



St. Matthew's Episcopal Church | Sterling, VA

# MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

## A Message from our Rector, Rev. Rob Merola

Dear Friends,

This month, on July 12, I will be leaving for a sabbatical. My primary goals for this time are to seek rest, refreshment, and vision for the next leg of my journey as a priest at St. Matthew's.

Linda and I will be sharing the experience. Having just retired, she too is looking forward to getting a chance to rest and beginning to figure out where God is leading her in this next phase of her life.

Solitude and remote natural surroundings have always been an essential part of "vision quests". These settings, and the time and effort it takes to get to them, help create the space for a vision to take shape with clarity and life-change power. Accordingly, our time will be spent primarily in the mountains of Wyoming, and in Alaska.

We will be gone for four months, returning for services on November 20th, and I am tremendously excited to be able to share with you what God has shared with me during this time! Hopefully I'll have picked up a few new stories to make for some exciting sermons as well. Even more important, I expect there will be a multitude of new learnings.

I have every confidence that Mary Margaret will do a fantastic job of running St. Matthew's while I'm gone. Of course, she won't be doing it alone. Miriam will continue to offer her considerable experience and wisdom as General Manager, and David Lathrop will continue to bring world-class leadership skills to St. Matthew's as Senior Warden. The absolutely incredible staff will continue to do the "and then some" work they always do. And let's not forget that the chief ministers in any church are the congregation, and few churches minister as well and enthusiastically as St. Matthew's!

It is one of my heart's deepest desires to serve St. Matthew's as well as I can. Going on this sabbatical will—by God's grace and with God's help—allow me to do so. Thank you for giving me this opportunity.

With much love and affection always,

Rob+



### This issue:

- Rob's sabbatical
- Children & Youth Events
- Outreach
- VBS is this month!
- Concert & Garden to Table Event

# WAYS TO CONNECT



## STAY CONNECTED VIRTUALLY AND IN-PERSON

### **In-Person & Online Sunday Worship**

Sundays at 8:00, 9:30, and 11:00am

### **Faith Factory for Kids In-Person**

Sundays at 9:30am & 11:00am

Email [Adrian@stmmts.org](mailto:Adrian@stmmts.org) for information

### **Young Professionals (YoPros)**

2nd/4th Sundays at 12:00pm

Zoom Meeting ID: 832 1051 7955

### **Noon Day Prayer and Compline**

Monday - Friday at 12:00pm and 8:00pm

Facebook Live: [stmmts.org/live](https://stmmts.org/live)

### **Social Time with Candace**

Mondays at 12pm

Zoom Meeting ID: 681-861-620

### **Bread of Life Small Group**

Mondays at 7pm In-Person

Email Darrell: [Darrell@stmmts.org](mailto:Darrell@stmmts.org)

### **Social Time with Kevin**

Mondays at 8:30pm on Zoom

Email Kevin Fletcher: [Kevin@stmmts.org](mailto:Kevin@stmmts.org)

### **Sandwich Generation Small Group**

1st/3rd Tuesdays at 7:30pm

### **Outreach Meeting**

Second Tuesday at 6:00pm on Zoom

Email [Kristin.Drummond@stmmts.org](mailto:Kristin.Drummond@stmmts.org)

### **Men's Group**

Saturdays at 8:00am In-Person

Email Linden: [Linden@stmmts.org](mailto:Linden@stmmts.org)

### **WonZ/WatCh**

WonZ/WatCh will take a break during the month of July, returning in August! We will provide a hybrid option moving forward. If you'd like to get information about upcoming WonZ/WatCh series, contact

[MaryMargaret@stmmts.org](mailto:MaryMargaret@stmmts.org)

**Saint Matthew's buildings are reopening. Some groups may begin meeting in-person and others will remain online. Please contact the church office (703-430-2121, [Office@stmmts.org](mailto:Office@stmmts.org)) to confirm.**



## FATHER ROB'S SABBATICAL SEND-OFF!

### **SUNDAY, JULY 11th | 8, 9:30 & 11 AM SERVICES**

Join us at 8, 9:30 and 11 am services as we send Father Rob off for his sabbatical and celebrate his 20 years at St. Matthew's! Plus, join us for a special coffee hour following each service.



