

ST. MATTHEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Spirit of St. Matthew's

167 Spring Valley Road, Paramus, NJ (201) 262-5286
stmatthewsparamus.org

Epiphany 2021

The Season of Epiphany begins with the arrival of the Magi from afar to visit and pay homage to the infant Jesus in Bethlehem - the event through which God makes known that Jesus is the Light for the world. "Epiphany" comes from the Greek *epiphaneia*, meaning 'manifestation' or 'appearance'. It is, in some sense, a continuation of the Christmas season.

This season is the season of light. It is the time when we recall the Gospel story of Christ as the Light of the World to all peoples. It is a time in which we focus on the Transfiguration and glory of Christ, the mission of the Church to reach all the peoples of the earth, and the great gift of God's grace in revealing healing truth and light to the world.

The season begins with Christmas on December 25, the birth of Christ, followed by the 12 Days of Christmas which lead to the feast of Epiphany on January 6. The season of the Epiphany continues until the day before Ash Wednesday, which this year, is February 16.

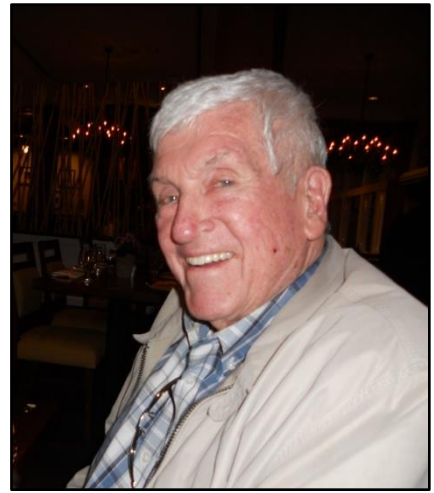
The Baptism of our Lord is observed on the Sunday after Epiphany. The gospels for the other Sundays of the Epiphany season describe the wedding at Cana, the calling of the disciples, and various miracles and teachings of Jesus. The Last Sunday after the Epiphany is always devoted to the Transfiguration. Jesus' identity as the Son of God is dramatically revealed in the Transfiguration gospel, as well as the gospel of the baptism of Christ. We are called to respond to Christ in faith through the showings of his divinity recorded in the gospels of the Epiphany season.

During the Season of Epiphany, we also remember the revelation of Christ to John the Baptist, to the disciples, and to all Christians. We also remember Christ's baptism and our own, together with the ways in which Christ has been revealed to humankind, especially in the healing miracles.

The liturgical color of the season is green, representing the green things of God's earth and referring to growth of the Spirit of God within us in response to His coming at Christmas.

Parish News

It is with great sadness that we said goodbye to our patron, mentor and dear friend of many years, **Ed Johnson**. He left this life and began his spiritual journey to join his wife Marion on January 8th at the age of 91. There was a small service at Vander Plaats Memorial Home in Paramus which could be viewed virtually by those unable to attend.



Ed has been a member of the St. Matthew's family since almost the very beginning. He has performed every job that ever existed here, including many years as Senior Warden of the Vestry. He helped feed the homeless at the St. Paul's every time we went there. He could be seen up on the roof, down in the basement, planting flowers under the sign out front, and solving every imaginable issue that came to St. Matthew's.



Ed was the kindest person one could ever meet. He was always smiling, always helping, and always had something nice to say to everyone. And he loved his cookies! Ed, the cookie monster. Pat always had to take some home for him after coffee hour if he couldn't be there.

Jerry Herrick has these words to describe Ed:

"Ed was a true gentlemen. Kind, caring, helpful and never complained about anything. It was never about him no matter what the issue. When working with the organ crew installing the new pipe organ he would stop in almost every day to check on the latest progress. He loved St Matthew's so much as well as his wife and daughter. He was so dedicated to the church maybe we should call him Mr. St Matthew's. May God bless him."

Our condolences go out to Pat and our hearts are with her. Pat took care of Ed for the last years when he was unable to do the things he wanted to do. Our love and blessings go to this wonderful family who were such a huge part of St. Matthew's.

Memorial donations in his name may be sent to St. Matthew's Episcopal Church 167 Spring Valley Road Paramus, NJ 07652



THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

A meditation from Taizé

The following is a meditation Brother Alois of Taizé

Christmas sets before us a humble event that took place one day in Bethlehem. Epiphany shows us that this event has a universal and even a cosmic dimension. The Wise Men are guided by a star and represent all peoples, all cultures.



Today we would like to understand how the light of Christ can enlighten all people. To achieve this, like the Wise Men we must leave our habits and some of our beliefs behind. We must leave ourselves behind, bending down and entering the stable. Any other attitude would cause us to miss the God who humbled himself to the point of being born in a hidden place.

Let us spend time with them. May our prayer, before being petition, be, like theirs, adoration. When we look towards the light of Christ, it gradually becomes an inward light and the mystery of Christ becomes the mystery of our own lives as well.

The spirit of adoration is not easy in a world where immediate results matter so much, where the mere thought of a long process of maturation arouses impatience. As for the Wise Men, a journey is necessary to allow us simply to remain in the presence of God. In long silences where nothing seems to happen, God is at work in us, without our knowing how.

