mentored kindergarteners at Weyanoke Elementary School.

We continue to help the children share their faith in lives of service by participating in quarterly mission projects. In the fall of 2017 we raised \$639.94 to improve the outdoor learning space at Weyanoke Elementary. In spring 2018, the children raised \$1,082.87 for Hurricane Relief in Puerto Rico through UMCOR. In summer 2018, VBS raised an additional \$1,020.51 for the students at Weyanoke Elementary. Much of this money assists the school staff in ensuring the students' basic needs for items such as shoes, clothing, and jackets are met. The school supply kickoff drive netted over 20 boxes of actual supplies for students. Upcoming projects for the 2018-2019 year include supporting DC Diaper Bank and continued support of Weyanoke Elementary.

The Club 56 program for 5th and 6th graders also participates in regular mission projects. This year we have 37 kids and 3 adult coordinators who meet monthly. Club 56 has served the community by making 60 pies for our church Thanksgiving Baskets given to those in need; caroling to St. Matthew's members in need of cheer at Christmas; volunteering at Aarondale Retirement Community; making care packages for people on the St. Matthew's prayer list; and serving with Earth Sanga on Earth Day to plant native plants at Marie Butler Preserve. To kick off this school year, Club 56 helped pack meals at George Mason University to support Rise Against Hunger.

To reinforce the connection to our church, we sponsor monthly outreach and parent gatherings for the parents of the Weekday School program. These activities have included parent coffees, clothing swaps, cookies with Santa, a chocolate dipping Valentine's party, a Jr. Olympics, teacher appreciation lunch and more. In October, we hosted our first Parenting Workshop which was led by St. Matthew's member Mandy Lloyd on Conscious Discipline for parents of St. Matthew's, the Weekday School families and community.

We continue to come alongside families during milestone moments of childhood faith development. The three specific milestones celebrated are Baptism, the presentation of 3rd grade Bibles, and 6th grade promotion.

Discipleship Committee

In 2018, the Discipleship Committee focused on our NLI innovations on small group and discipleship ministries. The Discipleship Committee was reformed in 2018 after a yearlong hiatus. The committee formed in February with a special mandate to look at small group ministries and launch more small groups at St. Matthew's. Together this committee read *From Membership to Discipleship* by Phil Maynard and *The Connected Life* by Jacob Armstrong. The committee also attended two trainings: Rachel Billups at 5 Talent Academy and Phil Maynard. The newly reformed Discipleship Committee also launched a life group based on the model in *The Connected Life*.

Discipleship at St. Matthew's includes many ministries throughout the church. Under Rev. Grace Han's leadership and with the support of Rev. Nickie Moreno Howard and our Director of Connections, Jenny Ligon, we have three goals: 1) encourage the practice of spiritual disciplines and opportunities to practice spiritual disciplines, 2) increase the number of small groups and participants in small groups, and 3) establish a comprehensive discipleship plan for newcomers to St. Matthew's.

Discipleship at St. Matthew's includes opportunities to grow in faith and practice spiritual disciplines. Friday Morning Prayer Group and Lent and Advent Prayer Services all continued throughout 2018. In Lent, our Lenten Prayer Services continued with opportunities for meditation, reflection and song. Our Friday Morning Prayer Group meets at 6:30am and uses a variety of devotional practices. Currently, we are reading the Upper Room Disciplines. The Friday Morning Prayer Group begins an Advent devotional in December. This Advent, our Prayer Services will begin in December and invite participants to engage in a variety of new prayer practices each week. Pub Theology is a monthly communal spiritual practice that encourages dialogue and understanding on current topics. Pub Theology began its third year in Fall 2018 with a Trivia Night and a program on Borderlands with speakers Rev. Nickie Moreno Howard and Bethany Printup-Davis.

