

February Newsletter

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church

WE ALL NEED LOVE

REV. ROB MEROLA

Dear Friends,

"Like every other child, yours needs lots of love. Again, and again, your love will be tested just to be sure it is always available. Security is the word. Your child wants security, needs this assurance. We hope you'll give it abundantly."

This passage comes from a small pamphlet I discovered in the things my mother left me. It was given to her by Mrs. FW Burr, the nursery role superintendent at her local church. Looking back, I am deeply touched that this woman, who was not my mother, was so deeply invested in seeing that I received such love.

I think maybe my mother was too, and that's why she kept this pamphlet all these years. Of all the possibilities, this is one of the few things she considered important enough to pass on.

We all need lots of love, of course. We all need to be sure love is always available. In fact, in this world where insecurities only seem to be growing both in size and number, it just may be that we need this now more than ever.

As imperfect human beings, we don't always get this right. That's where Mrs. Burr had additional wisdom to share. Mrs. Burr reminded my mother of the importance of her loving me, yes, but she went on to say that it was also important for my mom to introduce me to Jesus and to Jesus' love for me. In the love Jesus has for us, we do find a love that is available to us everywhere, all the time, no matter what. In it we rest secure.

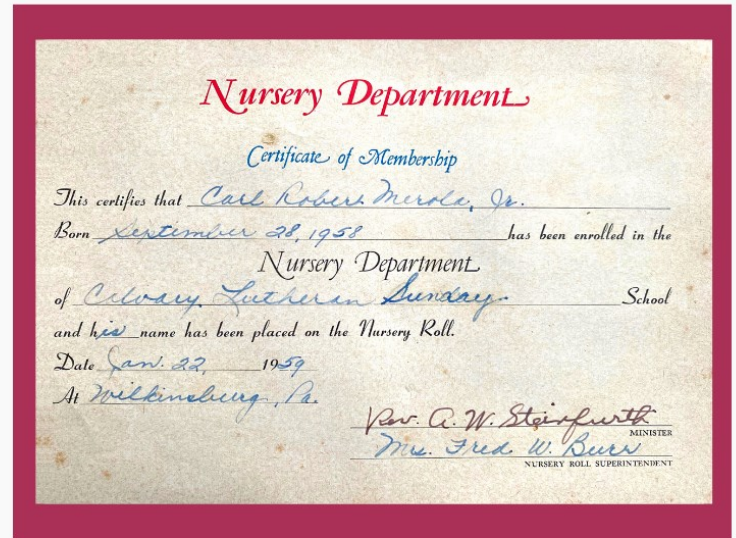
My prayer and great desire for everything we do at Saint Matthews, everything you'll find on the pages to follow, is that they would be opportunities for you to know and grow in that love. And that even more, like Mrs. Burr did, we would share Jesus love with others, with people like me who now 64 years after my birth, remember this woman who is a complete stranger to me, but who has touched my life in such a profound way.

I am deeply thankful for her. For my mother. For you. For all those who know and share the love of our Lord Jesus Christ.

With much love and affection,
Father Rob



FEBRUARY 2023



THIS ISSUE:

- Annual Meeting/ Vision Sunday
- Vestry Candidates
- All About Lent for Kids
- February Events & Activities

WAYS TO CONNECT

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



Faith Factory for Kids
Sundays at 9:30 AM

Donuts & Discovery - Middle & High School Students
Sundays at 10:30 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

Social Time with Candace
Mondays at 12 PM
Zoom Meeting ID: 681-861-620

Social Time with Kevin
Mondays at 8:30 PM on Zoom
Kevin@stmmts.org

WatCh (Wednesdays at Church)
Wednesdays at 7 PM

Men's Group
Saturdays at 8:00 AM
Linden@stmmts.org

EVENTS & SAVE THE DATES

FEBRUARY

Tuesdays - Backpack Buddies Packing at noon
Wednesdays - WatCh at 7 PM - IS THE TRUTH OUT THERE?
Sundays at 10:30 - Donuts and Discovery
Sun., Feb. 5th - Vision Sunday/ Annual Meeting
Fri., Feb. 10th - Lunch Meet-up at Choolaah 11:45 AM
Sun. Feb. 12th - Kids 'The Big Game' Party
Fri., Feb. 17th - Ladies' Night Out at Los Toltecos in Dulles at 7 PM
Sun., Feb. 19th - All About Lent with Fr. Rob at 10:30 AM
Tues. Feb. 21st - Pancake Supper at 5:30 PM
Wed., Feb. 22nd - Ash Wednesday services at 6 AM, 12 PM & 7 PM
Fri., Feb. 24th - St. Matt's Game Night at 6 PM
Sun. Feb. 26th - First Sunday of Lent
Sun., Feb. 26th - Kids Lego Minute-to-win-it Games