[Our] stained-glass window of the Epiphany shows the Wise Men adoring the Child. Let us look at that child to understand who God is. Let us consider the extreme humility of God. Let us see that, as a poor child, he comes to beg for our love! And let us see too that he restores human dignity to those who have lost it.

To adore means to discern the presence of God. God is present in his Word (at the recent Synod of Bishops in Rome, the "sacramental" character of the Bible was recalled). God is present in the Eucharist. Christians of the East know that icons also lead us into communion with God. God is present in the humble events of our lives. And the Gospel insists: God lets himself be found among the poorest of the poor.

Adoration means turning away from ourselves to look towards God. If our own concerns take up all the room, how can the obstacles that cover over the source of life set within us by God be removed?

The Wise Men express their adoration by an offering. The prayer of adoration leads us to offer the best of ourselves to God and to others. It leads us to make our life a gift for those who are entrusted to us.

It is true that some suffer too much and no longer have the strength to worship God. We must have respect and compassion without limits for such people. But if the Gospel asks us to look beyond ourselves, it is in order to keep hope alive, even for those who are unable to hope any longer.

Christians of the East may feel an attitude of adoration before the mystery of God more spontaneously than Westerners do. I had that experience recently. In early December, the death of the Orthodox Patriarch of Moscow, Alexy II, touched our hearts. I had met him, and he told me he wanted to deepen cooperation with Taizé. I went to his funeral with two of my brothers.

During the celebrations in Moscow, I said to myself: we have such a need to open ourselves to the treasures bequeathed to Eastern Christianity. One of the secrets of the soul of Eastern Christians lies in a prayer of adoration where God's goodness becomes tangible. This prayer allows access to the mysteries of the faith: the incarnation of Christ, his resurrection, the presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church. And it is from these mysteries that Christians of the East draw a sense of the greatness of the human being. God became man so that humanity might participate in his divinity; every human being is called to be transfigured with Christ already here on earth.

Could our liturgies, without in any way neglecting the communal dimension, lead to more adoration, to inwardness, to a personal communion with God?

In the East, the Epiphany is called Theophany, "appearance of God." The liturgical tradition links the story of the Wise Men, the baptism of Jesus and the water changed into wine at Cana, since they are, at the beginning of the Gospels, three moments when the secret of Christ is revealed: letting the compassion of God shine forth in our humanity.

In coming to earth, Jesus manifested God's love for all people, for all nations. He inscribed God's "yes" in the depths of the human condition. God welcomes all of us just as we are, with what is good, but also with our shadows, and even our defects. We learn to accept that we are poor. And from that moment on, we cannot despair either of the world or of ourselves.



More Parish News

Christmas at St. Matthew's this year looked different because we continue to observe Covid-19 restrictions. The Reverend Liz Golub was our celebrant and congregants viewed the service on YouTube. Music was provided by Erin Hahn on viola, Megan Hahn on oboe and Brandon Lui on trumpet. Owen Davitt performed a beautiful rendition of O Holy Night. The organ music was pre-recorded by Owen and then played back so that he could sing the solo. George Hahn performed his electronic magic by enabling the organ to record and save music for future use if the need arises.

Virtual Services continue every Sunday while we observe Covid-19 precautions. You are invited and encouraged to join us via YouTube at stmatthewsyoutube.com. If the link does not work you can copy and paste it into your browser. An alternate way to access the service is to type youtube.com into your browser and then search YouTube for stmatthews paramus.

We now offer **an audio only Zoom service** for those who only have a regular telephone (your normal phone rates will apply.) To access the service dial 1-929-205-6099. The access code is 893 5267 7522. Both numbers will remain the same each week. If you know a fellow parishioner or interested friend without a computer or a smartphone, please pass this information on.

If you have **Altar Flower or Sanctuary Candle requests** while the church is closed, please contact the office. Make checks payable to St. Matthew's Church with "Altar flowers for (name and requested date) or Sanctuary candle" for (name and requested date) noted on the memo line and mail to the church.

Janyce Perrone has welcomed a new grandbaby into her family! Meet Amelia Lynne Perrone, born May 16, 2020. The proud parents are Janyce's son Frankie and his wife Shannon. Congratulations!!



Trex Recycling Program We have reached our goal of 500 pounds of recycled plastic, and our new park bench has arrived. Steve Evans is assembling it and you will see it at the church soon. We will be eligible to start saving plastic for our second Trex park bench in February. Keep saving that plastic!



And More Parish News

The Annual Meeting tentatively scheduled for January 17 has been postponed. The Diocese has advised us that by state statute Annual Meetings must be held in person. The meeting will be held at a later date when it is deemed safe to conduct in-person meetings.

Amazon Smile: Please support St. Matthew's when you shop on Amazon. Through the Amazon Smile program, our church will receive 0.5% of each qualifying purchase. To sign up go to <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/32-0469624>

Visit our new website stmatthewsparamus.org Many hours went into this enormous project. Thank you, Shawn Herrick !!

