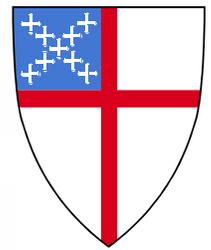


Saint
Matthew's
Episcopal Church

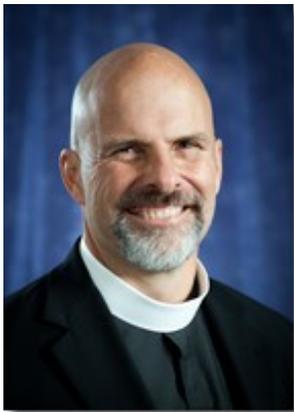


201 East Frederick Drive • Sterling, VA 20164

June 2019

FROM THE RECTOR

ROB MEROLA



Dear and beloved friends,

I'd like to begin with a question: Do you think more people went to see the movie "Avengers: Endgame" on its opening weekend or attended church during Holy Week (including Easter Sunday)?

The answer is obvious. Even when Avengers: Endgame is three times as long as a typical church service!

Perhaps the reason why is obvious as well. For many, many people, Avengers: Endgame tells a more compelling story, offering more hope than the church does. It's A LOT more fun. And, it builds a deeper sense of community in the shared experience of watching it together than most people find at church.

It would be hard to overestimate the challenge that is before us.

But I continue to believe that the Episcopal Church is up to it. That's because one of our greatest strengths is that we believe Jesus died to take away our sins, not our minds! We highly value the intellect. We prize deep thinking. It is incredibly important to us that we honor the great gift God has given us in our brains.

Most Episcopalians, for instance, believe in evolution (as Robin Williams once said, one of the top ten reasons to be an Episcopalian is that we can believe in dinosaurs!). We champion the full rights and privileges of women in ministry and celebrate their leadership at the very highest levels. Historically at least, we have been broad-minded, always open to new possibilities of what God is doing in the world.

My dream has always been that we would bring that same kind of bold and courageous thinking to how we "do" church. Once, churches used stained glass as a way of manipulating light, attracting the very best artists and most creative people of their day. (And, what is a movie, but the manipulation of light in a remarkable way?) Is it possible (remember our strength is thinking fearlessly) that Avengers: Endgame provides more of a religious experience than much of what happens in so many churches, and that is why it is so much more attractive? What might that mean for us?

I could be wrong—truly. I often am. But it seems to me these are the kinds of questions we need to be asking if we want to reverse the ongoing steep decline of the Episcopal Church that, if unchanged, will ultimately take us the way of the dodo. I am proud of the ways St. Matthew's has been willing to be different and has not insisted on simply maintaining things the way they are because "that's what we've always done."

I look forward to following God's lead with you as we continue to find ways to make St. Matthew's a compelling and fun place to be in a world that has, by and large, lost interest in "church."

Faithfully,

Rob+

Infuse!

A New Worship Experience

June 9—August 25
Briar Patch Park
Sundays at 5:30pm

Have you heard about Infuse?!

Infuse is our new summer worship service, running from June 9th-August 25th at Briar Patch Park., across from St. Matthew's on Sterling Boulevard.

Infuse is an intentional time of conversation that merges together the old and the new - infusing our lives with God's loving presence, our actions with the provocative actions of Jesus, our "mundane" spaces with sacred meaning, and our St. Matthew's community with our Sterling community.

Through Infuse, we strive to meet three visions:

1. Build new relationships with those not connected to Christ and share God's Word with them.
2. Build new and deepen existing relationships between St. Matthew's and our Sterling community.
3. Create a space where those hurt by religion or those who have never been a part of a faith community can experience God's presence in a way that honors our traditions, yet makes the Gospel approachable.

Infuse will be held on Sunday evenings from 5:30pm - 6:45pm, under the pavilion at Briar Patch Park. This time together will focus on sharing our faith stories with others and conversations around the tough life questions, such as "How do we know God exists?", "Does God cause bad things to happen?", and "If God is always with me, why do I feel so alone?" These discussions will occur over a shared meal and interspersed with acoustical music. For those who wish to join us after the conversation, we will close our time together with Compline.



We invite you to come join us and experience Christ in a new way! Make new friends with our neighbors and bring along your friends who might feel that traditional church is not for them, enjoy great conversation and food, and above all, come out and share with others how Jesus has transformed your life.



Queen Eucharist

Sunday, June 2, 9:30am

Join us for a vibrant worship service set to the music of Queen. Their music defied stereotypes and shattered conventions that still to this day bring inspiration and hope to outcasts and dreamers alike. The St. Matt's 9:30 Band will perform a curated blend of their most iconic songs throughout the service, creating what is sure to be a unique and uplifting worship experience.

Genevieve Zetlan will be joining us as a guest preacher at all Sunday services.

June Outreach Calendar

Backpack Buddies

April's featured Backpack Buddies donation item: Healthy Snacks. All month we're collecting individual applesauce, raisins, pretzels, fruit snacks, and granola bars to be included in the over 200 bags packed each week for food insecure students at local schools.