St. Matthew's small group ministry is vibrant and active. This ministry includes Sunday school classes, Christian Education opportunities, Short-Term Studies, and Disciple. Small group ministry at St. Matthew's is led by faithful members of the congregation throughout the week. This year St. Matthew's Discipleship Committee launched three new Life-Stage Life Groups in Fall 2018.

With Jenny Ligon joining St. Matthew's staff as Director of Connections, St. Matthew's expanded their discipleship plan for newcomers. Jenny coordinated the Path Class this Fall and Rev. Neil Hough led each class session. The Path is a six week class that follows Jim Harnish's *A Disciple's Path*. The Path is a way for newcomers to connect with the pastors, the life of the church, and learn about being a disciple in the United Methodist Church.

The Discipleship Committee gives thanks for the volunteers, staff and pastors of St. Matthew's who help to support their vision and goals for discipleship at our church. The Discipleship Committee is energized from the success of 2018 and looks forward to continuing Life Groups and furthering the development of a comprehensive discipleship plan for St. Matthew's.

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee, in collaboration with the Treasurer and Stewardship Committee, prepares the annual budget using information from church committees, commissions, staff, and data from previous years. The committee also monitors budget execution during the year and makes financial reports and recommendations to the Church Council.

From a financial perspective 2018 has presented some challenges. Through September, adjusted revenue is \$751,332 compared to expenses of \$806,936, which is a deficit of \$55,604. Total revenue/donations is \$794,761, a deficit of \$12,175. SMUMC follows the practice of spreading out annual pledges received in lump sum over the remaining months of the year.

Forecasted church revenue for 2017 was \$1,125,062, while actual revenue was \$1,238,004. The forecasted revenue for 2018 is \$1,146,962. Through Sept. 30, the actual revenue is \$830,946, with three months of revenue outstanding. In 2017, these 3 months accounted for \$316,016 in revenue. The average annual revenue for the preceding three years is \$1,168,313. Therefore, we

remain optimistic that we will narrow the gap between expenses and revenue in the last quarter of 2018.

Together, the Finance Committee and Church Council continue to monitor the financial position of the Church. We are aware there is a cash carryover from prior years of approximately \$82,000. However, the approach has been cautious regarding spending those funds. Church Council previously approved spending \$20,000 to match a \$20,000 gift dedicated to replacing a chiller in the children's wing.

Facilities, personnel, and apportionment consume over eighty percent of our budget. Our "new" sanctuary is now over twenty years old, and we are facing the inevitable costs associated with repairing, updating, and replacing our facilities. As a result we have continued to have difficulty fully funding our important programs, outreach goals, and mission activities.

This year we continued our effort to better inform members about how we are using church resources by providing testimonials about outcomes and activities impacting both our church community and the broader world community. These reports have been very well received and will be continued.

Global Missions and Community Outreach

Global Missions and Community Outreach Committee serves a wide range of service opportunities locally, regionally, nationally, and globally. St. Matthew's actively partners with a variety of organizations to extend the reach of our ability to serve God and our neighbor.

Over the past year we have hosted two service days, one each in the Spring and Fall, and collected a Lenten Offering of almost \$12,000. The Spring Service Day deployed 100 St. Matthew's disciples for 5 projects: 1) Packing 500 Power Pack Program (P3) packs for Food for Others and Weyanoke Elementary School, 2) Card Writing, 3) Weyanoke Elementary School mulching and courtyard renewal, 4) FACETS painting project, and 5) Earth Sangha, removing invasive plants and replanting native plants. Our Fall Service Day was a partnership with Arise Campus Ministries and St. George's UMC to gather almost 200 people to pack 40,000 meals with Rise Against Hunger.

St. Matthew's continues our Walk-In Ministry (Joy Fund) that provides financial assistance for essentials such as rent and utilities for persons in need. Volunteers, under the leadership of Debbie Throckmorton, assist guests on Wednesday and Friday mornings. We are continually thankful for the support of the volunteer team and St. Matthew's for funding this unbudgeted ministry.

