

OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church



COLORFUL COMPANIONS

by Rev. Rob Merola, Rector

One of the things I love about our backyard is the... turtles!

Although our entire lot is less than 1/3 of an acre, the turtles that call it home have been there longer than we have- and we've been there 25 years now! New generations join us every year as eggs hatch that were buried in the soft, moist garden earth.

They are eastern box turtles, and they live at least 40 years (some live more than 100!) in fact, they aren't even full grown until they turn 20 years old or so.

If you've seen one, you know how colorful and intricate their shells can be. If you've seen more than one, you also know how much their shells vary from turtle to turtle. That's how we know the individual turtles in our yard. One, for instance, is virtually neon orange.

Not only do we know them, but they also know us. Because I feed them slugs (great pest control!), if they hear my footsteps they will actually come find me expectantly. Surprisingly, box turtles are also great climbers, and so I have found them waiting for me on the deck.

This is but one instance of how indescribably rich animals make our lives. What would we do without them? I could not be more pleased, therefore, that this year we are having **not just one, but TWO Pet Blessings**.

The first will be a short service held in conjunction with the yearly celebration of Saint Francis at **Algonkian Park (Shelter 2) on Sunday, October 5th at 5 PM**. It's always a great event, and I absolutely love seeing the various pets people bring. I hope you will bring yours!

The second will be blessings offered as part of our annual **Trunk or Treat on Sunday, October 19th from 2 PM - 4 PM**.

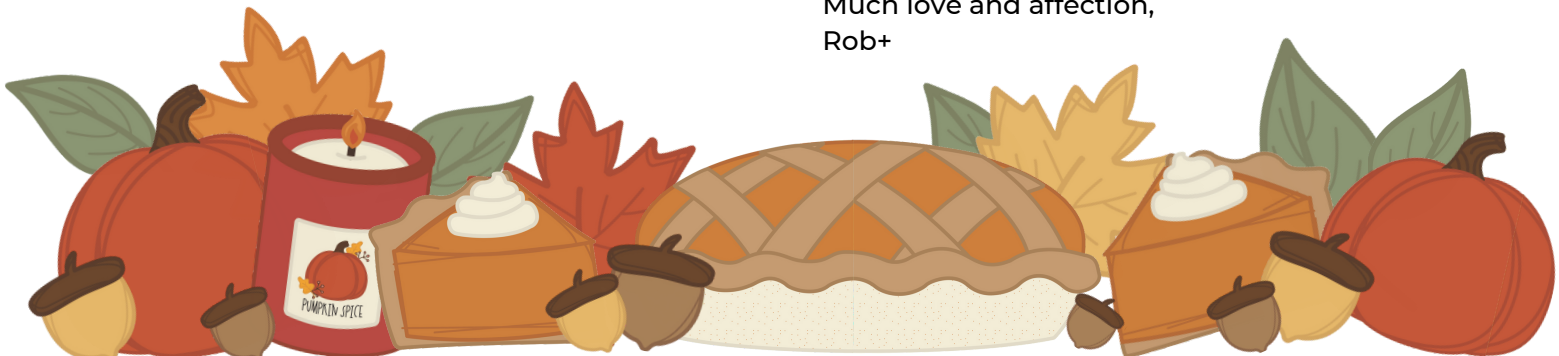
Between the great creativity of the people making trunks, the various costumes, and all our community neighbors that show up, this event is always a blast. It's a lot of fun to attend, and perhaps you even want to host a trunk!

Of course, there is much more happening this month, as this newsletter attests.

The bishop will join us for Confirmation on October 12th at 11 AM, plus we'll welcome our former seminarian, Rev. Christian Anderson at the 8 and 9:30 AM services that Sunday as well. Our Wednesday and Thursday Bible studies are starting back up, and we'll gather for our annual Thanksgiving food drive and Fall Parish Work Day. Read on for all the fantastic things happening this month.

What a great time this is to be at St. Matt's! I'm loving every minute of getting to enjoy it with you.

