



FAQs for St. Matthew's

We hope that this will answer most of your questions about St. Matthew's, but if it doesn't please feel free to [email](#) the parish office. More details can be found on the parish [website](#).

What services does St. Matthew's offer?

Sundays:

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| 8:00 a.m. | Holy Eucharist Rite I with organ music but no choir or hymns |
| 10:00 a.m. | Holy Eucharist with music, hymns and church school, 1 st and 3 rd Sundays of month |
| 10:00 a.m. | Morning Prayer with music, hymns and church school, 2 nd and 4 th Sundays of month |
| 5:00 p.m. | "Come as you are" Holy Eucharist in Children's chapel, music but no hymns |

Wednesdays:

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| 10:00 a.m. | Holy Eucharist and Bible study |
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During the summer, there a few changes:

Sundays:

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| 8:00 a.m. | Holy Eucharist is held in the Chapel in the Woods, weather permitting, during June, July, and September. |
| 9:00 a.m. | AUGUST ONLY – Holy Eucharist in the Church; no 8 a.m. or 10 a.m. service |

Who may take Communion?

All are welcome at the Communion rail.

How can I join?

- **Attend services:** Try us out and see how you like the services. You may want to attend several different services to get a feel for all of them. Children are welcome to stay with you in church if you aren't ready to sign up for Church School.
- **Register:** If you decide you'd like to join the St. Matthew's family, there are several ways to let us know. You may fill out the card on the back of the pews and give it to an usher, a clergy member, or leave it on the desk in the front hall of the Parish House; complete the registration form on the website or give a call to the parish office; or speak to a clergy member or parishioner – we are all eager to have you join us. If you have children you would like to enroll in Church School that form is on the website as well.
- **Become a member:** Registration, making a financial pledge to support St. Matthew's, and/or regular attendance will make one a new member of the Parish.

- **Welcome:** We will welcome you with open arms! For your first year as a new member, the Welcome Commission will provide assistance to newcomers to enable you to meet people in the parish. After a year as a “new” member, you will be a fully-integrated member of St. Matthew’s.

How do people dress for church?

At the 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. services, you will see men in jackets and ties and women in skirts, but you will also see many in less “formal” attire. Wear what is comfortable for you. At the 5 p.m. service people come “as they are,” whether it’s in jeans or a sun dress.

What programs are available for children?

- **Nursery Care:** there is care for infants and toddlers in the nursery during the 10 a.m. service
- **Church School:**
 - Children age 3 – 3rd grade are dropped off at their classrooms before the 10 a.m. service. They will attend a “children’s chapel” service – with lots of music – with their teachers. They may be picked up at their classrooms at the end of the 10 a.m. service.
 - Children in 4th grade – confirmation class go to the 10 a.m. service with their parents and are escorted to their classrooms during the hymn after the readings. They may be picked up at their classrooms at the end of the 10 a.m. service. They will be supervised until parents arrive.
 - Confirmation – Children in 8th grade attend class preparing for confirmation, which is generally administered by the bishop in May.
- **Youth Groups:** There is both a middle school and high school youth group.
- **Special events:** During the year there are many events held for and by children.
 - The haunted hike in October is staged by the older children to entertain the younger children. It is followed by a family spaghetti supper.
 - The day before Easter, there is a family service followed by an Easter egg hunt.
 - The Mardi Gras party before Lent includes activities for children as well as the crowning of two children as the “king and queen” of Mardi Gras.
 - Family game nights and field trips to sporting events are planned periodically.

What role does music play at St. Matthew’s?

We are known for the quality of our music, whether during services or at the Bedford Chamber Concert Series held in the Parish House.

The 10 a.m. service music is led by our music director, Anthony Newman who is our organist and choir director. Our music is very traditional – classical liturgical pieces as well hymns from the Episcopal hymnal. The music at the children’s chapel service during church school and the 5 p.m. service is more contemporary and less formal.

What volunteer opportunities are available for parishioners?

Parishioners are involved in volunteering both at outside organizations and within the Church. A full list can be found on our website.

In the community, parishioners are active in A-Home, The Community Center of Northern Westchester, the Midnight Run, The Bedford Hills Correctional Center and many others. We

can help you connect with these organizations.

Within the parish, we have many commissions and committees that support the mission of St. Matthew's. A list of those, along with the contact person for each can be found on the [website](#). We welcome volunteers! Easy entry points are coffee hour teams, clean-up days, or ushering. All women are automatically members of the Women of St. Matthew's and all men are automatically members of the Men of St. Matthew's and both sponsor events of interest.

How is St. Matthew's governed?

Episcopal churches are part of a diocese, in our case the Diocese of New York which encompasses New York City and the lower Hudson Valley. There are three diocesan bishops with different responsibilities. St. Matthew's is governed by its vestry, new members of which are nominated by the vestry with the advice of the rector. The rector is the primary minister and we usually have 1 or 2 assistant ministers as well. The vestry "calls" a new rector to the parish when there is a vacancy. The annual meeting held in February is when the parish votes on the nominations for the vestry and receives an annual report on the finances and other activities of the prior year. A copy of this annual report can be found [here](#).

How is St. Matthew's \$1,300,000 operating budget funded?

- **Stewardship:** There is an annual fund campaign in November to which parishioners are asked to pledge their support for the coming year. 70% of the church's operating budget derives from these pledges, which range from \$100 to \$50,000, but average about \$3,000. We ask that all member families make a pledge of support at a level that is comfortable for them.
- **Endowment:** St. Matthew's is fortunate to have an endowment from which to draw for operating purposes. The annual draw from the endowment is approximately 4% which provides 12% of the annual operating budget.
- **Other income:** Rental income, primarily from the St. Matthew's Pre-School, and other fundraising activities provide the balance of the operating budget. The primary fundraiser is the annual Bedford Antiques Show held in April. Other fundraising activities include the Christmas tree sale, the Holiday Boutique and the Bedford Chamber Concert Series, all of which use volunteers.

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