Our partnership with Weyanoke remains steady. This partnership includes volunteers who tutor, support and coordinate the book fair, pack 80 weekend P3 packs for hungry children monthly, and maintenance of the outdoor learning center. Many groups within St. Matthew's are supporting Weyanoke, including (but not limited to) our Children's Ministry, through Vacation Bible School, and UMW, through their Coat Drive.

Our P3 has increased its numbers this semester to better provide for Weyanoke and Food for Others. With the leadership of Cathy Moberly, small groups from around the church are

volunteering to pack the meals and deliver them each month. This new setup for our P3 program has been a success - many thanks to all those who have signed up and Cathy Moberly for creating the instructions and working with each group.

Each year the committee is grateful for the commitment from St. Matthew's to serve the needs of so many and looks forward to 2019. Over the next year, we will be furthering our partnerships with the wide array of missions in and around St. Matthew's and Annandale. We are also excited about strengthening our community outreach through Arise Campus Ministries.

Legacy Committee

Overview of program accomplishments over the past year:

The Legacy program has had a successful year so far in 2018. One of our largest accomplishments will be the installation of a Legacy Wall and the addition of 3 plaques for various levels of giving including recognition of donors. We expect to have an unveiling of the Wall at all services on Sunday, November 11. While our fundraising efforts are beginning to show results, the committee believes that this initiative will help greatly in improving these efforts. Finally, we have given 2 financial gifts totaling \$1,000 each (i.e. \$2,000 in total) this year.

Overview of program goals/objectives for next year:

Building on our recent initiative, we hope to build on our success in fundraising and be able to give more in gifts going forward. We also hope to have at least one educational seminar sometime in 2019 to expose members of the church to a financial planning topic which could benefit them personally and also build good will for the Legacy program.

Music Committee

St. Matthew's has continued its tradition of having a dynamic and thriving music program during 2018. This program includes a dozen vocal and bell choirs for adults, youth and children. These choirs routinely lead worship in each of St. Matthew's worship services as well as leading special and seasonal services such as youth and children's musicals, a Christmas cantata with orchestra, and annual appearances at the Kennedy Center and the State Department. The music program provides outreach to the community through numerous special performances, participation in festivals and music retreats, the annual Handbell Dessert Concert which raises money for the Youth Music Tour and fundraising events such as the "Ring for the Cure" Spring Hand Bell Concert, which raised approximately \$1,500 for breast cancer research. The music program at St. Matthew's continues to be directed by Nancy Cappel, with the staff support of Carol Workman, Tammy Freeman, Debbie Thieman, and Genevieve Hanson.

Next Level Innovations

In November 2017, St. Matthew's UMC accepted the call to adopt the recommendations of the Next Level Innovations Report. The report contained 5 recommendations, on which St. Matthew's has made solid progress this year.

Vision

The NLI Report recommended the formation of a Vision Alignment Team (VAT) and assigned it several major goals, chief of which is to develop and propose to the church a new vision for next season of ministry by October 2019. To put the vision into action, the NLI Report recommended

that the VAT help ensure that church priorities and resources reflect the adopted vision through actions such as facilitating leadership training and promoting job descriptions and goals for administrative and ministry committees that align with the new vision.

A Vision Alignment Team (VAT) was nominated by the Pastor with the help of the original NLI Team, and this team was elected by the St. Matthew's Church Council. The VAT assembled and reviewed all of the congregational input that was collected during the NLI weekend. This was one of the foundations of the VAT's work. The VAT assembled and reviewed information related to the vision and mission of the United Methodist Church and existing and previous vision and mission statements of St. Matthew's. The VAT held a "values discernment session" facilitated by Rev. Reggie Tuck. Additional members of Church Council participated. The VAT identified the values that we believe most reflect God's call to the congregation at St. Matthew's. The VAT developed a Strategy Map of the church's vision, mission, and values, and shared draft of the Strategy Map with Church Council for feedback. If endorsed by Church Council, this map will guide the next steps of the Vision Alignment Team.

