

# BUILDING to BLESS ALL AGES AN INVITATION TO PLEDGE FOR 2025

## A Note from the Vestry

Like many parishes in the Anglican tradition, Saint Matthias holds an Annual Stewardship Drive each fall to help our vestry plan the church's budget for the upcoming year. This year's drive will run through December 1. But before considering whether or how much you will pledge, we commend the contents of this booklet to you, which outlines the financial details of the anticipated operating costs of running the parish in 2025, as well as goals we have for enhancing our children's ministry and improving our property.

We'd like to begin by offering what we hope will be a few helpful thoughts on giving, stewardship, and the Kingdom of God. Father John and the vestry pray that this invitation to pledge would not just be about figuring out how much you can afford to give and still balance your checkbook, or how much we can spend on remodeling a classroom (as important as those questions are), but even moreso, about learning what it means to steward all that we have and are for the glory of God.

### **GIVING AND GOD'S UNCONDITIONAL LOVE**

We begin, as we very well should, with the center of our Christian faith: the

unconditional, everlasting love of God as demonstrated in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Some of us may have had negative experiences in the past with churches or ministries asking for money in ways that felt manipulative or coercive – and at the risk of stating the obvious, that is not what we want this stewardship drive to be. In fact, the Good News is that God never forces us to give; actually, it's the very opposite! Christ died for us while we were yet sinners (Romans 5:8). We had nothing to give, and still the King of Kings and Lord of Lords gave His all, for us.

It's important that we state clearly, as Father John has from the pulpit on multiple occasions, that God's love for you does not change one iota based on how much you give, or even whether you give or not. If anything, Jesus is the one who gave up His riches and glory in heaven, to take on our sins, sorrows, and poverty, so that He might show us beyond the shadow of a doubt how much He loves us, just as we are and where we are.

## **STEWARDSHIP**

And yet, throughout the Bible, it's assumed that for those of us who do follow Jesus, we are to give to the Church and to those in

need. How then should we understand this? A good place to start is by looking at the word “stewardship,” which Merriam-Webster defines as “the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care.” Key to this definition is that the steward is managing something that does not belong to him; no, it has been entrusted to him by the Master to whom all things belong. God has given us the great responsibility and privilege of being His stewards in this world – we look all the way back to the Garden of Eden and see that He entrusted Adam and Eve to take care of this fruitful and verdant world He created. And so, too, we have been entrusted with managing the gifts, time, and talents God has given us. Part of why the vestry does this annual stewardship drive is that planning for the year ahead based on your pledges helps us to be financially responsible – to steward Saint Matthias' finances well.

So while God does not coerce us to give, a Biblical worldview teaches that everything we have belongs to Him. Our paychecks, as much as they are the fruit of our blood, sweat and tears, really belong to God, in full: it was He who gave us the jobs we have, He who gave us the health and ability to work, He who created us with the talents and

opportunities we enjoy. Giving of our time is an important component of this stewardship, whether volunteering at the church or just informally helping someone in need; and so is giving of our treasure. Thus all that we have is meant to be used (or stewarded) for His glory – to care for His people, especially those in need, and contribute to the furtherance of the Gospel. It's not a burden, but rather the greatest privilege of our lives! The God of the Universe invites us to leverage our finances to forward the greatest mission in human history: declaring Christ's glory in all the earth.

## **THE TITHE**

So are we saying we should give 100% of our paycheck? Probably not – because stewardship also means taking care of yourself and those under your care for God's glory. That mortgage offers shelter and safety for your family, and also a means of hospitality to others. Those new car tires keep you safe on the road so you can drive to work and benefit the public good. Spending money on such things is good, and godly.

But (and this is a big “but”), we here in the U.S. live in the most prosperous society in the wealthiest era in the history of mankind. On a global scale, we are the 1% of the 1%.

In the New Testament Gospels, Jesus spoke about money more than any other topic – and His warnings were against greed: that pernicious, oft-imperceptible, voracious appetite to earn more... so that we can spend more... so that we can enjoy more... and on and on. How then do we guard against using our money in the service of self alone? How are we freed from the tyranny of materialism so that we can enter into the joy of using our money to love others?

Given our inherent blind spot to materialism and greed, it's hard for us to know if we're giving “enough” – and what is enough, anyway? God, in His infinite grace and wisdom, has given us a starting point to at least begin discerning and discussing what responsible stewardship looks like. And so we come to the tithe: a Biblical example of giving a tenth of one's harvest or livestock to God. So 10% is a good benchmark to be mindful of, but not all are able to give 10% of their income and others may be able to give far more. Some may be in debt, and responsible stewardship means first paying that off; others may be on a low fixed-income; and still others may not have unity with their spouse about giving to the Lord. But for those who don't give 10%, or discern that they are not able to, we invite

you to contemplate increasing your giving to the Church in 2025 by .5% or 1% of your income. And for those who already give 10%, perhaps you could contemplate an increase of .5% or 1% of your giving this year. You may or may not be able to do so - or you may even discern that you need to give less than you have been - but it's such a healthy conversation to have over the kitchen table: Not, "How can we spend more on ourselves this year?" but "How can we give more toward the Kingdom of God?"

