

THE TAU CROSS

Connecting the St. Matthew's Community

Stewardship 2025–Walk in Love

The Rev. Dr. Eric Hinds, Rector

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Ephesians 5:1-2, NRSV

During our outdoor services this summer, for seven consecutive Sundays, our lectionary provided lessons from the epistle to the Ephesians. The letter was written sometime in the second half of the first century to a fledgling gentile community in Ephesus (then a city in Greece, now part of Turkey) broadly to explain how they were both welcomed and reconciled to God. The letter contains many beautiful passages that describe aspects of Christian life and community. On August 4th, we were reminded about how we are all a part of a community of “one body and one spirit,” a claim that is repeated in our baptismal service. On August 25th, we heard how the author of Ephesians exhorts all Christians to “put on the whole armor of God,”



which includes truth, righteousness, the gospel of peace, faith, salvation, and the Spirit of God.

Every Sunday, there is a place in our liturgy termed the *Offertory Sentence*. It occurs after *The Peace*, and immediately after our ritual blessing of members of the congregation to mark various life events. The *Offertory Sentence* serves as a hinge of sorts, between the first part of our service—the liturgy of the Word—and our entrance to our celebration of the Eucharist. It also signals the beginning of a process where individuals will present gifts at the altar on behalf of the entire congregation. The alms, bread, and wine are symbols of the lives, labor and love of the congregation; they are then blessed at the altar, with the wine and bread given back as part of a ritual instituted by Christ to nurture and strengthen each follower in their life of faith.

At the time of the *Offertory Sentence*, my practice has always been to use the phrase from *Ephesians*, chapter 5: “Walk in love as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.” It captures, I think, the notion that we are participants in the transformative gospel of love, in imitation of Christ, and that we too are offering our hearts and lives to God. In some quarters of the Church, the period that follows the *Offertory Sentence* is simply referred to as “the collection.” This is an impoverished view of the

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Finding Equilibrium

The Rev. Jay Sapaen Watan, Associate Rector



I wonder, what might be some of the qualities we wish to see among our leaders? The Presidency of the United States symbolizes power for some, hope for others, and

leadership that should guide us all. Whether we agree with the brand of politics presented to us, the leaders we elect reflect who we are together. And like family, that togetherness sometimes radiates the dysfunction of relatedness rather than the dignity of our kinship. With the presidential election upon us, I have been besieged with ads and appeals from candidates asking me to choose a side. I find choosing a side messes with my equilibrium, because I find that the spectrum between progressive and conservative thought has many right and resonating points. My high school government teacher, Mr. Issola, gave sound wisdom in voting for elected officials: *“People are consistent... so make an effort to study how that person actually treats other human beings and not who they are sucking up to.”* Constancy, competence, courage, and compassion reflect values important to me. I don’t expect perfection or even inspiration. But I do wonder if that person we elect can lead with love, and a bit of laughter too?

We all have folks in our lives who wear their political ideology on their sleeves, often with polarizing effects. Have you ever seen a person’s politics bring people with differing stances together? I have not. Perhaps we need to change the talking points from the ways we differ to what we actually have in common. Relationships

really require some sort of common ground to weave our stories together. Growing up, I noticed one of the common ways Filipino folks started off a first meeting with me was not the usual, *“how’s the weather?”* or *“what do you do for work?”* or even *“how are you doing?”* but with a question to map out that common ground: *“So, where is your family from?”* This exercise of linking our relatedness, from the people we know to the communities we have connected with, invites discovery of common ground and a way to weave our stories together.

I find this approach helpful in this climate of cynicism and suspicion. As we are asked to take sides I’ve noticed, even for me, how easily the rhetoric of choosing a side can dismiss folks with other viewpoints and narratives when they do not align with one’s own. It’s hard to see what we have in common when the only worldview that matters is my own. So how can there be a right here? The labels we give to others just cannot reflect the wholeness of a person. And while it’s easy to profile a person based on their ideology and political leanings, the measurement of the heart matters. But what about the labels they embrace for themselves? I’ve also noticed how more folks have been willing to label themselves on the “losing” end of the stick or in life in general. And while our growing economic and societal inequities are complex realities our world struggles to address, the labels we give ourselves can be as self-defeating as sin itself.

The Catechism of the Episcopal Church defines sin as “seeking of our own will instead of the will of God, thus distorting our relationship with God, with other people, and with all creation.”

Continued on page 3...

