

AUGUST NEWSLETTER

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church

RESPONDING WITH LOVE

REV. ROB MEROLA

Dear Friends,

I was driving down Route 7 the other day when the light in front of me turned red. I took my foot off the gas; no point driving at a regular speed only to make a sharp stop a short distance ahead. Apparently, however, the vehicle behind me felt differently. The grill of his truck took up my entire rearview mirror as he pulled tight on my bumper. The message was clear: Go faster! When I didn't, he swerved into the left lane to go around me—and then hit his brakes hard as he came to the light.

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I recently did a service at Arlington National Cemetery. "We're currently doing about 32 funerals a day," the chaplain said. "Most of those are from the Iraq or Afghan wars," he continued. "It's not combat anymore. So many of them are taking their own life..." His distress was deeply evident.

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When the light turned, the truck hit the gas. As he pulled ahead, I noticed his license plate: IRAQ 03.

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Judging a person is easy. Responding with love not so much. But it is particularly the people we are so tempted to judge that Jesus calls us to love. How do we learn to do that? It's an important question. Until we learn to love like Jesus, the world is going to continue becoming an angrier and angrier place. Our world will become an angrier place.

St. Matthew's is a place dedicated to helping people grow in love. In fact, that's our mission: to know and share God's love. They're not just words. We want to fill our community with compassion, kindness, and grace.

I expect that the veteran driving the truck is not just struggling with traffic but with every area of his life. It's likely he's not just irritating other drivers, but the people closest to him. How they respond may well be the difference between life and death. And I fully expect there are people in your life who need to be loved well every bit as much. The kind of love that Jesus offers is precisely what our world needs, maybe now more than ever. But it does not just happen. It takes people who are deeply committed to something beyond themselves. It requires people who will give themselves to something other than the confines of their own lives and concerns. Are you one of those people? Thanks to those who really do listen to Jesus. Thanks to those who really are answering his call.

Warmly,
Rob+



THIS ISSUE

- SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE
- BACKPACK BLESSING
- HAITI BENEFIT CONCERT & BBQ
- AUGUST & SEPTEMBER EVENTS

WAYS TO CONNECT

JOIN US FOR WORSHIP Sundays at 8, 9:30 & 11 AM

Kids Chapel

Pre-K through Gr. 5
Sundays at 9:30 AM

Kids Chapel Unplugged

6th & 7th Graders
Sundays at 9:30 AM

Journey Breakfast Club

8-12 Graders
Sundays at 9:30 AM

Young Professionals (YoPros)

2nd & 4th Sundays at 12:30 PM
Caitlin.Dronfield@stmmts.org

Compline

Monday - Friday at 8:00 PM
Facebook Live: [stmmts.org/live](https://www.facebook.com/stmmts.org/live)

Social Time with Candace

Mondays at 12 PM
Zoom Meeting ID: 681-861-620

Bread of Life Christian Study Group

Mondays at 7:00 PM
Darrell@stmmts.org

Men's Group

Saturdays at 8:00 AM
Contact Pete Office@stmmts.org

SAVE THE DATES

AUGUST

Monday, July 31- 6th-12th Graders Sugar Cookie Decorating
Tuesdays in August - Celebration Garden Volunteering 8:30 AM
Tuesday, August 1st - 6th-12th Graders Celebration Garden Day
Wednesday, August 2nd - 8-12th Graders Kings Dominion
Friday, August 4rd - 6th-12th Graders - Flower Arranging & Delivery
Wednesday, Aug. 9th & Thurs., Aug. 10th - 8th-12th Grade Summer Retreat
Friday, August 11th - 6-12th Graders Bowling
Thursday, August 17th - 6th-8th Graders Mission & Museum of the Bible
Saturday, August 19th - Ladies Outing at Tarara
Sunday, August 20th - Back to School & Backpack Blessings
Sunday, August 27th - Haiti Benefit Concert & BBQ

SEPTEMBER

Tuesdays in September - Celebration Garden Volunteering 8:30 AM
Sundays in September - Sermon Series: When It All Started To Go Right
Sunday, September 3rd - Back to Church Sunday & Food Truck!
Sunday, September 3rd - HRTS Backpack Buddies Packing Returns!
Monday, September 4th - Labor Day - Help paint the church
Friday, Sept. 15th - Saturday, Sept. 16th - Confirmation Prep Class
Saturday, September 16th - Parish Work Day
Sunday, September 17th - Welcome Seminarian Kara Laughlin & Bishop Visit
Sunday, September 17th - October 15th - Winter Coat Drive
Friday, Sept. 22nd - Sunday, Sept 24th - Women's Retreat
Sunday, September 24th - St. Matthew's Day

For individual event details, visit [stmmts.org/events](https://www.stmmts.org/events)



SUNDAY, AUGUST 27TH at 5:30 PM

Join us for BBQ, Live Music, Games, Photo Bus & more!

Last year we raised enough money to feed the children and teachers of St. Mathieu's school for an entire year, let's do it again!

Eat, Enjoy, and Donate - You make a difference.

