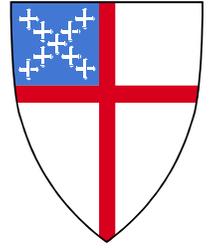


*Saint*  
**Matthew's**  
Episcopal Church

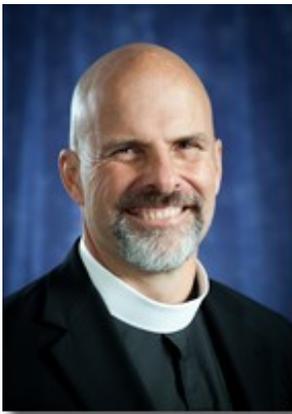


201 East Frederick Drive • Sterling, VA 20164

## February 2019

### FROM THE RECTOR

**ROB MEROLA**



Dear and Beloved Friends,

Yesterday was about as perfect as a day can get. No, it was not spent fishing. Nor was it spent on top a 10,000 foot plus mountain, breathing in that air that nourishes my soul every bit as much as it brings oxygen to my lungs. No, it was spent mostly at home.

It started with an act of service followed by church. After that, I mostly sat in my comfy chair watching the snow fall. In my hand was a hot cup of tea. Next to me was my wife. Perfect.

There is an old prayer that goes something like this: *“Lord, may I not be afraid of failure, but of succeeding in life at those things which really do not matter.”*

That is far harder than it first seems. It will not come naturally, but will require a diligent, purposed, and practiced passion for truth. It will take fierce devotion to the path less trod—and recognizing that the path we often think is the path less trod is precisely the path everyone else is walking. But there is perhaps no prayer I would more fervently pray for you—or ask you to pray for me.

Every yes is a no. Choosing one life, whether by default or intentionally, is turning our back on a hundred lives that could've been. Make no mistake-- the consequences could not be higher.

So choose well, dear and beloved friends. Choose well.

Choosing right along with you,  
Rob+

**Save the Date**  
**Vacation Bible**  
**School**

**July 22-26, 2019**



# Annual Meeting & Vestry Election

Sunday, February 3, 10:20am

Mark your calendar for the Saint Matthew's Annual Meeting. We will discuss our successes from 2018 and talk about our plans for 2019. We will also vote on new Vestry members and review the 2019 budget that was adopted by the Vestry. Take a moment to read the short biographies below of the three new individuals who are presently on the ballot for three year terms. Heather Tomaszek is also on the ballot to remain on the vestry and serve a one year term.

## Adrian Mattina

After moving from Vermont to Loudoun County four years ago, Adrian and her husband Dan and daughters, Hope, Joy, and Grace found a welcoming community and home at St. Matthew's. Adrian previously lived in south Florida and graduated in 2002 from Florida Atlantic University. Her love of reading lead her to major in English Literature with a minor in Women Studies and work for 10 years as a bookseller and Community Relations Manager for Barnes and Noble Booksellers. Currently Adrian is a Certified Instructor in Training in American Freestyle Karate. She enjoys helping in the St. Matthew's Celebration Garden and with Backpack Buddies and looks forward to getting even more involved at St. Matthew's as a member of the vestry. Contact her at: [Adrian@stmtts.org](mailto:Adrian@stmtts.org)



## Akila O'Grady



In 2013, Akila felt called to join the St. Matthew's Band and lead worship. This was an answer to her prayers, as she had been looking for a church home for her family. She is very passionate about worshipping through music and is thankful that she can use her spiritual gift to do so. Over the years she has been involved in the orchestra, band, hand bell and Madrigal and Children's choirs so, this is beyond a blessing. She is also very passionate about fitness and philanthropy. In her spare time she enjoys the sport of triathlon and cycling and believe every race should always be for a cause so.... She's looking forward to planning our first St. Matt's 5k!!! Contact her at: [Akila@stmtts.org](mailto:Akila@stmtts.org)

