

# The Epistle: February 2025

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## Annual Meeting

The Parish of St. Matthew Annual Meeting took place on Sunday, January 26 at St. Augustine by-the-Sea. The Rector's Report and Senior Warden's Report are now available. The full meeting may also be viewed via YouTube by clicking the button below.



Parish of St. Matthew Annual Meeting via YouTube

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### ***Rector's Report*** ***Rev. Bruce A. Freeman's address to The Parish of St. Matthew at the 2025 Annual Meeting***

Where to start? God is good. All the time. We know that. But this is a very confusing and difficult time for those of us who are The Parish of St. Matthew. We're safe. But we've lost so much: Possessions — but way more than that. Community. A sense of stable life. I was in my dentist's temporary office in Brentwood this last week. Several staff in the office, knowing that Dana and I had lost our home—were solicitous to connect with us. But seeing that we were safe and moving forward they referenced a senior who was also from the Palisades. She hadn't lost her home but many in her little neighborhood had left or were not likely to return anytime soon, if at all. This broke my heart. Many decades of friendship, community, memory and a hope toward future possibility — gone. Such loss. Such pain.

In a time of devastation like this it is, as I said in my sermon on January 19, it is tempting to hold on to easy answers, easy outcomes. But right now, we're still in the moment of loss and confusion. And it does seem like our call is to just be here. Supporting each other, listening to each other, and praying for each other. It is in these simple actions that we find that God's blessing of hope and love become real. [Continue Here](#)



### ***Senior Warden's Report*** ***Lawry Meister's address to The Parish of St. Matthew***

Bruce, your vision as to our refocused mission at St. Matthew's is the right thing at this time. We have to adapt to best serve our Parish as well as our greater community, and we on the Vestry stand with you.

Welcome everyone—thank you for taking the time to be here today, especially during this difficult time. It has truly been an honor to serve as Senior Warden this past year, following in the big shoes of John Carrick. With all that's happened over the past three weeks, we are going to have a different meeting agenda than in the past: we are going to update you on where we stand today and what we see for the future ahead, as much as we can.

Before I do, I want to share two things about the past year. There were two areas in which we exceeded our budget and, in retrospect, it really saved us during the crisis. The first is that we significantly overspent on brush clearance. While we were chagrined when it happened, we all believe that it saved the existing buildings on campus, especially the Church. We also overspent on security. However, when the fire happened, our security team, in conjunction with the School and Church, acted quickly to ensure that every person on campus was evacuated safely, under great pressure—including all the children at School. So at the end of the day, while perhaps not intentional at the time, these were monies very well spent. [Continue Here](#)

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## *This Month with St. Matthew's*

### WHAT NEXT? DISASTER RECOVERY RESOURCES

9TH, FEBRUARY 2025

**NEXT STEPS**

*Seminar*

### JEFF BAKER

Jeff Baker, who has been a frequent guest preacher at St. Matthew's and voluntarily serves as general counsel to the Diocese of Los Angeles, has also led numerous legal clinics on natural disaster response. Jeff will conduct a free seminar for St. Matthew's on resources available to those displaced by the Palisades Fire.

*Lunch will be provided!*

**SUNDAY | 11:45AM | IMMEDIATELY  
FOLLOWING THE 10:30AM SERVICE AT  
ST. AUGUSTINE'S**



14

February



“Love Songs” for Valentine’s Day – David Kaplan, YuEun Gemma Kim, Liv Redpath, and Friends

February 14, 2025 7:30 pm

[Buy Your Music Guild Concert Tickets Here](#)

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***Weekly Events with St. Matthew's  
and St. Augustine by-the-Sea***



**Wednesdays at 6pm:  
Evening Prayer**

All are invited to come together on St. Matthew's Facebook or Instagram pages for weekly evening prayer, every Wednesday at 6pm.

[Join via Facebook](#)

[Join via Instagram](#)

**Thursdays at 10am:  
Rector's Bible Study**

The Rector's Bible Study meets weekly on Thursdays at 10am via Zoom. All are invited!

Please email [connect@stmatthews.com](mailto:connect@stmatthews.com) for the Zoom link.



**Wednesdays with St. A's**

St. Matthew's parishioners are invited to attend St. Augustine's mid-week offerings (located at 1227 4th Street in Santa Monica):

**Wednesday Mass: 8:30-9am in the Chapel**

This simple in-person Eucharist centers on a saint or feast for the week.

**Bible Study: 9:30-10:30am via Zoom (link below)**

Join clergy to explore the Gospel reading for the upcoming Sunday.

**Contemplative Prayer: 7-8pm in the Chapel**

Gather for a time of silent meditation, centering prayer and a contemplative reflection.

St. A's Bible Study

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**Campus Closure Continues**

Please note that the St. Matthew's campus remains closed, including its parking lots, even while more people are allowed access into the Palisades. Please respect these ongoing restrictions, which are in place for the safety of everyone.



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