### A CHALLENGE

What follows here are the projects that our Saint Matthias leadership would present as the most pressing needs to facilitate the life of our parish, to care for all those God has brought here for us to steward, and to fulfill the mission of bringing His Good News to the lost. We've titled this year's drive "Building for All Ages," reflecting our desire to improve and expand our ministry to our parishioners of all generations, from children to adults to seniors. You'll see a detailed explanation of what we'd like to do in 2025, and how much we anticipate it will cost. The results of this Stewardship Drive will help the vestry discern whether we will be able to complete some of these projects in 2025 or just continue saving toward their future completion.

We humbly ask you to prayerfully consider giving to this work, a work we believe is the call of God for our mission here in Oakdale and to the ends of the earth. Our prayer for all of us is that through this process, God would transform us more and more into the likeness of His Son, so that we might be set free from the service of self alone, unto the greater glory of Christ, who came as the servant of all.

## A Financial Snapshot of 2024

As we come to the end of 2024, our giving for this year is on track to meet our budgeted operating expenses of \$250k.

Year-To-Date thru Sept. 2024		GENERAL OPERATING FUND ^	Projected for End-of-Year 2024 (estimate)	
Budget	Actual		Budget	Actual
\$178,549	\$210,899*	Income	\$236,260	\$258,400
\$185,037	\$185,224	Expenses	\$246,716	\$250,600
-\$6,488	\$25,675*	NET	-\$10,456	\$7,800*

^The numbers in this table do not include Building Fund / Property Improvement income or expenses

\* Please note that a handful of parishioners have already given their full pledged amount for 2024, therefore we expect NET income to decrease from what is \$25,765 after September to \$7,800 as we come to the end of the year.

## Looking forward to 2025

For 2025 the vestry will be increasing the operating budget to \$260k. This is due in part to projecting effects of inflation and some insurance premiums increases we have been notified of. But, this budget increase also includes adding \$5,000 for continuing to train new leaders and advance the training of existing leaders for our growing Sunday morning Montessori children's chapel program (as listed in chart). You can find a breakdown of all projected 2025 expenses on page 13.

### FURTHER EXPANSION OF CLASSROOMS

Beyond these important increases in our operating budget expenses, we have an additional need to accommodate our expanding children's ministry by remodeling classrooms one & two in time for a Fall 2025 launch at an estimated cost of \$8,000.

### PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT

In 2024, the generous giving of parishioners has allowed us to maintain and upgrade our buildings by

- repairing dry rot on the south side of the classroom building (\$2,700, completed in January),
- replacing all gutters and the parish hall roof

(\$29,550, in February),

- remodeling classroom 3 into a toddler room (in March),
- replacing our deteriorating marquee sign (\$2,100, in March),
- upgrading the sprinklers in the classroom courtyard (in summer),
- upgrading our cry room (with fresh paint forthcoming!),
- remedying the rainfall flooding problem in the courtyard (\$500, in October),
- upgrading security and installing smoke alarms (\$2k in October),
- & painting the exterior of our buildings (scheduled to begin in November)

These property improvements were made possible largely through parishioners giving toward these particular projects as well as through your donations to the building fund.

### 2025 PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT GOALS

In 2025, the remodeling of classrooms 1 & 2 is our highest priority. However, the vestry has identified four additional projects for improving our buildings. These are listed in the chart in order of priority in the following table:

PROJECTS ranked by priority, from highest to lowest		Cost*
#1 (top priority)	Remodeling Classrooms 1-2	\$8,000
#2	Restoring the wood paneling above the altar	\$2,300
#3	Renovating Kitchen	
	Replacing Refrigerators	\$2,500
	Floor, light fixtures, paint	\$13-17k
#4	Replacing windows: Parish Hall, Rector's office, & south window in Kitchen	\$9-\$14k
#5	Painting parish interior (two main buildings)	\$35-43k
* These cost estimates are based upon bids recently acquired by the vestry		

## Would you consider making a pledge for 2025?

Letting us know how you plan to give in 2025 provides the Vestry with valuable information for planning and finalizing our budget for 2025

after this Pledge Drive concludes on December 1st. Will you prayerfully consider pledging to give financially in 2025, whether you would increase your giving, continue giving at the same amount, or even need to decrease the amount you give?

## Can non-members pledge?

Absolutely! We understand each person's spiritual journey is unique, but if you believe in what God is doing through the ministry of Saint Matthias, we hope you will consider supporting our ministry by making a pledge.