Communications

The NLI Report called on St. Matthew's to develop a strategic communications plan that includes improvements to St. Matthew's website, social media presence, and signage. To accomplish this goal, St. Matthew's established a Communications Team with guidance from Church Council. The Communications Team is making simple changes quickly as it ponders the larger questions of effectively reaching people within and outside the church. New signage is beginning to appear throughout the church to help visitors feel at home more quickly. Several improvements to the church website have also been made; for example, St. Matthew's NLI activities are more prominently featured and easier to find. Additionally, Church Council meeting minutes will now be made available online. Finally, St. Matthew's social media presence has been streamlined and re-energized. The Team is now exploring ways to develop a communications strategy to come alongside the VAT as that team continues its work.

Worship

The scheduling conflict between the Modern Worship service and Sunday school classes was identified in the NLI Report as a significant concern for St. Matthew's. The Recommendations called on St. Matthew's to create a Strategic Worship Planning Team, endorsed by Church Council, with a goal of providing an opportunity for everyone to engage with Sunday school and worship. The Worship Team held 3 listening sessions where more than 80 people attended and shared what worship means to them. The Team is now processing the feedback it received and developing proposals for the congregation's consideration. The Team has also developed a timeline for the completion of its efforts.

Discipleship

The NLI Report stressed the importance of creating small group opportunities for St. Matthew's members, and the Discipleship Committee has embraced that recommendation. As described in more detail above, the Discipleship Committee piloted a Life Group program in spring 2018, and rolled out the full program in September. Thirty-eight church members are participating in 3 life groups, with room for growth.

Generosity

The Recommendations call on St. Matthew's and the Stewardship Committee to develop a strategy for generous giving that provides more funding for the building, missions, programs, and ministry of the church. More information about the Stewardship Committee's activities appear in a separate section below. The NLI Report also recommended that St. Matthew's offer Financial Peace University or an equivalent program that connects discipleship to giving. St. Matthew's is currently offering a second session of Financial Peace University. Ten households participated in the first session, held in late 2017.

Staff-Parish Relations Committee

During the first half of the year, Neil Hough as Senior Pastor, with Grace Han and Bill Moberly as Associate Pastors, continued working with the congregation through the NLI to further distill the vision of the future for St. Matthew's, encouraging the congregation in its outreach to our community, helping visitors and new members start their path to discipleship and guiding members on their journey to discipleship and greater generosity. Neil Hough continues to serve as the NLI point person for the Church, and his leadership positions in the District raise the profile of SMUMC in the District and community. Grace Han, having been ordained in June 2017, was appointed as Senior Pastor at Trinity United Methodist Church. Saint Matthew's welcomed Nickie Moreno Howard as the new Associate Pastor. The daughter of a United Methodist Pastor, Nickie brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the position, quickly taking leadership of the Missions Committee and Discipleship Committees. Nickie is pursuing her ordination with the guidance and coaching from Pastor Neil. Bill Moberly, with his role guiding visitation and ministries to seniors in our community, continues to lead ministries outside our walls to the Aarondale Assisted Living Community, providing the good news and healing of Christ to this senior community on the scale of a planted church. The leadership, example, and gifts of proclamation by our pastors will continue to focus on helping our congregation grow. Although this is just one part of our congregation's faithfulness, it is a measurable example of the impact our pastors have had on guiding all of us on our individual paths of discipleship.

St. Matthew's staff members are each very accomplished in their own right, with several seminary-trained staff members leading our ministries and others with advanced degrees each providing their unique gifts to enhance our worship, ministries, and missions. We have a very robust staff made of up many part-time members that are able to efficiently direct their talents and passion to our varied ministries.