MARCH

Tuesdays - Backpack Buddies Packing at noon
Wednesdays - Lent WatCh at 7 PM
Sundays at 10:30 Donuts and Discovery
Fri., March 24th - St. Matt's Game Night at 6 PM

HOLY WEEK & EASTER APRIL 2-9

VISION SUNDAY FEBRUARY 5TH

Sunday, February 5th please join us for Vision Sunday.

During each service, Fr. Rob & Sr. Warden, Sara Warnick will discuss the 2023 Vision for St. Matthew's, and a vote will be taken for our incoming vestry members (bios located on page 4 of this newsletter). Then join us at 10:30 am in the Parish Hall for our financial report, Student Connections vision for 2023 followed by a Q&A.

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

Prior to our Feb. 5th Vision Sunday, we encourage you to take a look at all that St. Matthew's accomplished in 2022.

stmmts.org/AnnualReport2022

Have questions for our Q&A session? Submit questions by Friday, Feb. 3rd:

stmmts.org/Questions

2022 HIGHLIGHTS

2,000
Backpack Buddies
Bags Distributed

13,849
Diapers
Donated

800
Proverbs
Studied

400+
Bags of Food
Donated

200+
Winter Coats
Donated



Read all the 'And Then Some' results!
stmmts.org/AnnualReport2022

2023 INCOMING VESTRY CANDIDATES



Bob Henry

Bob is a product of 16 years of Catholic education. While attending a Jesuit college in D.C. (Georgetown), he eventually found and joined the Episcopal church. He has previously served on a Vestry as both Junior and Senior Warden, and became a member of St. Matthew's in 2020. St. Matthew's was for him and his family a place of healing where he found the kind of vibrant, giving, love-centered community needed.

Bob works in cybersecurity and spent almost 9 years in the "five-sided building" before moving to commercial security software ventures. He was born to fly, and is a certified flight instructor with over 2,000 hours in the cockpit since 2001. He also has been renovating homes since age 4 (with an acquired disdain for plumbing), and has an uncanny knack for being lucky.

Bob has a daughter, Meghan, who is married and finishing her law degree in Kansas, and a son, Robby, who graduated from college in 2022 and works in Reston. Bob lives in Herndon with his wife Genevieve Zetlan and her two children, Davis and Otto.



Robby Stevens

Originally from Allentown, Pennsylvania, Robby moved to Northern Virginia in 2015 for work with Aramark Refreshments. He completed his undergraduate degree in Marketing from James Madison University. Robby joined the St. Matthews family five years ago through his now wife, Emily.

One of the things he enjoys most about St Matt's is the welcoming and selfless atmosphere both within the church family and through the outreach into the local community. Some of the activities that Robby enjoys in his free time include biking, golfing, reading, and food. Robby is excited to join the vestry to continue to build his relationships with the St. Matthew's family and see how his experiences and faith can have an impact on the church and community.



Andrew Wright

Andrew and his family (Diana, Carolyn, and Katie (Ian)) first attended St Matthews in June 2021, after worshiping at other churches in the area. Carolyn and then Katie coming into Diana and Andrew's lives prompted a renewed focus on church, worship and involvement in church life. With the move to St. Matthews, Andrew and his family are enjoying a new and welcoming community.

Originally from Australia, Andrew works in IT and was fortunate to take up dancing many years ago where he met Diana. The rest, as they say is history. Dog owners for many years, Andrew and Diana have two recently adopted male dogs that provide much entertainment. In his off times Andrew like to relax with reading, watching TV, spending time with his family and fixing things. He is looking forward to taking the step to be more involved in the running of the church and learning more along the way.

Meet all of our dedicated Vestry members on our website!
stmtts.org/Vestry

STUDENT MINISTRIES

FEBRUARY COFFEE HOUR KIDS

Sundays between the 9:30 and 11 am services. Games and events for kids while parents enjoy fellowship and a cup of coffee or two!

SUN
FEB 5

GAMES & CRAFTS

Join Ms. Aurelia in Classroom 2 for games and crafts during the annual meeting

SUN
FEB 12

THE BIG GAME PARTY!