...Fr. Eric, continued from page 1

liturgical action, as it implies a simple one-way monetary transaction divorced from any deeper sense of sacrificial offering. From an earlier, more agricultural time, bread and wine were deeply recognized as products of human labor. Alms, bread, and wine together are thus symbols of the fruits of our striving and our labor—offered to the greater glory of God for the transformation of our lives.

At Saint Matthew's, in the month of October, we are intentional in dedicating time to talk about financial giving through our yearly Stewardship Campaign. This year, our stewardship theme is *Walk in Love*. As the author of the letter to the Ephesians knew, it takes something as radical as the gospel of love to open one's heart to sharing time, talent and treasure for a greater purpose. Together we have been on a journey to strengthen the financial foundation of our community of faith. Individuals and households have been generous and intentional in supporting our parish. Last year, we grew the number of households that pledge and have emerged from the disruption of Covid in a solid financial position.

One of the unexpected products of Covid has been a widespread and deeper realization of the importance of community. Our Church community is a unique place where individuals and families gather across generations and with many differences for common worship and fellowship. We are a community that is learning to "*walk in love as Christ loved us*." Almost two thousand years ago, the letter to the Ephesians extorted a small community not to take their lives for granted and to support one another in a life of faith. My prayer for our upcoming Stewardship season is that we continue to deepen our commitment to *Walk in Love* with one another and continue to support this community of faith.

Blessings, Fr. Eric+

... Fr. Jay, continued from page 2

In other words, we are made in the image of God...from love for love. And because of that we also know the will of God has something to do with a love that makes us whole people. Sin isn't simply about that the "bad things" we do out there. It is about broken relationships. Unfortunately, we do not have an easy duct tape or super glue solution to the disappointment and anger many people feel from their brokenness. Shouldn't we have more... security, peace of mind, prosperity, and success? Maybe. I believe people lean into that which seems more hopeful to them. As such, sometimes we remain so attached to the idea of what life would be or should be that it creates the unhappiness we have been trying to avoid. The late theologian Henri J.M. Nouwen struggled with depression for most of his life in ministry. He noted how his ordination to the priesthood, while connecting with others, left him longing for closer relationships. And during his last sabbatical to a Trappist monastery he wrote in his journal, *I read that sadness is the result of attachment. Detached people are not the easy victims of good or bad events in their surroundings. [They] can experience a certain sense of equilibrium.*"

The Good Lord encourages us like no other to return to the source of who we are to find our equilibrium. Jesus said, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." Matthew 11: 28-30 (KJV)

We are invited to do the work of finding equilibrium in a world trying to catch us off balance. Before the outcome of any presidential election, just know a better tomorrow first begins with you and me, and how we define our hearts by the way of love.

Peace, Fr. Jay+

Sr. Warden's Message

Carol Kalb

It has been a busy summer at St. Matthew's, with extensive work throughout the grounds.

Our long-term project, the Memorial Garden, is nearing completion. Ferns, boxwood, dogwood trees and azaleas have been planted; the rhododendrons will be planted as soon as cooler weather arrives.

The path through the garden has been installed and the fountain is operational. Decorative stones will be placed around the fountain prior to the dedication. Garden lights are installed. Memorial plaques are on order and should arrive by mid-October. After they are installed, the Garden will be dedicated.

All of the trees on the property have been pruned. The oaks were thinned and cut back where necessary to reduce possible damage from high wind, and the courtyard magnolia was trimmed. The redwood trees had never been pruned. In order to plant the Garden, it was necessary to prune/remove limbs and raise the canopy height for sunlight. By next spring there will be new growth on the trees and the Garden planting will be established and growing.

Scott Poms (Scapes Landscaping) and Justin Willett (Timberline Tree Service) have been exceptional to work with. Christopher Kalb, (CWK Electrical) installed and donated all the electrical work and lighting in the trees and along walkways.

In other parish news, the Thrift Shop has opened! The shop is staffed by a wonderful group of volunteers. If you are interested in helping work in the shop, please call Diana Dikes. 650-796-3177.

September 15th marked the festive occasion of St. Matthew's day and a visit by Bishop Rios at our 10:15 service. The service was followed by our Annual Picnic BBQ for all members of the parish to celebrate the day and meet with our new Bishop Rios.

October 5th from 6-9 p.m. will be our Polynesian Night Luau, sponsored by the Vestry; please purchase your tickets (\$30/\$10/under 5 free) after church through September 29.

And finally, Stewardship for 2025 will start in October.