# LET'S GET TOGETHER!

## TASTE & SING!

### OUTDOOR CONCERT & GARDEN TO TABLE EVENT

**SATURDAY, JULY 17th | 7PM**

Taste and Sing! The Lord is good. Join Abby Middleton (singer), Rebecca Soelberg (singer), and Greg Knauff (piano) in sharing a night of music celebrating Broadway, musical theatre, friendship, and the stories that inspire us. Songs by Steven Schwartz, Stephen Sondheim, and other Broadway composers not necessarily named Steve.

Also, enjoy some delicious and fresh food from the St. Matthew's Celebration Garden created by Heidi



## JOIN THE CHOIR!

Have you ever sat in service or remember a Sunday when you left invigorated and nourished by a choir anthem or a hymn?

Maybe this is the year you'd like to add your voice to the mix and join the St. Matthew's choir. The choir consists of singers of varying degrees of musicianship, in fact - our choir Director, Kevin Fletcher, believes that "Anyone can sing!".

We encourage you to join this wonderful group to enhance our worship services, everyone's contribution is essential and we need your voice!

For more information, contact Kevin Fletcher at [Kevin@stmtts.org](mailto:Kevin@stmtts.org).



## GET INVOLVED

So many opportunities to Serve and Grow at St. Matthew's. Join one of our many volunteer opportunities or ministries this summer!

[www.stmtts.org/Get-Involved](http://www.stmtts.org/Get-Involved)

# JULY CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES



## FAITH FACTORY THIS SUMMER

**SUNDAYS | 9:30 & 11 AM**

Preschool and elementary kids are invited to join us on Sundays at 9:30 & 11AM for Children's Faith Factory. Masks required.



## SPIRIT SUNDAYS EVERY SUNDAY IN JULY

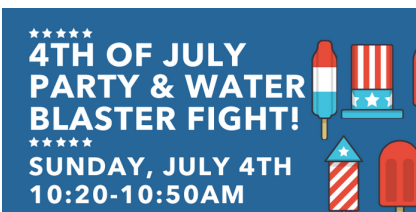
Join us for fun themed spirit days!

**July 4** | Red, White & Blue Day

**July 11** | Pajama Day

**July 18** | Treasure Hunter Day

**July 25** | VBS Sunday wear your VBS shirt!



## 4th OF JULY PARTY & WATER BLASTER FIGHT JULY 4 | 10:20-10:50 AM

Kids of all ages, come ready for an after church water fight and some 4th of July themed treats!



## LETTER WRITING SERVICE PROJECT

**JULY 10 | 10 AM-12 PM**

Small Hands Big Hearts children's community service team invites you to help write letters to children in Haiti.



## CELEBRATING JULY BIRTHDAYS!

**JULY 11 | 10:20-10:50 AM**

Join us as we celebrate everyone that has a Birthday in July, there will be games and mini cupcakes.



## SUMMER CRAFT EVENT JULY 18 | 10:20-10:50 AM

Join Ms. Adrian for a fun summer-themed crafting activity. Supplies provided. Masks required.



## VBS STORYTIME & CRAFT ONLINE

**JULY 12 | 1:00-1:30 PM**

Join us as we read some Amazon themed books and enjoy a craft

**Zoom ID: 753 6635 1082**

**Password: Church**

A graphic for 'Treasured' with a treasure chest and the text 'Discovering You're Priceless to God'.

## VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

JULY 19 - 23  
5:30 - 7:30 PM

Illustrations of a colorful parrot and a butterfly.

- Games
- Science-y fun gizmos
- Music
- Dancing and more!

Children ages 3 through 5th grades are invited to join us for a week of fun, games, and Bible Adventures as we learn we're Treasured by God. Teens and adults are welcome as volunteers! If you'd like to support VBS with a donation, please visit:

[go.stmtts.org/VBSdonations](https://go.stmtts.org/VBSdonations)

**REGISTER TODAY!**

[go.stmtts.org/VBS](https://go.stmtts.org/VBS)

An illustration of a green frog.



