



## David's Dialogue

Dear members and friends of St. Matthew's,

As Jesus walked on, he saw Matthew, a tax collector, at his post. Jesus approached and said, "Follow me," and Matthew got up and followed. *Matthew 9:9*

Who is the saint who gave us our name? We know that Matthew had a unique personality: He was a great host who liked to feed his friends. He was a tax collector who was probably good at math. His name means YHWH's gift, which says there was something in him that people found precious and beautiful. We know that life gave him a unique set of experiences: He was a Syrian Jew. He grew up on a trade route that ran between Indian, Persia and Rome and was therefore exposed to many wonderful things. He had a heart for children. He probably experienced at least one earthquake. We also know that he had a special ministry in the church: He was one of the twelve apostles and the Gospel that bears his name helped to evangelize Persia and India.

We at St. Matthew's United Church have our own personality, our own gifts and our own special ministry. One of the things we do well is feeding people and I'd say we're also pretty good at it. Community suppers are a pillar of St. Matthew's ministry. We share this characteristic with our namesake. And like our namesake we have been challenged by Jesus to think of ways we can use our special gifts for the benefit of a much bigger community than our own circle of friends.

On June 11, the congregation of St. Matthew's United made the big decision to declare itself an Affirming congregation. What does it mean to become an Affirming congregation? On the very surface level it means affirming our belief that the presence of sexual diversity within the church and within the world is the will of God and publicly declaring this belief. But on a deeper level we might see this as a chance to live up to our name, to remember that like many in the Queer community today, Matthew was once rejected by his community as a sinner. It is a chance to remember that just as Matthew was good at feeding others, Christ had a mission for him that involved not only feeding the tens and hundreds of people he knew, but thousands of others he didn't know as well, people in countries and places much different from his own. This decision is a chance to remember that the Gospel proclaimed by Matthew and the other apostles at the beginning of the church was not meant only for the small group

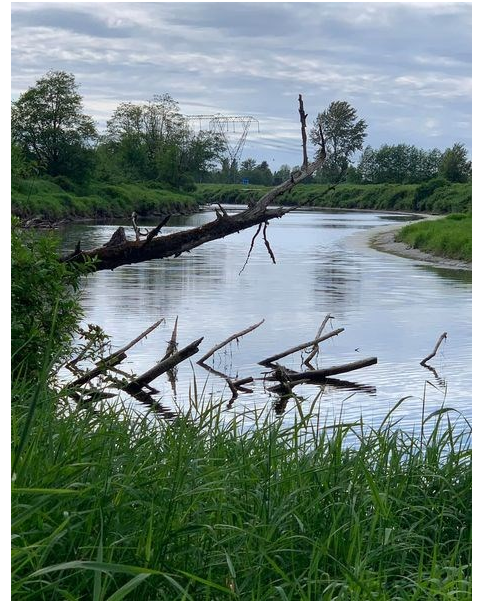
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who followed Jesus but for the wider world, a world far bigger than they could imagine. The step to become an Affirming congregation is a chance for St. Matthew's to become "Yahweh's Gift," a chance to live up to our name!

St. Matthew's is a great name. It carries a wonderful history and meaning. But the gift of a name carries responsibilities as well. May God help us to discern those responsibilities and give us strength and courage to respond to the call.

Peace like a river,

Rev. David Kim-Cragg ᑭᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦ *wahkohtowin*;  
Minister at St. Matthew's United Church (he/him)



Nicomekl River in May 2023, located in BC; Photo taken by Megan Beddows

## Upcoming Services & Activities

- June 18: Get your orders in for Cash Cards this Sunday. Cards will be delivered on June 25th. Next order date will be mid to late September. Can't get to church? Phone Doreen with your order or [email her](#) —type of card, dollar value & quantity for each card you want.
- June 18: The Truth & Reconciliation team will have a meeting following the service.
- June 21: GET YOUR TICKETS NOW for the June 21st Strawberry Supper from 5 to 7pm. Take-out or eat-in. Bill Hurdman has the tickets which are \$20 each.
- In the spirit of building our Ecumenical relationship, St. Matthew's and Richmond Hill United will be worshipping together on two dates this summer:
  - July 16, 9,30 am at St. Matthews UC (no service at Richmond Hill UC)
  - August 6, 10.30 am at Richmond Hill UC. (no service at St. Matthew's UC)We look forward to continuing to build connections between the two faith communities.
- The Worship Committee is looking for volunteer Lay Readers and Soloists/musicians for our 9:30 am summer services. If you are interested in contributing to Worship, there is a sign-up sheet in Room 101. You may also speak to Naomi Knight or Helen Smith. But if you are doing the lay reading, let Doreen know so she can send the readings to you.