Much love and affection,
Rob+



OCTOBER AT ST. MATT'S

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
SAVE THE DATES Sun., Nov. 9th Thanksgiving Food Drive Ends Sun., Nov. 23rd Giving Tree Goes Up Sun., Nov. 23rd Christmas Pageant Auditions Wed., Nov. 26th Youth Cook for Tree of Life Thanksgiving Sun., Nov. 30th Advent Begins Sun., Nov. 30th Advent Wreath Making			1 Confirmation Class Group 1 7 PM	2 LCPS & FCPS No School Confirmation Class Group 2 12 PM Choir Rehearsal 7:30 PM	3	4 Men's Group 8 AM Confirmation Class Group 3: Saturday Intensive 10 AM - 2 PM
5 Seminarian Josh House Preaching  10:30 AM Backpack Buddies Packing + Kids Potato Sack races 12 PM FreedUp Financial Living Class	6 Social Time on Zoom at 12 PM A Matter of Balance Class 1:30 - 3:30 PM	7 HRTS Backpack Buddies Packing 12 PM Compline 8 PM Online	8 Confirmation Class Group 1 7 PM	9 Confirmation Class Group 2 12 PM Choir Rehearsal 7:30 PM	10	11 Men's Group 8 AM PARISH WORK DAY & WOMEN'S COFFEE AT PARISH WORK DAY 9 AM
12 8 + 9:30 AM Rev. Christian Anderson Preaching 10:30 AM Kids Fun - Create Boo Bags!  11 AM Bishop's Visit with a Reception in Parish Hall at noon 12 PM FreedUp Financial Living Class	13 LCPS & FCPS No School Social Time on Zoom at 12 PM A Matter of Balance Class 1:30 - 3:30 PM	14 HRTS Backpack Buddies Packing 12 PM Compline 8 PM Online	15 Bible Study 7 PM	16 Bible Study 12 PM Choir Rehearsal 7:30 PM	17	18 Men's Group 8 AM
19 Fr. Rob Preaching  Pumpkin Spice Coffee Day! 10:30 AM Kids Fun - Prayer Football 12 PM FreedUp Financial Living Class Trunk or Treat 2 PM - 4 PM	20 LCPS & FCPS No School Social Time on Zoom at 12 PM A Matter of Balance Class 1:30 - 3:30 PM	21 HRTS Backpack Buddies Packing 12 PM Compline 8 PM Online	22 Bible Study 7 PM	23 Bible Study 12 PM Choir Rehearsal 7:30 PM	24 Game Night 6 PM	25 Men's Group 8 AM
26 Genevieve Preaching  Kids Costume Parade + Pumpkin Treats 12 PM FreedUp Financial Living Class Youth Outreach Event 12 PM	27 Social Time on Zoom at 12 PM A Matter of Balance Class 1:30 - 3:30 PM	28 HRTS Backpack Buddies Packing 12 PM Compline 8 PM Online	29 Bible Study 7 PM	30 Bible Study 12 PM Choir Rehearsal 7:30 PM	31 LCPS No School	1

SEPT. SPECIAL SERVICES & COFFEE HOUR EVENTS



OCT
05

Backpack Buddies & Cinnamon Buns!

Who doesn't love the smell of fresh-baked cinnamon rolls? Add in the joy of helping our neighbors in need, and that's a recipe for a great Sunday!

Join us between the 9:30 & 11 AM services for Backpack Buddies packing & cinnamon roll treats!



OCT
12

Bishop's Visit & Reception

We are excited to welcome Bishop Mark Bourlakas on Sunday, Oct. 12th at 11 AM to worship and celebrate Baptisms, Confirmations, Receptions, and Reaffirmations.

Immediately after the service, join us in the Parish Hall for a reception.



OCT
19

Flavors of Fall Coffee Hour

Spice up your Sunday with cozy pumpkin-spice and fall-flavor sips.

"Gourd" vibes only. Taste, chat, and "leaf" your worries at the door!

Join us at 10:30 AM for flavorful time of fellowship.



OCT
26

Costume Parade & Pumpkin Treats

Watch St. Matt's kids strut their stuff in a spook-tacular costume parade at the end of our 9:30 AM service, then pick up a pumpkin goodie in the Parish Hall for coffee hour at 10:30 AM

It's a boo-tiful way to celebrate fall together!

SEPT. SMALL GROUPS



MON
7 PM

Bread of Life Book Discussion Group

Mondays at 7 PM

Bread of Life will continue reading **The Book of Joy by the Dalai Lama and Desmond Tutu.**

Together, they explore the Nature of True Joy and confront each of the Obstacles of Joy.



TUES
+
WED

October Bible Study Groups

Resuming Oct. 15 & 16

Our Wednesday evening (7 PM) and Thursday noon groups resume October 15 and 16. Together we'll dive into 1 and 2 Timothy. No prior experience needed, just bring an open mind and an open heart.



SAT
8 AM

Men's Group Weekly Gatherings

Saturdays at 8 AM

Build friendships and grow in faith with men of all ages through prayer, Bible study, and service.

Meetings Saturday mornings at 8 AM in the trailer.



OCT
11

Women's Meetup at Parish Work Day

Sat., Oct. 11th at 9 AM

Meet up with friends at St. Matt's to catch up while sprucing up the church for the Bishops' visit!

There are fun, supervised jobs for kids too!

GAME NIGHT

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 24th
at 6 PM

Bring a snack and your favorite game to share as we enjoy some friendly competition and great company.

Fun starts here!

FALL PARISH WORK DAY

Sat., Oct. 11th 9 AM - 12 PM

Join us for a family-friendly service event! Help spruce up our church and grounds for the Bishop's Visit.

Indoor and outdoor tasks for all ages are available. Donuts, coffee, and a great time provided!



OCTOBER EVENTS



PET BLESSING SERVICE

Algonkian Park, Shelter 2

Sunday, Oct. 5th at 5 PM

This year's Pet Blessing Service will be extra special as we gather outdoors at beautiful **Algonkian Park!**

Bring your furry, feathered, scaly, or fuzzy companions and join us in giving thanks for the gift of animals as we ask God's blessing on all creatures great and small.