Join us to get ready for "the big game" Snacks, games and more!

SUN
FEB 19

ALL ABOUT LENT

Join Fr. Rob to learn all about Lent, what it means and why we celebrate it.

SUN
FEB 26

LEGO MINUTE-TO-WIN-IT GAMES

Join Ms. Aurelia in Classroom 2 to play some minute-to-win-it games with Legos!



stmmts.org/events

YOUR JOURNEY
STUDENT CONNECTIONS
AT ST. MATTHEW'S

FEBRUARY UPDATES

RON WHITT, DIRECTOR OF STUDENT CONNECTIONS

Influence Matters

In February, OUR JOURNEY will be focused on the theme of influence through leadership and development. From the arts, hospitality, and entrepreneurship, to photography. By way of mentoring meetups and training sessions, as we make way for an INFLUENCE March retreat (details coming soon).

Be a part of the Journey!

Students and adults, email Journey@stmmts.org to find out more about how you can help to be an influencer at Journey for this generation, and generations to come.

St. Matt's Students Presents
TALENT SHOW & SILENT AUCTION

Supporting the summer Youth Mission Trip to Erie, PA

SAVE THE DATE
SUNDAY, APRIL 15TH

Questions? Contact office@stmmts.org

DESIGNING SPACES & PANCAKE SUPPER

PIZZA & SET-UP MON. FEB 20TH AT 12:30 PM IN THE PARISH HALL.

The student ministry will be partnering with Lisa Caselli for our annual Pancake Supper. Students will oversee the decorations and table layout.

PANCAKE SUPPER TUESDAY, FEB. 21ST AT 5:30 PM

Also, our students will BRING IT during the event with hospitality to help be sure that every friend and stranger alike, will feel welcome.

Questions? Contact journey@stmmts.org

YOUTH MISSION 2023

JULY 9-14 | ERIE, PA



stmmts.org/YouthMission

DONUTS & DISCOVERY
SUNDAYS AT 10:30 AM
Classroom 4

FEBRUARY AT ST. MATT'S

BACKPACK BUDDIES

We provide support to dozens of local children in need. Each child receives a bag filled with six meals, snacks and milk each weekend during the school year.

Ways you can help:

- Visit HRTS (Hunger Response Team of Sterling) sterlinghelp.org to make a financial gift.
- Drop off food: Tues/Thurs 8-4, Mon/Wed 12-4 or on Sundays.
- Help pack - Group Packing on Tues. at noon and the first Sun. of the month during Coffee Hour! (No packing first Sun. in Feb.)

FEBRUARY WATCH

TRUTH: Is it really out there?
If so, how can we discover it?

WatCH (Wednesdays at Church) will meet on February 1, 8, and 15 (Feb. 22nd is Ash Wednesday service) at 7 PM.

We'd love to have you join us for what is sure to be some lively discussions!

St. Matthew's
LUNCH MEET UP
CHOO LAAH INDIAN BBQ

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10TH
AT 11:45 AM

FRIDAY, FOOD & FRIENDS. JOIN US FOR A LUNCH MEET UP!



LADIES' NIGHT OUT

LOS TOLTECOS AT DULLES TOWN CENTER

FRIDAY, FEB. 17TH AT 7 PM

Grab yourself some dinner, and enjoy great company. Age 18+ are welcome to attend.

Let us know you're coming, and we'll save you a seat!

Contact office@stmmts.org



St. Matthew's

GAME NIGHT

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24TH
6PM - 10 PM

BRING & GAME AND
SNACK TO SHARE

Lent

Fast | Pray | Give

ALL ABOUT LENT

FOR KIDS

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19 TH

Students of all ages (and their families) are invited to join Fr. Rob between the 9:30 & 11 AM services for "All About Lent!"

Learn what Lent is, why it's important and why we celebrate it!

Questions? Contact office@stmmts.org

PANCAKE SUPPER
TUESDAY, FEB. 21st
5:30 PM



Enjoy pancakes, crepes, pancake decorating, breakfast meats, fruit and juice as you partake in the feast.

Come join us for fellowship and fun. If you would like to volunteer with set up, cleaning or cooking, please contact Lisa Caselli at office@stmmts.org

Ash Wednesday

REMEMBER YOU ARE DUST

WED., FEBRUARY 22nd
SERVICES* AT 6 AM, 12 PM & 7 PM

*Livestream available at 12 & 7 PM

Lent Resources

Devotionals & Family Activities for this season of preparation

stmmts.org/Lent