## What is a pledge, really?

Your pledge is a promise before the Lord of how much you intend to give in support of the ministry of St. Matthias in 2025. We do understand that financial circumstances can change unexpectedly. If that happens, you can always notify us at any time to make an adjustment to your pledge. But pledges made according to wishful thinking are ultimately detrimental to our financial planning. So our encouragement to you during this pledge drive is to take a full (and prayerful) measure of the financial realities of your situation and pledge to give the amount that you believe God is calling you to.



## How can I make a pledge?

There are two ways to make a pledge: you can make it at

[www.saintmatthiasoakdale.com/pledgeonline](http://www.saintmatthiasoakdale.com/pledgeonline)

or by filling out a pledge card (on the back cover of this booklet). Pledge cards may be submitted by placing them in the offering plate on Sunday or by mailing them to Saint Matthias Anglican Church, P.O. Box 26, Oakdale, CA 95361.

## A new, third way to give

This year, St Matthias established a relationship with TMF (Texas Methodist Foundation) to receive gifts of stock from parishioners without charging us a fee. For some, giving this way has tax advantages, which a financial advisor or a tax expert may be able to advise you on. To learn more about how to give to St. Matthias in this way or to learn more about TMF, visit

[www.saintmatthiasoakdale.com/givestock](http://www.saintmatthiasoakdale.com/givestock)

## Should I give to the General Fund or the Building Fund?

Either is fine! Building funds will now go toward paying our monthly mortgage payments and future property improvements.

## Details: Projected 2025 Expenses

<b>Salaries and Benefits</b>	<b>\$103,395</b>
Clergy Salary	\$69,500
Clergy Benefits	\$35,895
<b>Administration</b>	<b>\$31,450</b>
Administration & Bookkeeping	\$14,400
Insurance	\$11,000
Phone, Internet, & Website	\$2,000
Office Equipment & Supplies	\$2,800
Software & Banking Expenses	\$1,250
<b>Ministry</b>	<b>\$37,695</b>
Music	\$8,265
Congregational Life	\$2,500
Clergy Supply	\$1,300
Mission	\$1,300
Conferences & Retreats	\$2,000
Children's Ministry	\$2,500
Children's Ministry Training	\$4,000
Subsidized Counseling	\$5,000
Other Ministry Expenses	\$11,100
<b>Facilities</b>	<b>\$57,500</b>
Cleaning & Maintenance	\$9,500
Alarm & Utilities	\$10,100
Facilities & Equipment (incl mortgage)	\$36,000
Landscaping	\$1,900
<b>Professional Expenses</b>	<b>\$600</b>
Audit & Licensing Fees	\$600
<b>Other Expenses</b>	<b>\$27,050</b>
Diocesan Assessment	\$26,050
Other Expenses	\$1,000

# Other F.A.Q.s

## Why is fulfilling my pledge through BillPay better than giving through the parish website?

We welcome anyone to use the online giving service available through the website. However, with each transaction through the website the parish incurs a small service fee. Therefore, we ask you to consider using BillPay through your bank instead. BillPay is an online service offered by most banks that provides the convenience of automated payments typically without any fees. If you would like to switch from online giving to BillPay, e-mail church@saintmatthiasoakdale.com and request that your recurring payment be cancelled. Then, be sure to set up BillPay with your bank and schedule your offerings to be sent to P.O. Box 26, Oakdale, CA 95361.

## Whom should I contact if I have further questions?

Direct any further questions to Fr John, our Treasurer Traci Yazembiak, or any other Vestry member: Larry Johnson (Senior Warden), Peter Vargas (Junior Warden), Josette Adams, Justin Black, Nan Gravel, Andrew Hongo, & Vickie Looney.

Artwork by Elizabeth Wight

107 S First Ave, P.O. Box 26, Oakdale, California 95361 • Phone: 209.847.2012  
www.saintmatthiasoakdale.com



Submit a 2025 pledge at  
[www.saintmatthiasoakdale.com/pledgeonline](http://www.saintmatthiasoakdale.com/pledgeonline)  
or by using the card below

### 2025 Pledge Card

I pledge to support the ministry of Saint Matthias Anglican Church in 2025 with an offering of: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (select one)

per week    per month    for the year  
to the General Operating Fund

**BUILDING FUND (Optional)**  
Additionally, I would like to contribute to the Saint Matthias Building Fund in 2025 the amount of: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(select one)    per week    per month    for the year

Check here if you do **NOT** wish to receive pledge envelopes (especially recommended for those who donate exclusively through BillPay or online giving).

Check here if you desire more information on how to donate stock, and we will contact you with more information

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Your Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Please submit your pledge by 12/1/24 by placing it in the offering plate or mailing to P.O. Box 26, Oakdale, California 95361

Thank you for supporting the ministry of Saint Matthias!!