# YOUTH EVENTS

## MUSEUM OF THE BIBLE YOUTH OUTING

**FRIDAY, JULY 9 | 10 AM–2PM**

We will join the youth of Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill (where Rev. Mary Margaret's husband serves) for a fun day exploring the museum and meeting new people. Rising 6th-12th graders; friends and family welcome!

**Cost: \$10 | Please RSVP here: [go.stmmts.org/Museum](http://go.stmmts.org/Museum)**



## MISSION POSSIBLE: BACK TO WORK

**HARD WORK | CONNECTIONS | FUN**

**JULY 19TH-23RD | TIMES VARY**

This week offers multiple opportunities for engagement in our local community. We will begin our days volunteering at local non-profits; then move to volunteer at VBS PLUS! Monday, Wednesday, and Friday evening fun! Ice-Cream Party | Movie Night | Water Balloon Fight

*All of the events are at no cost, although we encourage a \$5 donation for evening activities.*



**Visit [go.stmmts.org/YouthMission](http://go.stmmts.org/YouthMission) to register**



## CONFIRMATION, REAFFIRMATION, & RECEPTION

Adults and youth who are interested in making an adult affirmation of faith, reaffirming their baptismal covenant, or being received into the Episcopal Church are encouraged to attend WatCh during the month of September.

We will be exploring what it means to be a person of faith and an Episcopalian.

**Contact [MaryMargaret@stmmts.org](mailto:MaryMargaret@stmmts.org) for information**

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**Cost: \$10 | Please RSVP here: [go.stmmts.org/Museum](https://go.stmmts.org/Museum)**



## MISSION POSSIBLE: YOUTH MISSION WEEK

**JULY 19 - 23, 1 PM - 8 PM**

This week offers multiple opportunities for engagement in our local community. We will begin our days volunteering at local non-profits; then move to volunteer at VBS



**Evening activities: Mon: Ice-Cream Party | Wed: Movie Night | Fri: Water Balloon Fight**

All evening activities are no cost, we encourage a \$5 donation. Youth have the option to bring up to \$25 of spending money to evening activities. Contact [MaryMargaret@stmmts.org](mailto:MaryMargaret@stmmts.org)

**[go.stmmts.org/YouthMission](https://go.stmmts.org/YouthMission)**



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# OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES



## LINK FOOD PANTRY

LINK needs volunteers on an ongoing basis to help run their food pantry distribution, make deliveries and help unload bulk food deliveries. St. Matt's next dedicated timeslot for making deliveries is the **last two weeks of July**. You can sign-up to help with these deliveries at [go.stmtts.org/link](https://go.stmtts.org/link).

There are also vacancies for the Treasurer position, Food Coordinators and Food Packers that need to be filled. For more information, please contact Melissa Hancock at [melissahancock@hotmail.com](mailto:melissahancock@hotmail.com).

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## MOBILE HOPE

Mobile Hope is a local non-profit organization that provides support, emergency shelter and growth opportunities for homeless and at-risk youth through age 24 (<https://mobile-hope.org/>). St. Matt's is holding a volunteer event with this inspiring organization the morning of Saturday, August 7th - please mark your calendar! Details to come!!

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## CELEBRATION GARDEN SUMMER VOLUNTEER HOURS

The Celebration Garden will be hosting volunteers on Tuesdays starting at 8:30am beginning June 29th. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Heidi Lathrop at [celebrationgarden@stmtts.org](mailto:celebrationgarden@stmtts.org).

You can also follow the garden's Facebook page to stay updated on ways to stay involved: <https://www.facebook.com/St.MattsCelebrationGarden>

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## UPCOMING OUTREACH MEETINGS

Are you interested in becoming involved in St. Matthew's outreach efforts? Join us for our monthly meetings to share your ideas and volunteer. Contact Kristin Drummond at [kristin.drummond@stmtts.org](mailto:kristin.drummond@stmtts.org).