



ST. MATTHEW'S CHURCH
BEDFORD, NEW YORK

September 2020

Dear Parishioners,

It has been two months since we resumed gathering together for worship at church. Like all Episcopal churches in the Diocese of New York, St. Matthew's has been, and continues to be, limited to 25% capacity at both the 8 a.m. Chapel-in-the-Woods and the 10 a.m. church services.* For so many of us this summer, the Chapel-in-the-Woods has provided a particularly glorious setting of hearing God's Word, surrounded by the peace and majesty of creation.

As we look to the fall and a somewhat improving COVID environment, we are excited to be able reintroduce a few more activities into the life of the parish, though these remain limited in capacity and require advance registration, and generally are also available through live streaming. Starting on Sunday, Sept. 13, our traditional Welcome Sunday – Church School* will reopen at 10 a.m. with services and lessons in the Fellowship Room which offers more space for our kids to social-distance. The Nursery* will also reopen for the 10 a.m. service. Remote learning activities for children will continue to be offered as before. (Details are in the September Key and on our website.). Confirmation and Youth Group are also returning for small group gatherings.

I am also happy that we will be able to again hold our Wednesday Eucharist* service at 10:15 a.m., since it is a smaller service. The Eucharist will only be offered “in one kind” with the bread solely as the sacrament to be received. At 11 a.m., Bible Study* will resume in the Fellowship Room for those who wish to attend in person and virtually through Zoom. We still be studying the Exodus narrative, which holds special meaning at this current time in our lives.

I will also be starting up a new adult education class on Wednesday evenings starting in October at 7 p.m. in the Fellowship Room and virtually. The class called ***Building Blocks of Grace: Theology 101**** will discuss the classic theological concepts that underpin both the Christian faith and our ministry at St. Matthew's.

Of special note, let me call to your attention our Harvest Moon fall benefit on Oct. 2. While are not able to hold our traditional parish-wide events yet, I hope that you will join with me, Drew and others to share a picnic together on the church lawn (socially distanced of course) or with friends in your home to celebrate being members of the St. Matthew's family. And please don't forget to Raise the Paddle through online giving in your generous support of St. Matthew's. We can't thank you enough for your continued support and generosity.

While our activities are still constrained, St. Matthew's is beginning to feel like the lively, connected church we love so much of just a few months ago. As the fall progresses, you will see many new and old ways of connecting and being involved become available. The Men of St. Matthew's is holding its first Saturday breakfast meeting on Sept. 19 and the Women of St. Matthew's are beginning a new book club. Be on the lookout for these, and I look forward to seeing you in church and virtually.

****Sign up for services, church school and nursery***