

JUNE NEWSLETTER

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church



SMALL GROUPS SURVEY

What is a Small Group?

A Small Group is an intentional gathering. They exist as a way for people to engage in biblical community that helps them become more like Jesus in every area of their lives.

St. Matthew's currently has several Small Groups that meet regularly like: Bread of Life, Men's Group, Wednesdays at Church (WatCh), Young Professionals, etc.

Help us improve and grow our Small Group offerings at St. Matthew's by filling out the short 8 question survey at the link below:

www.stmmts.org/survey

Thank you!



SPENDING TIME WITH FRIENDS

REV. ROB MEROLA

It was a challenging day to be on a jetty sticking well out into the ocean. The rain was constant and cold. The wind howled, relentlessly. But mostly it was the big waves, so big they were breaking over the jetty, that made it not just unpleasant, but treacherous.

The fishing, however, was great.

A huge fish jumped out of one of the waves, its head shaking as it tried to throw the hook at the end of my line. It was the biggest fish of my life.

Only one other person was on the jetty that day, a man I did not know. But when he saw my fishing rod bent double, he came running, stepping out on a big rock to net the fish. Unfortunately, just as he did so a large wave crashed up against the rock. Both fish and man vanished in a sea of violent spray.

Only one reappeared, flopping at my feet. "Damn," the man said, "that was a good fish."

And that was how I met Russ. It was the spring of '95.

We would fish together many times in the years to come, often sharing a meal before or after. His wife had died just before I met him. He was a tough ol' cuss, but it was clear he missed her terribly, suffering awful loneliness.

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- STUDENT MINISTRY UPDATES
- VBS DETAILS
- SMALL GROUPS SURVEY

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

Donuts & Discovery - Middle & High School Students

Sunday, June 4th 10:30 AM Final session for this school year

Young Professionals (YoPros)

June only - 1st & 3rd Sundays at 12:30 PM

Caitlin.Dronfield@stmtts.org

Compline

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

Social Time with Candace

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

Bread of Life Prayer Group

Mondays at 7:00 PM
Darrell@stmtts.org

Men's Group

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

SPENDING TIME WITH FRIENDS (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Russ would go home to New Jersey for the summer, enjoying cooler weather and fishing for striped bass. Upon his return he would call to let me know he was back. This year, however, I could hardly recognize his voice. They had found cancer in his throat. "Let's go fishing," he said.

Though thirty years my elder, Russ always had the energy of six men. But when we met this time he commented, "I move a little slower these days." And he did. He had lost a lot of weight. "Bet you don't even recognize me," he said. But I did.

"Here," he said, taking my hand. "Feel my neck. Hard as a rock from all that radiation. I still can't really eat. Just keep trying to put down that damn Ensure." We loaded up our gear, and for the first time I can remember he asked for a hand.

We ambled off towards the water, wading out to a beautiful island where we had fished together many times in the past, often well into the night. We talked about life, people we knew... and of course, fishing. During the conversation, Russ mentioned Jesus many times, though mostly by last name, and mostly when he missed or lost a fish. "I want you to do my eulogy," he said.

When we returned to shore, it was he who had caught the biggest fish. "Damn," he said, "It was good fishing together." And it was.

Life can be a pretty poor and insipid thing without people to enjoy it with. I hope this summer we will all make a point of spending time with our friends.

Warmly,
Fr. Rob+



FOOD DONATIONS NEEDED FOR SUMMER

Donation requests for food from the community have continued to grow over the last year, please help us continue to support families in need over the summer.

Collecting: Oil, Maseca Corn Flour, Pasta, Pasta Sauce, Soup, Canned Vegetables, Canned Fruit, Rice, Beans Peanut Butter, Jelly, Toilet Paper, Paper towels, Diapers, Baby Wipes, Feminine Products

Drop off Tues/Thurs 8 AM - 4 PM or Sun. 8 AM - 12 PM. Questions? Contact office@stmtts.org

BACCALAUREATE CELEBRATION

SUNDAY, JUNE 4TH AT 5 PM

High School & College Graduates and their families are cordially invited to our Graduation Service & Dinner.