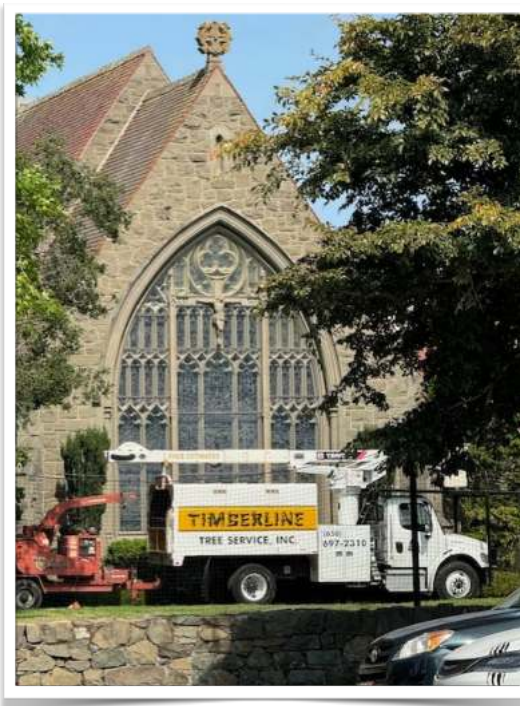


Photo credit: Carol Kalb

Notes from the Precentor

Philip Keil



A veritable Feast of Organ Music, performed on our historic instrument, will be offered at the church on **Sunday afternoon, October 20, program to begin at 4:00 pm.** Up to 10 members of the local chapter of the American Guild of Organists will perform what they are calling a “Members’ Recital”. Please do support this no-charge music event with your attendance. Each performer will

offer one selection, affording the audience opportunity to hear a variety of both tonalities and interpretive styles. It will be interesting to hear how each player utilizes the resources of our instrument.

Among the expected players, some are highly skilled concert performers; others are students just beginning to launch their organist careers. Come, let us cheer them all on!

Faithfully,

Philip Keil, Precentor , Director of Music & Church Organist



Photo credit: Jay Watan

Music at St. Matthew’s

St. Matthew’s Music Groups all have an “open rehearsal policy,” permitting and welcoming anyone to attend a rehearsal to explore their own comfort level in making music with the ensemble.

Come, give it a try!

Here are the contacts for our directors:

CHILDREN’S AND YOUTH CHOIRS

Suki Jang - janghyunsuk@gmail.com

CHANCEL CHOIR, (Adults & Teens)

Philip Keil - turbo_pk@hotmail.com

BELL RINGING CHOIR

Stannie Holt- stannieholt@gmail.com



Elana Cowan, alto singer in our choir, is moving to Los Angeles. We wish her much happiness and success.

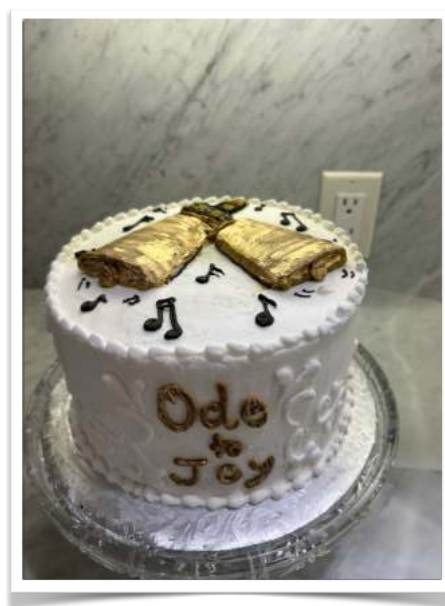
Photo credit: Darlia Clerico

The Bell Choir Rings Again



The Bell Choir had its post-Pandemic resurrection in 2024, playing at 8:00 and 10:15 services, with “Ode to Joy” celebrating Easter season and a lively version of “Holy Holy Holy” marking the transition into summer. The Bell Choir celebrated their resurgence at a festive brunch after the June 9 performance, a day that happily coincided with and honored Fr. Eric’s 30th anniversary as a priest.

New ringers are always welcomed to join, and no prior experience is necessary. We schedule 2-4 specific performances during the year, practicing in the music room (by the Thrift Shop) after the 10:15 service for several weeks before we play at church; you can join in for one or for all of them, as your schedule permits. Many find it an enjoyable and creative way to share in fellowship and service. To participate, please get in touch with Stannie Holt or Ann Watters or one of the other members, or listen for an announcement at church



Bell Choir and friends at the end-of-year brunch and the celebratory dessert cake
Photo credit: TC staff

St. Matthew's Episcopal Day school

Quincey Grieve, Head of School

The 2024-25 Episcopal Day School year is underway with joy and anticipation of the year ahead. On the first day of school, festive music, magnificent blue and yellow flags, fabulous teachers, and our beautiful campus greeted the children as they bounded onto campus. We gathered as a community for the first time in Chapel, awed by the sacred space, uniting in worship to officially launch the year.