Join us for Backpack Buddies packing on Tuesday, June 4 at 7pm. This will be our last packing event for this school year.

Contact Hilary Hultman-Lee at HLLearning@gmail.com to learn more about Backpack Buddies.



Outreach Meeting

Sunday, June 2, 10:40am

Have you ever wondered what the Outreach Committee does? Have you ever wondered how you can help others? Have you wanted to get more involved? Join us to learn about the Outreach Committee and our upcoming projects. We are in need of helpers and team leaders so come see if there's any ministries you'd like to be a part of or lead.

Contact Adrian Mattina at Adrian@stmtts.org to learn more.

Spirit Night at Cheeburger Cheeburger

Monday, June 3, 11am—8pm

Join us for a delicious meal and fellowship while supporting Backpack Buddies.

Outreach Meeting

Sunday, June 9, 10:40 am

Join us to learn what the Outreach Committee has planned for this summer and see if there's any ministries you'd like to get involved in. Contact Adrian Mattina at Adrian@stmtts.org for more information.

Mobile Hope Meeting

Sunday, June 23, 10:40am

Join us to learn about this new ministry and how St. Matt's is going to feed around 100 homeless local teens and how you can become a part of this team.

Contact Mary Wardell at Germarwardell@gmail.com to learn more.



Spirit Night at Cheeburger Cheeburger

Monday, June 3, 11am—8pm



Take the night off from cooking and join us at Cheeburger Cheeburger for lunch or dinner on Monday, June 3. Mention St. Matthew's when placing your order and 20% of all proceeds will be given to support scholarships for this summer's Vacation Bible School program. Cheeburger Cheeburger is located at 22000 Dulles Retail Plaza, Sterling, VA 20166, by Wegmans.

Kings Dominion

June 30, 2019

Join us on Sunday, June 30th as we travel to Kings Dominion! We will worship together and praise God through the Holy Eucharist before entering the park, then enjoy the day in fellowship in the park. We will depart from St. Matthew's at 8am and arrive by 10am. We will leave the park at 5pm and arrive back to St. Matthew's by 8pm.

Ticket price per person is \$40 - we need a minimum of 15 people to receive this ticket price. Meals are not included, so please plan accordingly. Tickets will be purchased as a group by St. Matthew's.



Register before June 12 at: go.stmmts.org/kingsdominion

Celebrate Pentecost: **Wear RED!**

Sunday, June 9

Let us gather as one with the Holy Spirit to celebrate

PENTECOST!

Do you read in another language?

If you do, we invite you to participate in our simultaneous reading of the New Testament in multiple languages during the Pentecost Sunday service you choose to attend. Simply email the church office (Office@stmmts.org) for a copy of the reading in the language you (or a friend you invite to join us!) is comfortable in reading aloud.

"When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them."

(Acts 2:1-4)



Pack for
Mobile Hope
June 25, 7pm

Outreach Grant Winner: Mobile Hope

The winner of St. Matt's Outreach Program's Shark Tank grant money search is *Mobile Hope of Loudoun*.

The mission of Mobile Hope was brought to our attention by Panita Greer.

The young people served by Mobile Hope include those:

- 1) Living in conditions that are not stable,
- 2) Living without healthy eating options or stable medical alternatives
- 3) Living in an atmosphere of stress, distrust and despair,
- 4) Living without the needed tools to perform well in school
- 5) Living in an atmosphere which is influenced by violence and crime, and where illiteracy is prevalent.



The specific service to be funded by the grant money will be our supplying meals once a month to a distribution site at Sugarland Elementary. While the grant money will cover food costs, your help is to assist in the preparation and packing of one hundred bag lunches each month on the fourth Tuesday evening of each month. Our first packing event will be June 25th at 7:00 p.m. in the St. Matt's kitchen.

For additional information please contact Mary Wardell at germarwardell@gmail.com.

Summer Coffee Hour



We invite you, our members and friends, who typically attend either the 9:30am or 11am Sunday services to join us this summer for a combined coffee hour at 10:30am.

Each Sunday in June, July, and August, we plan to offer a time between services to enjoy coffee and treats and the opportunity to get to know one another better. During the summer, we will not be serving after the 11am service.

Vacation Bible
School

July 22-26, 2019



Register today:
myvbs.org/stmatts2019



**SCHOOL'S OUT
BLOW OUT
BASH!**



FREE FAMILY FUN!

- FACE PAINTING
- ICE CREAM
- MOON BOUNCE
- RAFFLES & MORE!

JOIN US!



JUNE 9TH

AFTER 9:30 & 11 AM SERVICES

ALL ARE WELCOME!



ST. MATTHEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
201 E. FREDERICK DR.
STERLING, VA

QUESTIONS?
CONTACT [KATHLEEN@STMTTS.ORG](mailto:kathleen@stmtts.org)

FAITHFACTORYKIDS
BUILDING FAITH
ONE CHILD AT A TIME