Let us know of a graduate your family would like to celebrate.

RSVP office@stmtts.org

SUMMER EVENTS AT ST. MATT'S

JUNE

Tuesdays in June - Celebration Garden Volunteering Returns! 8:30 AM
Sunday, June 4th - School's Out Celebration with Donuts
Sunday, June 4th - Kids Chapel Parent's Meeting at 10:30 AM
Thursday, June 8th - Student Summer Kick-Off at 6 PM
Saturday, June 10th - Young Couples Small Group Meet-Up at Izzi Pizza
Sunday, June 11th - Popcorn Bar Sunday!
Tuesday, June 13th - Narcan Training at 7 PM
Sunday, June 18th - Father's Day
Wednesday, June 21st - Cook Out at Fr. Rob & Linda's Backyard 7 PM
Sunday, June 25th - Youth Mission Coin Jars Due
Sunday, June 25th - Education For Ministry Graduation 11 AM Service

JULY

Tuesdays in July - Celebration Garden Volunteering 8:30 AM
Sunday, July 2nd - Bomb Pop Popsicles Celebrating the 4th of July
Sunday, July, 9th - National Sugar Cookie Day
Sunday, July 9th - Saturday, July 15th - Youth Mission Trip to Erie, PA
Sunday, July 16th - Rootbeer & Creamsicle Floats
Sunday, July 23rd - VBS Training & Set Up
Monday, July 24th - Friday, July 28th - Stellar VBS
Sunday, July 30th - VBS Sunday at 9:30, wear your VBS Shirt

AUGUST

Tuesdays in August - Celebration Garden Volunteering 8:30 AM
Sunday, August 20th - Back to School & Backpack Blessings
Sunday, August 27th - Haiti Benefit Concert & BBQ

For individual event details, visit stmtts.org/events

For prayers, devotionals, and ways to stay connected this summer, visit:

stmtts.org/summer

JUNE AT ST. MATT'S

NARCAN TRAINING

TUESDAY, JUNE 13th | 7 PM
at. St. Matthew's

Open to High School Age Students and Adults

This training will cover:

Understanding

- The REVIVE program and legislation
- Addiction
- How opioid overdose emergencies happen and how to recognize them
- How naloxone works

Identifying risk factors that may make someone more susceptible to an opioid overdose

Dispel common myths about how to reverse opioid overdose

Learn how to respond to an opioid overdose emergency with the administration of naloxone

Learn more & RSVP stmmts.org/Narcan



COOKOUT AT ROB & LINDA'S & JUNE WEDNESDAYS AT CHURCH UPDATE

WatCh (Wednesdays at Church) will take a summer break for the month of June.

However, on Wednesday, June 21 there will be a cookout at Rob and Linda Merola's backyard from 7 PM to 8:30 PM. Bring a chair and something to share (if you wish; if not, there is always plenty of food) and enjoy some great discussion with wonderful people!

RSVP at office@stmmts.org

YOUNG COUPLES SMALL GROUP MEET UP

Join Emily & Robby Stevens at IZZI Pizza on Saturday, June 10th from 1-3 PM for a Young Couples (20-30 somethings) small group meet up. Grab some delicious pizza & enjoy some great conversation.

Email office@stmmts.org with questions.



POPCORN BAR SUNDAY JUNE 11TH COFFEE HOUR

It's Corn! Join us to celebrate National Corn Day on Sunday, June 11th during coffee hour between the 9:30 & 11 AM services.

Create your own delicious popcorn mix with sweet and savory toppings!

FATHER'S DAY SERVICES SUNDAY, JUNE 18TH SERVICES AT 8, 9:30 & 11 AM

Services at 8, 9:30 & 11 AM. Join us on Sunday, June 18th for worship, prayer and to honor all the men in our lives. Dads will receive a special gift.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Pete Hart has been a very active volunteer at St. Matt's for many years, serving in Men's group, and teaching Faith Factory & now Kids Chapel every Sunday morning. We are so blessed by his generous spirit and love for Jesus. Thank you for all you do, Pete!