Sign up to volunteer or make a donation:
[stmmts.org/HaitiConcert](https://www.stmmts.org/HaitiConcert)

AUGUST EVENTS

THE GLOBAL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

THURSDAY, AUGUST 3 & FRIDAY, AUGUST 4
ST. MATTHEW'S PARISH HALL

You're invited to join us at St. Matthew's for a Livestream event of the Global Leadership Summit. Contact office@stmmts.org to reserve your spot!



The Global Leadership Summit, is an annual gathering that brings ministry and marketplace expertise together. Dynamic speakers and key topics challenge you to grow and become a catalyst for change.

GLS23 Speakers include: Secretary Condoleezza Rice, Patrick (Pat) Gelsinger CEO Intel Corporation, Liz Forkin Bohannon is the founder of Sseko Designs, Dallas Jenkins Creator of the Chosen, Craig Groeschel Founder of Life Church and more.

Reserve a spot: office@stmmts.org | See the full list of speakers: globalleadership.org/summit



BIBLE STUDY WEDNESDAYS AT 7 PM

Fr. Rob will lead the discussion on what Jesus had to say about the good life (based on Matthew 5: 1-12).

Bible study begins promptly at 7, please join us!

Questions? office@stmmts.org

LADIES' NIGHT

SAT., AUG. 19 AT 6 PM

Join some of your St. Matt's besties for an evening at Tarara Winery and enjoy DC Area's most popular band, Gonzo's Nose! Grab a friend and RSVP below to let us know you're coming. Don't forget to purchase your tickets ahead of time from Tarara.

RSVP stmmts.org/ladiesnight



WOMEN'S RETREAT SEPT. 22-24 | SHRINEMONT

You're invited to join the women of St. Matthew's to enjoy fellowship and relaxation as we cultivate fertile soil in our hearts. We are excited for this weekend's guest speaker, Rev. Mary Margaret Winn.

REGISTER: stmmts.org/retreat



EfM OPEN HOUSE

TUESDAY, AUGUST 22 AT 7 PM

EfM is a 4-year small group program that provides an education in the content of the Christian tradition. Join us as we explore church history, theology, and community service.

The Open House will give you a chance to learn more about the program, view the materials, and meet other members. Snacks will be served. For more information contact the group mentors, Sue Reier Sue@stmmts.org or Jane Garrett janeowl@gmail.com.

OUTREACH UPDATES



CELEBRATION GARDEN

Join us for Celebration Garden volunteering on Tuesdays at 8:30 AM. Help harvest, wash, and bag veggies for local food pantries.

Contact Heidi at garden@stmtts.org for more details.



FLOWER MINISTRY

Beautiful hand-tied floral bouquets are available on Sundays by the front door of the sanctuary.

Pick up a bouquet so you can share it with a friend, neighbor, or stranger.



FOOD PANTRY DELIVERIES

LINK food pantry is in need of volunteers to help deliver food during the month of August.

Visit stmtts.org/LINK to reserve your spot.



CARE RESPONSE FOOD NEEDED

Our Care Response Team has seen a big increase in food requests over the summer, help us restock our food donations. For shopping list, visit:

stmtts.org/Care

COMING THIS SEPTEMBER...

IT ALL GOT BETTER WHEN

SERMON SERIES SUNDAYS IN SEPT.

GREAT SCOTT!
Sundays in September, join us for a new sermon series. Together, we go Back to...
IT ALL GOT BETTER WHEN



BACK TO CHURCH & FOOD TRUCK

SUNDAY, SEPT. 3RD

Join us for Back to Church Sunday! Great worship, catch up with friends, and enjoy some tasty treats from a local food truck!



PRESSURE WASH & PAINT ST. MATT'S

SAT., AUG 26, SUN., SEPT 3 & MON., SEPT 4

Help us get the exterior of St. Matt's back into tip top shape! Help needed with pressure washing & painting.

stmtts.org/Painting



WELCOME KARA!

SUNDAY, SEPT. 17TH

Join us in welcoming our new Seminarian, Kara Laughlin!

We are very excited to welcome Kara to the team and see all the great work she will do!



PARISH WORK DAY

SATURDAY, SEPT. 16TH
9 AM - 12 PM

Jobs of all types for all ages and abilities: dusting, gardening, polishing etc. Donuts & Coffee will be there too!



COAT DRIVE BEGINS

SUNDAY, SEPT. 17TH

Our annual winter coat drive for kids begins Sept. 17th. New and gently used coats size 6-16 for local Elementary and Middle School students wanted.
stmtts.org/WinterCoats



CONFIRMATION CLASSES

SEPTEMBER 15 & 16

Confirmation classes will be offered Friday, September 15th & Saturday, September 16th.

For more information, complete the form stmtts.org/confirmation



BISHOP VISIT

SUNDAY, SEPT. 17TH

Join us for a visit from the Bishop and to celebrate confirmation, baptism, and reception.

For more information, complete the form stmtts.org/confirmation

BACK TO SCHOOL



BACK TO SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE JULY 23 - AUGUST 13

It's that time again - stores are stocking up on school supplies and our local schools are preparing for the next school year!