### Mark your calendars:

- Our Summer services are at 9:30 am from July 2nd to Sept. 3rd.
  - July 16. St. Matthew's will host Sunday services for ourselves and the Richmond Hill United Church members at our church at 9:30 am.
  - August 6. Richmond Hill United Church will host services for us and themselves at their Yonge St. location. Service at 10:30 am.
- September 17th is going to be our Celebration Sunday. (subject to change) Join us for an interesting service plus cake and coffee afterwards.
- October 21 is our annual Beef & Salmon dinner.
- November 11 is our Annual Bazaar.

## SALVATION ARMY SCHOOL DRIVE

The Salvation Army ministry unit in Richmond Hill is having it's annual back-to-school drive. Your CEO Committee endorses this effort and encourages all of us to contribute if possible. The program runs until late August and the CEO team will collect your donation each week and get them to the Salvation Army on a regular basis so they can starting packing the bags.

The goal is to give about 250 children a new backpack and lunch bag. Students in need range from JK to Grade 12. There will be a designated box in the Narthex in which you can place your donations. These donations will be picked up each week. Final date for donations will be August 13, 2023 so CEO can ensure that everything gets to the Salvation Army on time.

### ITEMS NEEDED:

- ◆ New or not noticeably used backpacks or lunch bags – JK to Grade 12
- ◆ New calculators and math sets
- ◆ New packs of pens, pencils, and pencil crayons, pencil sharpeners
- ◆ Monetary donations by cash or cheque are also welcome—make them out to our church. CEO will turn the funds over to The Salvation Army or purchase more pack-backs with them.

Please consider a donation. Thank you! *From your Christian Education & Outreach Committee*

## Strawberry Supper

Join us for our in-person strawberry supper on Wednesday June 21 from 5 pm to 7 pm. Or order take-out if you prefer.

### Dinner includes:

- Roast Beef and Ham
- Salads: Potato Salad, Cole Slaw, Carrot Salad, and Bean Salad
- Plus cake covered with strawberries and ice cream for dessert!

Tickets are \$20 (cash only). Get your tickets after service or phone and reserve a ticket or take out meal by sending an email to Bill Hurdman at [hurdman0347@rogers.com](mailto:hurdman0347@rogers.com) or phone him at 905-737-0347. Be sure to state your name, and the number of tickets you are requesting. A limited number of tickets are available, so order NOW.



**Last day to get tickets for dine in or takeout is this Sunday, June 18, 2023.**

# Yes! We are now an Affirming Church.

## THANK YOU!

### Upcoming Activity:

- Rev. David and other members of our church will be joining the York Pride Parade which will be held in Newmarket **this Saturday June 17th starting at 3pm**. If you enjoy a good walk, please let David know and join the group. More details from David or at <https://yorkpride.ca/> The parade starts at Main Street near the corner of Main & Ontario (just 2 blocks south of Davis). So get there early especially to get a parking spot. Parking lots are shown on the map at the yorkpride.ca website. The parade will continue south on Main to Water Street, thus a fairly short walk of 5 blocks. Afterwards you can try out some of the local restaurants and boutiques on Main or cool your feet in the splash pad at the Community Centre just behind Main.
- In September we'll have an official celebration of becoming an Affirming congregation during our "Celebration Sunday". There's talk of cake and coffee after the service. Watch for more details.

### Do you have a question about all of this?

- The members of the Affirming Ministry committee as well as Rev. David are still available to answer your questions in person with you or over the phone or even by email if you prefer. Let us know if you'd like to discuss something, and we'll get it set up. Or if you know who you want to discuss this with, feel free to reach out to them directly.
- Who are the members? Naomi Knight, Doreen Coyne, Bertha Hurdman, Hannah Kim-Cragg, Noah Kim-Cragg, Monique & RJ Romero, AJ Francisco, Linda Alldred-Johnson, and Rev. David Kim-Cragg.

### Summer is almost here and Richmond Hill continues to offer free fun!

- Concerts in the Park—Thursdays 7pm to 9pm starting July 7th at the Mill Pond
- Live in the Plaza—every Tuesday and Wednesday, 7 to 9pm. At the outdoor Plaza at the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts. Tuesdays will feature local artists with varying musical genres and Thursdays are OPEN MIC nights. Tune your cords and come out or just sit and listen to the entertainment.
- Plus Moonlight Movies which start in late summer and continue into September.

### Missed a recent service? Watch it on YouTube.

#### Recent services at St. Matt's

- May 21: [Video recording](#). Sermon focuses on our Trust in God and the importance of Prayer led by Doreen Coyne.
- May 28: [Video recording](#). Pentecost service led by Rev. John McTavish
- June 04: [Video recording](#). Service led by Helen Smith.
- June 11: [Video recording](#). Rev. David is back! Today he spoke on "Who is St. Matthew?"