St. Matthew's is now in the fourth year of fully incorporating the Weekday School into our overall Children's Ministries. The leadership and collaboration between our Director of Children's Ministries and Weekday School continues to increase St. Matthew's outreach to families with young children resulting in the Weekday School having the highest enrollment to date. The Weekday School remains a vital component of our ability to attract new families to worship and membership in our Church. We have experienced seamless transitions in our Director of Connections, Weekday School Director and Assistant Director positions. Our new staff members have added energy and enthusiasm to these positions which continue our focus on communication, outreach, and welcoming to members of our community, particularly children and their families. Staff members in the Church Office, Connections Ministry, and Weekday

School have brought new perspectives, energy and vision to their positions, adding to the vibrancy of our ministries.

Daily, our congregation, visitors, and walk-ins increasingly feel the hospitality, welcome, and ministry of our staff. Many of our staff are members of St. Matthew's, exemplifying their commitment to our ministries and their spiritual connection to our church.

Stewardship Committee

In the past twelve months, the Stewardship Committee has continued to work toward its stated goals:

- Help create a congregation of generous givers.
- Make stewardship a year-round activity through education and participation.
- Communicate that stewardship is living the vision of the church, not just paying the bills.
- Ensure that all communication is positive and contributes to the narrative that St. Matthew's changes lives.
- Establish more regular and accurate reporting and analysis.
- Collaborate with the Finance Committee in developing more effective ways to monitor and analyze giving and show appreciation to donors.

The Committee has worked closely with the Senior Pastor to guide the ministry of stewardship, including planning for the annual stewardship campaign. Even though the number of Estimates of Giving has been declining over several years, the average Estimate of Giving continues to increase. The committee works with several volunteers to follow-up with members of the church family at the end of every year to encourage participation in the stewardship campaign. For CY 2018, St. Matthew's received 249 Estimates of Giving totaling just over \$1,012,000.

In preparation for the 2018 stewardship campaign (for CY 2019), the committee has reviewed and revised the hardcopy and online forms used for Estimates of Giving and worked with Kim Lauer, Director of Communications, to update the website and emphasize the stewardship campaign.

During the year, the committee has continued to share information with the church family about the ministries of the church. The committee has also organized a paper-shredding event for the fourth consecutive year. Donations received during shredding events have totaled more than \$5,000 for the Joy Fund. The 2018 event is scheduled for November 10.

The Stewardship Committee is thankful for the faithful support and generosity of the St. Matthew's Church family.

United Methodist Men

A key goal for St. Matthew's United Methodist Men is to support the mission, ministry, program and facility needs of the church funded from the proceeds of our annual Christmas Tree Project. Christmas trees arrived the day after Thanksgiving and were sold out by mid-Dec. The youth group and parents assisted the UMM in unloading the trees. There were approximately 30 teams of volunteers over 21 days who sold the 250 trees. Projects supported in 2018 by UMM's Christmas tree proceeds include the MicheLo Swaziland project, Appalachia Service Project

(ASP) and Jeremiah Project (JP), the Kairos Prison Ministry, and Boy Scout Troop 260 and the Venture Scouts. The UMM also provided angus burger and hot dog dinners for the Hypothermia Project, the church-wide fall kickoff picnic, and during the month of July the Picnic on the Lawn. The UMM continued to provide an opportunity for men's fellowship through periodic Saturday morning meetings that include a delicious pot luck breakfast and an interesting speaker. Speakers include Keith Robertory, on the American Red Cross's hurricane relief efforts in Texas, Puerto Rico, and Florida in 2017. Bob Gohn who lived very close to the 11 Sept flight 93 crash site in Shanksville PA told of his experience as a first responder and as a Fight 93 museum guide. Also David Meyer gave a very informative presentation on the history of the Methodist Church in North America including the church's activities in the revolutionary and civil wars.

United Methodist Women

St. Matthew's United Methodist Women (SMUMW) is a community of women whose purpose is to know God, and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.