OUTREACH & UPDATES



CELEBRATION GARDEN VOLUNTEERING TUESDAYS AT 8:30 AM Begins Tuesday, June 6th.

Join us to harvest fresh produce to support local food pantries.

Questions? Contact Heidi garden@stmmts.org



SET IT AND FORGET IT?

Dan Robertson, St. Matthew's
Stewardship Leader



For years my wife Katie and I have donated to St Matt's electronically. We like this as it puts God first allowing us to intentionally support the church before we do other things with our money. This is similar to how we set up our retirement savings that comes directly from our earnings before the rest is deposited into our account. A tip I learned long ago is to use the two time changes each year to execute at least a 1% increase in our retirement savings. I am a big fan of set it and forget it when it comes to savings. A few weeks ago it was time to spring forward. I adjusted our savings rate and I was inspired to take a look at our donations to St Matt's. To my shock, I realized that the donations had stopped on 12/31/22. I then made the desired updates. Going forward, we will continue to set it and forget it, and revisit to pause and ask, "God, what would you have me do?"

EfM GRADUATION SUNDAY, JUNE 25TH AT THE 11 AM SERVICE

Join us Sunday, June 23rd at 11 AM to celebrate the 2023 Education for Ministry Graduation.

EfM is a 4-year small-group program that provides an education in the content of the Christian tradition.

Learn more: stmmts.org/efm



WOMEN'S retreat

SIGN UP TODAY!

WOMEN'S RETREAT

FRI., SEPT 22nd - SUN., SEPT 24th

CULTIVATING FERTILE SOIL IN OUR HEARTS

featuring guest speaker:
Rev. Mary Margaret Winn

Space is limited, so register early.

Register: stmmts.org/retreat



BACKPACK BUDDIES

SUMMER FOOD DRIVE

Backpack Buddies has taken a break for the summer, but we're stocking up for the next school year!

Collecting all items from our shopping list as long as food does not expire until after December 2023.

sterlinghelp.org/BackpackBuddies

Does your student need service hours? Host a neighborhood food drive this summer! Learn more at the link below.

sterlinghelp.org/volunteer

STUDENT MINISTRY UPDATE



Introducing Journey GROUPS

We are building into people and our next generation!

This month we are thrilled to launch our student ministry mentoring groups as a part of our strategic plan to engage in intentional and meaningful relationships among our students, led by a mentor-leader.

For students in grades 7-12.



JOURNEY BREAKFAST CLUB

Sundays, June 11 & 25 | 9:30 AM

A safe place for students to come and be who they are, make friends, and have real conversations about God.

These events are open to students everywhere and anywhere! Grades 7-12.

To learn more about our mentor groups, feel free to contact Ron at any time via email, and we will follow up with a phone call or meeting.

Our Mission:

We partner with students no matter where they are in their journey to provide meaningful connections and experiences to encourage them through life's ups and downs.



THURSDAY, JUNE 8TH
6 PM - 8 PM

Students are invited to join Kassidy Juliane our returning Summer Intern and Ron for an evening of kickball, water balloons, friendly competition, and grilled cheese sandwiches. Friends welcome!

Open to rising 6th grade through 12th graders.

Questions? Contact Ron or Kassidy at journey@stmtts.org



CALLING!

All adults who have faith in Christ or are seekers and care about this generation of students.

The minimum commitment:

CHECK IN! Once a week via a journal, email, or Zoom.

HANG OUT Once a month with your mentor group

Requirements:

1. Attend a 2-hour Mentor-Leader training
2. Point students to faith in Jesus
3. Be a Listener, and be open to where your students are in their journey, whether they are believers or non-believers.
4. Empower your group through affirmation and encouragement week to week.
5. Be a part of the once-a-quarter BIG JOURNEY student ministry event.