There is so much to look forward to in the year ahead. Enrollment is strong with 310 students, and we have a new Associate Head of School for Academics who is working closely with our Division Directors to examine our curriculum and pedagogy. We initiated a strategic planning process in January, and I'm eager to share this exciting work with our community in the coming months.

We rented a house across the street from the school at 109 Baldwin Avenue, where the Business Office and Advancement Team are now located. This new space has opened opportunities for reimagining how we use space and has led to a very busy summer for the facilities team but has made a profound difference in the operation of the school.

Last year we finalized our Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Vision Statement, a document that crystalizes our longstanding commitment to DEIB and now serves as our North Star for this work going forward. I'm grateful to Fr. Eric for his partnership as we crafted the Vision Statement, helping to ensure that it appropriately illuminates our Episcopal identity as foundational to our commitment to



DEIB. We now have a four-person DEIB leadership team on campus that is already doing transformative work for Episcopal Day School.

I'm thrilled to be in my second year as Head of School. After seeing the full arc of the year, I have even greater appreciation for the beauty in the relationship between the school and the church. At school, we've been talking to the children about how we are fortunate to be like neighbors – even roommates – with the church, and how thoughtful we must be in nurturing that relationship. I have no doubt there will be some stray balls here and there, as children will always be children! *And* everyone in the Episcopal Day School community is committed to using such moments to educate the children and help them develop their skills in building relationships and being good leaders.

Last year I was struck by the beauty of the Lessons and Carols service and the Day School Sunday service – two moments when school and church intentionally come together in worship and in celebration. These dates are marked in bold on my calendar, and I hope they are for you as well. We also love to have parishioners join for school chapel services; our eighth grade chapel talks are extraordinary and all are welcome! Additionally, I will share special highlights over the year about performances and showcase events such as May Day. We love to share the joy of the children with everyone in the church community.

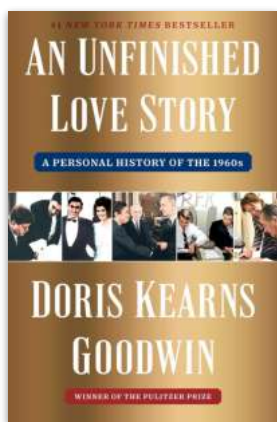
Here's to a fabulous year ahead, and thank you for our unique and powerful partnership.

Very sincerely,
Quincey Grieve

ECSM Book Group

Susan Peterson

September brings thoughts of Autumn, even as we continue to enjoy warm, sunny days. Children have returned to school. After our summer break, Book Group held its September meeting at Charles House to discuss Doris Kearns Goodwin's latest book, *An Unfinished Love Story: A Personal History of the 1960s*.



Kearns Goodwin is well known as a presidential historian; her previous books include biographies of Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, Franklin Roosevelt, and Lyndon Johnson. *An Unfinished Love Story* combines Kearns Goodwin's

personal story with the social and political history of the 1960s. She and Richard (Dick) Goodwin were married for 42 years before Goodwin's death in 2018.

In the early 1960s, Dick Goodwin was one of the brilliant young men of John F. Kennedy's New Frontier. Later in that decade, he named and helped design Lyndon Johnson's Great Society. When Johnson decided not to run for re-election in 1968, Goodwin became a speechwriter and close advisor to Robert Kennedy, whose run for President was cut short by an assassin. Doris Kearns was a twenty-four-year-old graduate student when she was selected to become a White House Fellow in 1967, working directly for Lyndon Johnson and later assisting Johnson with his memoir.

Dick Goodwin maintained an extensive archive from his years working in the White House, storing 300 boxes of materials at their home in Massachusetts. He and Kearns Goodwin began the project together, cataloging the materials in chronological order and planning to write a book together. After Goodman's death, Kearns Goodwin decided to complete the project.

An Unfinished Love Story, widely praised by critics and readers, is available in hard cover, Kindle, and audio editions, with the Audible version narrated by Doris Kearns Goodwin and the passages from Dick Goodwin's own writings voiced by Bryan Cranston (of *Breaking Bad* fame). The Audible version of the book also contains archival recordings of speeches from John F. Kennedy, Robert F. Kennedy, and Lyndon B. Johnson.