SMUMW has five circles: Elizabeth, Esther, Lydia, Mary and Priscilla. Some of the mission activities circles support throughout the year are: the St. Matthew's Food Closet, Kits for Conference (i.e. layette, health, sewing, and school kits for the Annual Virginia Conference), assisting with Celebration of Life services, Rising Hope, Hypothermia Week, FACETS, preparing and serving dinner for the PATH class, Wednesday on the Lawn supper, and packing P3 packs. The UMW also continues to support Weyanoke Elementary School by volunteering time (i.e. working the book fair), and donating coats, books, and other supplies. We were, again, able to sponsor 15 campers at All God's Children Camp (a camp for 7-12 year olds who have an incarcerated mother or father).

In April, we had a designated UMW Sunday, with Mary Wright (Va. UMW Spiritual Growth Coordinator) as our speaker. During the services, six church members received a Recognition Pin for their work and commitment to mission. The pins are given to UMW members as well as others in the church. We also collected \$800 through card sales and donations for the P3 program.

The UMW hosts an annual Welcome Back Tea in September. This year's speaker was David Meyer, Fairfax City Mayor, who spoke on the history of the Methodist church. Approximately 70 people attended.

We hosted a Pie Dinner (with about 80 attending) in October to raise money for UMW programs, including a retreat that usually occurs every other year, with approximately 30 attending. There will be another Pie dinner on March 14th (3.14), 2019!

The annual UMW Craft Fair will take place November 16-17, 2018. Proceeds will go to support the Joy Fund, P3, ASP/JP, and UMCOR. The UMW consistently chooses local, national, and international organizations to support throughout the year.

We always look forward to our Christmas Brunch (with approximately 90 attending), sharing a meal, and enjoying the entertainment from the St. Matthew's Brothers! At the brunch we install the new members of the board, as well as have a Candle Burning ceremony. This is a ceremony to honor the lives and memories of loved ones.

The UMW collects for various offerings throughout the year, including the World Thank offering and the Least Coin. We again met our goal of being recognized as a Six Star Unit. This award is not only given because of our pledges, but also for our special mission projects, gifts to mission, and gifts in memory.

Weekday School Board

The WDS Board meets on average every other month or more often as needed.

A new playground structure, total cost of about \$27,000, was installed in early spring of 2018. Money came from a combined church and school fundraising effort of \$15,500 as well as reserve funds of the WDS and the Trustees. Additionally, an Eagle Scout devised and completed a project to upgrade and rebuild our sandbox on the playground.

Our church connection was strengthened through parent socials, "Meet and Greets," and regular parent notification of church activities arranged by the Children's Ministry. A new combined church/WDS cookbook was published this fall. Funds raised will go toward future playground phase 2 plans: toddler structures and a shade structure over a portion of the playground.

2017/18 school enrollment remained around 100 with some fluctuations. Current enrollment for the 2018/19 school year is at full capacity, 102 children.

The 2 week, optional Summer Camp program in June was a success with an increase in camper capacity from 52 to 60 children.

Financially, the school is in good health, with an Operational Reserve Fund between \$50,000 and \$60,000. \$30,000 of that amount was invested in interest bearing CDs. The school activity fee charged per student was increased on a sliding scale. Tuition remained the same, except for an increase in one of the 3 year old classes, much in demand. Substitute pay was increased. We were able to offer a pay raise for all staff. The WDS Board plans to mirror future pay raises given to church staff (dependent on available funds) for our 2 WDS administrators who are also church staff.

In conjunction with SPRC, the WDS Board studied the Church Employee Policy Manual as it applies to WDS administrative personnel, our Director and Assistant Director, and recommended some clarification and revisions to the manual. A new leave policy for these employees was developed and approved by SPRC and the WDS Board.

Continued emphasis on WDS goals for this school year include curriculum, increased parent involvement, and connection with the church.