THANKSGIVING FOOD DRIVE

Pick up a reusable grocery bag and shopping list on **Sunday, Oct. 19th.**
Drop off donations on or before
Sunday, Nov. 9th.



- Dried Beans
 - White rice
 - Canned meats (tuna or chicken)
 - Pasta sauce
 - Pasta
 - Vegetable oil
 - Corn flour (like Maseca)
 - Thanksgiving Treat
- Optional Items**
- \$30 Walmart gift card
 - Diapers/wipes/fe minine pads

DOWNLOAD SHOPPING
LIST & SIGN UP TO HELP:



stmtts.org/ThanksgivingBags



TRUNK OR TREAT

Sunday, Oct. 19th 2PM - 4 PM

Fall is here, and so is one of our favorite traditions: **Trunk or Treat!**

Kids of all ages (and even pets!) are invited to wear non-scary costumes and enjoy games, decorated trunks, and trick-or-treating with allergy-friendly candy, toys, and pet treats. Rain or shine, we'll be ready, with an indoor option if needed.

Be Part of the Fun!

We need volunteers to make this event a success. Families, scout troops, small businesses, and teams can host a trunk with decorations, goodies, or a simple game. Or, lend a hand with set-up, games, or greeting guests.

Whether you're **attending or volunteering**, there's a place for you at Trunk or Treat, invite your friends and neighbors to join the celebration!

Visit stmtts.org/TrunkOrTreat to sign up or learn more!



This month in Faith Factory, kids are learning...



Even the tiniest seed has the power to grow into something strong and life-giving. Jesus reminds us that even a little bit of faith can do big things in our lives.

That's why our October theme is **"A Seed of Faith."** Each week, kids will explore one of Jesus' parables and discover how God helps our small beginnings grow into bold trust and action. Together, we'll learn that when we plant faith in our hearts, God makes it flourish.

- **Oct. 5** – Luke 17:5-10: Faith as small as a mustard seed can do amazing things.
- **Oct. 12** – Luke 17:11-19: Jesus heals ten lepers; one returns with gratitude. (Bishop's Visit)
- **Oct. 19** – Luke 18:1-8: The persistent widow shows us the power of prayer and perseverance.
- **Oct. 26** – Luke 18:9-14: A parable of humility—the Pharisee and the tax collector.

OCT. kids events

Sundays at
10:30 AM

OCT. 5

POTATO SACK RACES

Ready, set, go! Join us for some fall fun with potato sack races!



OCT. 12

BOO BAGS

Craft the perfect spooky surprise Boo-Bag for a friend and drop it off to them after church!



OCT. 19

PRAYER FOOTBALL

It's football season! Create a special family prayer football, then join us outside for a game of catch!



OCT. 26

COSTUME PARADE & PUMPKIN DECORATING

Wear your non-spooky costume to church & join our parade during the 9:30 service, then join us at 10:30 for pumpkin decorating!



SAVE THE DATE

Children's Christmas Nativity Play Auditions

Sunday, Nov. 23rd

ST. MATTHEW'S YOUTH

GRADES 6-12



M

DONUTS & DISCOVERY

MIDDLE SCHOOL

SUNDAYS AT 9:30 AM
CLASSROOM 4



M

DONUTS & DISCOVERY

HIGH SCHOOL

SUNDAYS AT 9:30 AM
MUSIC ROOM

EVENTS



Volunteer at Trunk or Treat & Hang Out

Sun., Oct. 19th | 1 PM - 6 PM

Help with St. Matt's annual Trunk or Treat Event, wear your non-spooky costume, or come as you are, and help set up, greet, and clean up! Come for whatever time you can. Food & games in the Parish Hall for some hangout time afterwards.



Youth Day of Service - Leaf Raking Help

Sun., Oct. 26th | 11 AM - 3:30 PM

Give back to our community members and join Rachel for an afternoon of raking leaves. Lunch provided. Wear clothes you don't mind getting dirty and bring water. Bonus: have rakes, gloves, or leaf bags at home? Bring some!



Thanksgiving Cooking for Tree of Life

Wed., Nov. 26th | 1 PM - 6 PM

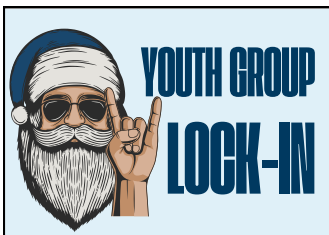
We had such a fantastic time last year cooking for Tree of Life's Thanksgiving, so we're doing it again! Bring a friend and join us in creating a great meal for our neighbors in need. Pizza and snacks will be provided.



Christmas Cookies & Karaoke

Sun., Dec. 14th | 11 AM - 1:30 PM

It's the most wonderful time of the year to enjoy cookies! YUM! Come decorate sugar cookies and grab the mic for some holiday (or non-holiday) Karaoke fun! Lunch provided.



Winter Lock-In - SAVE THE DATE!

Friday, January 2nd

More details coming soon!