If you are old enough to remember the 1960s, this book may give you fresh insights into the leaders and events of those heady and turbulent times. If you are too young to have your own memories of that era, you may recognize issues and conflicts that continue to challenge us.

The Book Group meetings begin at 7:00 pm and usually conclude between 9:00 and 9:30. We generally choose a book to read and discuss at the following meeting, with the next Group scheduled for November. If you have read any good books this summer, please let us know! Newcomers are always welcome at our ECSM Book Group meetings. Watch the *Ivy Leaf* for updates.

Fellowship Parents Group Reflection - Coming Back

Erin Harrigan

In our June Vestry meeting, Father Jay led the twelve of us in a bible study about Jesus bringing Jairus's daughter back from the dead. He asked us to reflect upon and discuss two questions: 1) where have we seen resurrection in our lives? 2) what does healing look like to us?

Just days prior to the vestry meeting, I had been recovering from a stomach flu that had ripped through our household. On my birthday, I lay on my bed in such intense pain that I wondered whether I should go to the emergency room and fell asleep debating calling an ambulance.

A week later, listening to my fellow vestry members sharing their resurrection experiences, I was distracted by a background character in the Bible story. As Jesus traverses the crowd on his way to Jairus's home, an unnamed woman reaches out to touch his clothes. She has been suffering for 12 years from constant bleeding, but as she touched his clothing, she is healed.

I had been briefly sick and had fully recovered. In the case of this unnamed woman, not only had she lived in immense pain, but she had been isolated from human connection; her illness had rendered her "unclean" among her community. Thus, when she was healed by touching Jesus' clothing, she was freed not just from her physical pain but also from her social and emotional imprisonment.

At the Vestry meeting, Lorraine shared that she saw the return of children to school after the

lockdowns as a kind of resurrection. The laughter of the children, the voices of teachers welcoming students into a physical learning space for the first time in over a year, had brought her a sense of relief from the isolation we all had shared.

In "the after-times," in the resurrection of the world after the pandemic, we have witnessed not just coming back, but becoming something different. How easy it was to walk within six-feet of a student again, to take down my mask and be understood. Things that annoyed me in the pre-

Covid era are the same things I am now grateful for—things that I had assumed would always be there, like the blaring ring of the school bell and the slamming of lockers. Similarly, health is something that is easy to take for granted. To be sick one can hope to return to health, but with a greater appreciation for that health.



Credit: Getty Images

lockdowns as a kind of resurrection. These days, that last bell is music to my ears. I revel in the sounds of preteens yelling their greetings to friends and fighting with stubborn combination locks; I listen as the tumult slows like the popping of corn in the microwave.

Resurrection is often thought of as a physical return, but the emotional before-and-after of both biblical and personal resurrection experiences is striking. Before, there is fear or sadness that can reach the point of hopelessness. After, I think the "life" that returns to people's eyes comes from the surprise of hope returning.

What St. Matthew's Means to Me

Carol Kalb

St. Matthew's has been a major part of my life. Some of my dearest friends have been those I made over 55 years at St. Matthew's, through getting involved in many activities at church: Couples Club, the Adult Choir, Day School Parent Group, Altar Guild, Garden Guild, Christian Social Relations, and Bible Study. My children grew up attending the Day School and Sunday School, serving as acolytes, singing in the Jr. Choir, and participating in Cambridge Club.

In times of great happiness and great heartaches I laughed, cried, and comforted or was comforted by members of my St. Matthew's family. During personal difficult times I have found comfort in our sanctuary; the caring of our clergy and parish family have been a true gift from God. I feel blessed to be a member of this wonderful parish.

I was deeply honored and humbled to be asked to be Senior Warden. As such it is one of the greatest honors of my life. I plan on spending eternity with my St. Matthew's Family in the Memorial Garden.

MILESTONES

In Memoriam

Nancy Graham, September 5, 2024



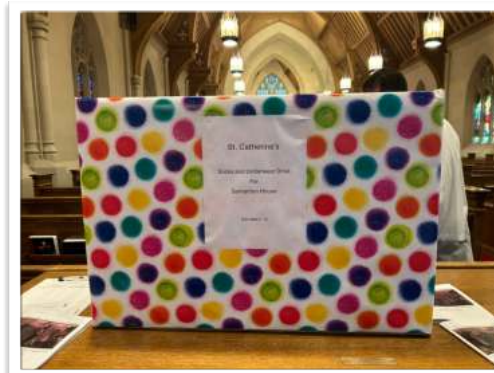
St. Catherine's Section of the League for Service Ask and Ye Shall Receive... Socks and Underwear?