All mentors will have a background check and abide by the policies established by the diocese and the leadership team.

GET INVOLVED!

Contact Ron or Kassidy at journey@stmtts.org

WELCOME BACK KASSIDY JULIANE

Kassidy has just returned to Sterling from her freshman year at JMU and we are excited to announce she will be one of our Summer Interns assisting with Kids Chapel, Student Ministry and VBS!



KIDS CHAPEL & VBS

KIDS PARENT CHAPEL MEETING

SUNDAY, JUNE 4TH 10:30 AM
PARENTS OF KIDS AGE 4 - RISING 6TH GRADE

As we head into the summer, Pete Hart, Kids Chapel Leader invites parents of kids aged 4 through rising 6th grade to enjoy an assortment of gourmet grilled cheese sandwiches and to discuss summer Kids Chapel, rising 6th grader programming, and summer events.

Kids will enjoy "School's out for summer" donuts & activity while parents are meeting.

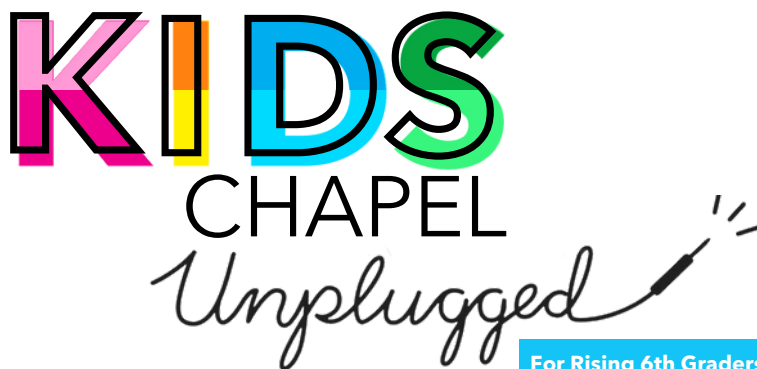
Questions? Contact Ron at journey@stmtts.org

INTRODUCING KIDS CHAPEL UNPLUGGED

Designed especially for rising 6th graders, Kids Chapel Unplugged was created to support students new to Middle School and provide group discussion, bible study, games, and connection.

Kids Chapel Unplugged begins Sunday, June 4th at 9:30 AM in Classroom 2.

Questions? Contact Ron at journey@stmtts.org



VBS REGISTRATION IS LIVE VOLUNTEER HELP NEEDED!

Dinner, Live Music, Games, Skits, Bible Discovery, and more! Join us for an out-of-this-world adventure!

Cost for campers \$40, scholarships are available upon request.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

(Rising 6th grade - 12th grade, and adults needed)
Decorations, Crew Leaders, Kitchen Help, Registration and more!

Register online or contact Kathleen@stmtts.org



STELLAR VBS

JULY - 24 | 28 5:30 - 8:30 PM

stmtts.org/VBS

VBS YOUTH VOLUNTEER EVENTS

Mon., July 24 - Ice Cream Social | 8:30 - 9:30 PM

Enjoy your favorite flavors of ice cream with all the toppings you can think of while getting to know your fellow youth volunteers.

Tues., July 25 - Karaoke Night Returns! | 8:30 - 9:30 PM

Back by popular demand, sing along with your favorite songs, no talent necessary just the desire to have fun!

Wed., July 26 - Water Games | 8:30 - 9:30 PM

Join us for an epic water battle with water balloons, squirters and more!

Thurs., July 27 - Game Night | 8:30 - 9:30 PM

Come enjoy snacks and bring a favorite board/card game to share.

Fri., July 28 - Slip n' Slide Kickball | 8:30 PM - Pickup TBA

End VBS week with a fun night of slip n' slide kickball



JOIN US FOR POST-VBS FUN EACH NIGHT
FOR VOLUNTEERS IN GRADES 6-12 |
*PARENT CHAPERONES ALSO NEEDED

RSVP at stmtts.org/VBSevents
Contact Cassidy at journey@stmtts.org