Calendar for January/February

- January** **24** **Epiphany 3** Holy Eucharist 10 am
- 31** **Epiphany 4** Holy Eucharist 10 am
- February** **3** ECW Brown Bag Lunch Hards room 12 noon (pandemic/weather permitting)
- 7** **Epiphany 5** Holy Eucharist 10 am
- 10** St. Paul's Shelter dinner – Leave at 5 pm
- 14** **Last Sunday after Epiphany** Holy Eucharist 10 am
- 17** **Ash Wednesday** Holy Eucharist and Imposition of Ashes (pandemic permitting)
- 21** **First Sunday in Lent** Holy Eucharist 10 am
- 28** **Second Sunday in Lent** Holy Eucharist 10 am
- Note: All services are virtual until further notice**

January Birthdays . . .

11~Laura Joosten Pantelides
18~Nancy Petrillo
19~Clara Nagy
20~Robert Chebba
21~Ryan Coohill
27~Ginny Marchut
28~Richard Albro
28~Mary Pinkerton

And Anniversaries

26~Robert & Karla Chebba



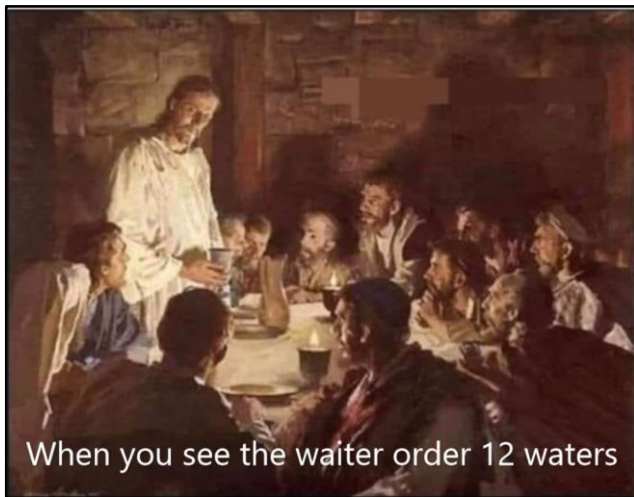
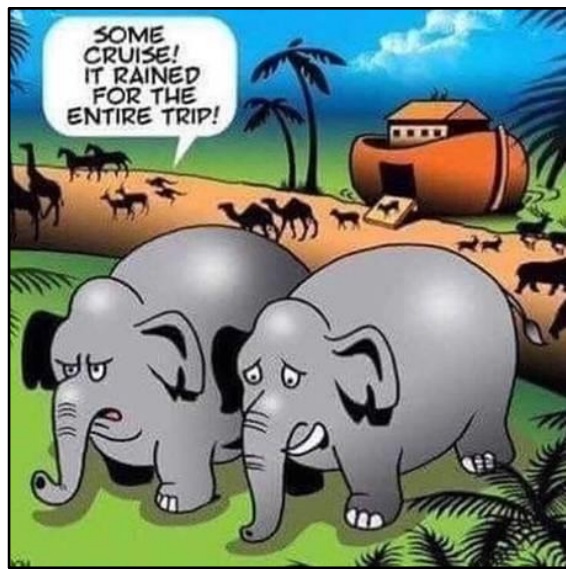
February Birthdays . . .

1~Stephanie Teng
6~Kristina & Brian Lama
6~Stacy Ullrich
12~Nancy Newman
14~Meghan Murphy
19~Brendon Winters
20~Donald Higgins
22~Erin Hahn
23~Taylore Chacanis
24~Gail Bornkamp
25~Helen Chubb

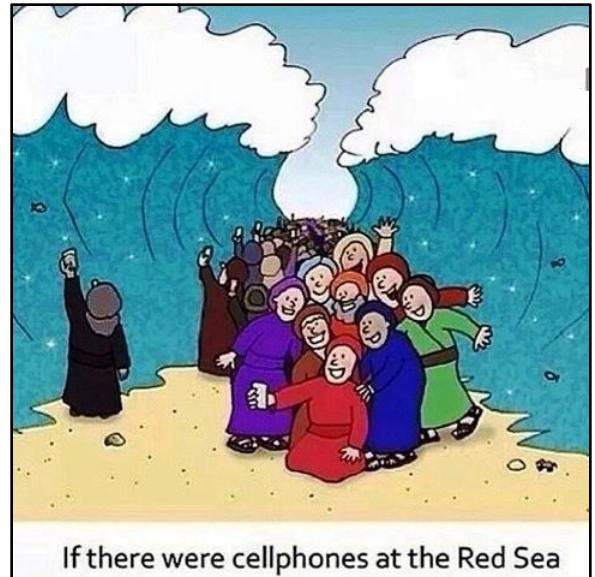
And Anniversaries

14~Ed and Laura Coohill
25~Evelyn & Len Cheringal





When you see the waiter order 12 waters



If there were cellphones at the Red Sea

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THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

WELCOMES YOU

Deacon: The Rev. Jacques Girard
Parish Administrator: Janice Walker
Webmaster: Shawn Herrick
Newsletter Editor: Linda LoPresti

We, the Congregation of St. Matthew's, seek to know the gifts that Christ has given us, to use them as Christ would have us, in a ministry of love and encouragement to each other and the community, with God's help.