This big box was filled to the brim with 181 pairs of socks, 123 underwear, four thermal sets and five tank tops!

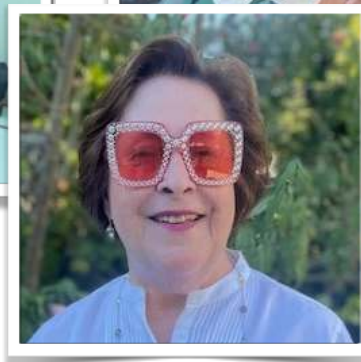
All were delivered to Samaritan House on September 10 and received by staff with special gratitude because of their low supply for the start of the school year.

This drive, coordinated by St. Catherine's Section of the League for Service, was the second of its kind in 2024. The need is great.

Sincere thanks to all who donated.



Ladies of St. Catherine's Section of the League for Service



Left photo - Anne Hinds, Jenny Mathis,
Kitty Van Beckum

Middle photo: Elizabeth Weatherby

Right photo: Tara Vlkjord, Anne Hinds

Photo credit: Darlia Clerico

Bishop Austin Rios joins St. Matthew's for worship on September 15th



Top photos: left-Bishop Rios ; right - Fr. Eric, Bishop Rios, Fr. Jay. Photo credits: Darlia Clerico
Bottom photos left - Bishop Rios and his wife Maleah Rios - photo credit: Darlia Clerico
Bottom photo right - Bishop Rios, Tom Doherty, Fr. Eric - photo credit: TC staff

Parish Picnic for the Feast of St. Matthew September 15, 2024



Upper left; Lauren and Alex Cupps
Lower right: Paul and Jacqueline Harris
Photo credits: TC staff

Workshops: Stress!

Gary Perkins, Adult Education Co-Coordinator

Are you one of the many of us listening to the news, caught up in the upcoming elections, or facing challenges? These times are upsetting and are causing many of us uneasiness, resulting in STRESS.

To gain some insight into identifying, coping with, and managing stress, come to the talks by *Jacquelyn Galbreth Rabouin*, MFT, PhD., from San Jose State University's Counseling and Psychological Services.

We will be hosting two seminars between Sunday services.

Stress Management I:

An introduction to the causes of stress and techniques to help manage it.

Sunday, November 3 - 9:15 am in the conference room

Stress Management II:

Parents' and grandparents' techniques to help school-age children manage stress

Sunday, November 17 - 9:15 am in the conference room

For questions, please contact the church office.

Ron Gantvoort is ready for Polynesian Night, are you?



Ron Gantvoort
Photo credit: TC staff

Polynesian Night
Saturday October 5th
6-9pm JBH

- Authentic Hawaiian Food
- Live Polynesian Dancers
- Learn the Hula
- Dress in your Island Best

Adults \$30~Kids \$10~Under 5 Free

Tickets on Sale after both services
Advance Purchase Only
no tickets are being sold at the door
Now Through September 29th

THE TAU CROSS

The Episcopal Church of St. Matthew is
a family called by Christ . . .

to Live God's Love,
to Share the Gospel,
to Grow Spiritually.

Come Celebrate with Us!

Sunday Services

8:00AM Rite I

10:15 AM Rite II (Facebook Livestream, also)

The Rev. Dr. Eric Kimball Hinds, Rector
The Rev. Jay Sapaen Watan, Associate Rector
The Rev. Amber Stancliffe Evans, School Chaplain

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Layout & Design: Carol Martin

The Tau Cross is a quarterly publication of the Episcopal Church of St. Matthew. We welcome submissions that have a connection to the parish. Inclusion is at the discretion of the staff and may be edited for space or clarity. If you would like to submit an article, please contact the editor, Dr. Ann Watters (watters@stanford.edu), for information regarding the next issue and guidelines for submission.

Upcoming Events

- Sept 18** ECISM Book Group Meeting
- Oct 5** All-Church Polynesian Night
Social
- Oct 8** Taizé Service
- Nov 3** Stress Management I Workshop
- Nov 3** Daylight Savings Ends
- Nov 17** Stress Management II Workshop
How parents and grandparents
can help school-age children
manage stress

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