This year, we've received specific requests from Sterling area schools - to help us to fill their exact needs by purchasing/donating one or more of the following items. Help us give local students what they need to succeed!

Here's how:

- Shop our online wishlist: stmmts.org/BackToSchool
- Make a financial gift online and in the memo note "Back to School Outreach 2023".
- Share the drive with friends via text or on social media!

PLEASE DROP OFF ALL SCHOOL SUPPLY DONATIONS BY AUGUST 13, 2023.

Here's what our schools need:

- 24-pack Crayola colored pencils - Goal 100
- Acrylic paint sets - Goal 20
- Box of 10 Crayola markers - Goal 220
- Box of 24 Crayola crayons - Goal 220
- Composition notebooks - Goal 200
- Fiskars scissors- Goal 100
- Headphones - Goal 50
- Large backpacks - NEW ONLY - Goal 50
- Boxes of No. 2 Pencils - Goal 100
- Pocket folders - Goal 100
- Tissue paper packs - Goal 50
- Watercolor paint sets - Goal 100

Learn more: stmmts.org/BackToSchool



BACKPACK BUDDIES

Help Backpack Buddies stock up for Back to School! Grab a few items on your next shopping trip:

- shelf-stable milk
- juice boxes
- instant oatmeal packets
- shelf-stable breakfast foods (like pop-tarts or individual cereal boxes)
- canned soup
- ramen/ cup-o-noodles
- granola bars
- mac n' cheese single-serving cups

Learn more about the Hunger Response Team of Sterling and how you can fight childhood hunger here in Sterling: sterlinghelp.org



BACK TO SCHOOL & BACKPACK BLESSING SUN., AUG. 20TH | 9:30 AM



Students of all ages, teachers, and school staff are all invited to our annual Back to School & Backpack Blessing service on Sunday, August 20th at 9:30 AM.

Receive a blessing and tag for your school bag, and stay for coffee hour following the service for treats and some Back to School fun.

Back to School prayers, lunchbox notes, printables, recipes for busy nights, and more are available on our website:

stmmts.org/BackpackBlessing

STUDENT MINISTRY

SUMMER FOOD & FUN

CELEBRATION GARDEN HARVEST

Tuesday, August 1st, 8:30 - 10:30 AM | Grades 6-12

Join Colin, Kassidy, and Ms. Heidi to help harvest veggies from the garden.

DAY AT KINGS DOMINION

Wednesday, August 2nd. Depart 9:45 AM | For 8th -12th Graders
Depart St. Matthew's at 9:45 AM to visit Kings Dominion for the day.
The cost is \$45 for your ticket, and you must bring your own lunch money. Scholarships are available - email office@stmmts.org

FLOWER ARRANGING & DELIVERY

Friday, August 4th | 1 PM - 4 PM | Grades 6-12

Make flower arrangements, and deliver them to nursing home residents. Bring recycled glass jars with labels removed, extra mason jars, or small vases.

WATERMELON PARK TUBING

Monday, August 7th | 1 PM - 6 PM | Grades 6-12

Visit Watermelon Park for a fun afternoon of tubing! Wear a bathing suit, and bring a towel and a change of clothes. Cost \$25 plus extra money for food. Chaperones and carpool drivers are needed.

END OF SUMMER RETREAT

Wednesday, August 9th & Thursday, August 10th | 8 - 12th Graders

Where: The Inn at Mt. Ida in Ellicott City, MD

More details: stmmts.org/foodfun

BOWLING

Friday, August 11th | 5 PM - 8 PM | 8 - 12th Graders Price:\$30

LASER TAG

Monday, August 14th - 5 PM | 6th - 8th Graders Price \$25

MISSION EVENT & VISIT MUSEUM OF THE BIBLE

Thursday, August 17th, 9 AM - 6 PM | 6th - 8th Graders

Students will make lunches for the homeless, and visit the Museum of the Bible in DC. Cost: \$15 plus bring a bag lunch.

END OF SUMMER COOKOUT & BONFIRE AT ST. MATT'S

Friday, August 18th | Time 6 PM - 8 PM | Grades 6-12

Middle & High School students are all invited to an end-of-summer hangout with food and a bonfire. More details coming soon.

Full event details & RSVP at stmmts.org/FoodFun



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT JAE MITCHELL

Last summer Jae approached the staff at St. Matthew's with the vision of creating a youth mission trip to Erie, PA for the summer of 2023. Jae took on the research, organization, fundraising, and execution of the first mission trip St. Matthew's has had in over 3 years. We are so grateful for his dedication and passion for mission work and the 8 young women (plus 2 additional female chaperones who attended) who had a fantastic time, connected with God and the community in Erie, and are already talking about next summer! Thanks Jae.



SUNDAYS AT 9:30

Join us in the Parish Hall classrooms for our Sunday Student programming:

- Kids Chapel: Age 4 - 5th Gr.
- Kids Chapel Unplugged: Gr. 6 & 7
- Breakfast Club: Gr. 8-12

Questions? Contact Ron
journey@stmmts.org