A new Director (we promoted the Assistant Director!) and new Assistant Director, highly qualified in the field of Early Childhood Education, were hired this summer. We are very confident in their new leadership and plans for the future of the school!

Worship Committee

The worship committee has had a very successful year supporting the staff to enhance worship services primarily through the Altar Guild, acolyte program, communion support, wedding and funeral co-ordination, usher program, and music. All three worship services are supported and represented by the worship committee. A meeting of the committee on September 18th demonstrated that the committee is very healthy in function with committee members who oversee specific elements with competence and dedication. Music is overseen by Nancy Cappel and Susan Ely, Funerals and Weddings are overseen by Pat Blythe, Ushers are overseen by Phil Guth, Dan Burrer oversees audio-visual needs, Communion is overseen by Peggy King, Carrie Schwab oversees the Acolytes, and Debbie Creekman oversees the Altar Guild. Additional support for all functions is supplied by Vivian Bacon and Christine Nelson, as well as numerous helpers for each sub-committee.

Upcoming projects for the worship committee include preparing for the Hanging of the Greens, sale and implementation of Chrismons, and supporting the staff by providing a meal on Christmas Eve between services.

Overall, the worship committee is a team of hard-working members of the congregation who do an amazing amount of behind the scenes work to keep worship and many other functions of the church running smoothly.

Youth Ministry

The youth ministry at St. Matthew's continues to thrive and grow under the guidance and leadership of talented, committed, caring, and supportive adults. The senior high ministry graduated one of the largest classes of students to college. But without skipping a beat, a new younger active class of 8th graders graduated in to replace them. This class of active 8th graders also happens to be the group of 19 kids that were just confirmed on Pentecost in 2018.

The youth ministry at St. Matthew's thrives on being active in missions and outreach. Over the summer we once again partnered with Woodlawn Faith United Methodist Church to send a team of over 50 adults and youth to serve in Kentucky on the Appalachia Service Project. In addition to serving with ASP, we sent 20 youth and adults to Front Royal to work with the Jeremiah project. For the first time St. Matthew's was also a part of the bi-district Costa Rica mission team and sent two youth and one adult to serve alongside people from all different churches in the bi-district area. Being missionally minded is only one of the pillars that make up the youth ministry vision.

St. Matthew's just created a new youth worship team made up of all teenagers. Interestingly enough, this group of youth all started playing their respective instruments relatively shortly before they started playing as a team. And they have made leaps and bounds in their progress as worship leaders. This worship team helps to lead the devotion time at the beginning of youth

group as well as lead worship at retreats and at the Easter Sunrise Service. This past August they also helped to lead the Modern Worship Service on Youth Mission Sunday.

This past year the youth ministry started taking seriously the call to discipleship through creating a new Thursday night Bible study. This Bible study analyzes contemporary issues that the youth are confronted with through the lens of Biblical theology. Over the summer, the youth participated in a Sunday school Bible study class and discussion that examined some of the issues that have been populating the news. Topics included everything from taking a knee, to immigration, to the death penalty. The youth had the opportunity to hear about the issues, then discuss in open forum with their own peers, their own thoughts and opinions on these issues that impact them.

Last but certainly not least in the youth ministry, we had a good amount of fun fellowship. Our youth went apple picking in the fall as a service to those in our church who cannot pick apples for baked goods on their own. Our youth went to a Nationals game to promote family oriented ministry in the church. We went to a trampoline park, went laser tagging, ran around a corn maze at night. All of these events are meant to create a sense of fellowship and fun, and create the opportunity for the youth to invite their friends to get plugged into a faith-based community.

Overall, the state of the youth ministry is strong and the outlook is that it will continue to be productive and supportive of the youth and families of the St. Matthew's congregation. New initiatives are being considered, such as an open gym day at Wakefield Chapel Elementary School where kids can come and play pick-up style games and invite their friends out to participate. St. Matthew's UMYF will continue to march onward and upward together in the mission of Christ to create young disciples for the transformation of the world.