## Martha Olson

Martha, a Texas native, became a member of St. Matthew's in 1992. Since then, she has served in several ministry areas, most recently (and currently): LEM, Lector, Flower Guild, Pastoral Care, and co-editor of our St. Matthew's devotionals. She spent 20 years working as a technical writer in private industry, paused a few years to raise her two youngest children, Bobby and Christie, and then spent 14 years working for Loudoun County Public Schools as a PALS (reading) Tutor, substitute teacher, and (after returning to school to get licensed), as an ELL Teacher. She was a member of the St. Matthew's Vestry 20 years ago. Now retired, she is looking forward to a new opportunity to serve her church family. Contact her at: [Martha@stmtts.org](mailto:Martha@stmtts.org)



## Heather Tomaszek



Heather is originally from New Jersey and has been attending St. Matthew's since 2015. She moved to Alexandria, VA in 2011 where she volunteered with Franconia Volunteer Fire and Rescue Company. She began attending an Episcopal Church while on an extended business trip in Panama City, FL. She is a 2011 graduate of Stevens Institute of Technology currently working for the Naval Sea Systems Command as a Naval Architect and residing in Sterling. Heather teaches 3-5 grade Faith Factory, runs the St. Matthew's Sunday Night Live program for middle and high school students, and is a member of the Finance Committee. Contact her at: [Heather@stmtts.org](mailto:Heather@stmtts.org)

# WatCh: Wednesdays at Church

## Wednesdays at 7pm: February 6, 13, 20, 27

### Where the Crawdads Sing

OK, there aren't really any crawdads. And no, there won't actually be any singing either. But there will be some spirited discussion as WatCH (Wednesdays at Church) takes the form of a talk show for the month of February. Hosted by our own Julia Braxton, the guests will be Grant and Rob as they consider various issues Julia presents to them. Topics will include such things as the following:

- "I Am the Boss of Me—Or Am I?" What (the Bible? The Church? Science? my "heart"?), if anything, has authority over us—and what exactly does this mean for our everyday 21st century decisions?
- "The Many Faces of Jesus" (if Jesus wasn't a blue eyed, blonde haired white man, what was he? In what ways is it appropriate—or inappropriate—to think of Jesus?)
- "Does Christianity teach us to stick it to the man?" (How does God call us to change the world—through casting down corrupt systems or cleaning up our own corrupt hearts?)

Sound intriguing? We'd love to have you join us starting Wednesday, February 6. Dinner (optional) starts at 7pm, with program following from 7:30 to 8:30pm.

## Traveling Eucharist 2019

"And he said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the Gospel to the whole creation."

*-Mark 16:15*

2019 is the year for us to be BOLD at St. Matthew's - in loving our neighbors, in the study of our faith, in the sharing of the Good News with the world! Part of what it takes to be bold is to try new, innovative things, to leave behind the comfort of our four walls and venture out into God's creation and BE in the midst of God's people.

This year, Rob and Grant invite you to join them in the world by participating in one (or more, or all!) of our Traveling Eucharists! These opportunities are designed to take us out into God's creation and worship God in the broader community. Mark your calendars, invite your friends and neighbors, and be on the lookout for sign-up information and times on each Traveling Eucharist throughout the year!

### Overnight Traveling Eucharists:

May 4th-5th: Visiting some of our College students (VT, JMU, VCU, etc.)

June 22nd-23rd: Point Lookout, VA (option for baptisms)

October 12th-13th: Hiking, Location TBD

November 2nd-3rd: Cathedral of St. John the Divine, NYC

### Local Traveling Eucharists:

February 24th: The National Cathedral

March 24th: Local Homeless Shelter, Location TBD

June 30th: Kings Dominion

September 22nd: Grocery Store Parking Lot, Location TBD

October 27th: Great Falls Park (option for baptisms)

December 15th: Los Toltecos

December 22nd: DRNK

December 24th: Locations TBD



Join us at the National Cathedral on February 24.  
Details in the bulletin.



# February at Saint Matthew's Love is in the Air



## Love Songs: February Sermon Series

Have you ever wondered why we spend so much of our time and energy not only pursuing things other than love—but often at the expense of love? Things like performance, recognition, or material gain can all be very rewarding, but when pursued at the cost of love those rewards will be fleeting. This February at St. Matt's we're going to be taking a broad look at this "crazy little thing called love" as we consider together how we can all do a better job of letting "a little love into our hearts."

Please join us at of our weekend services for our new sermon series, "Love Songs". (And yes, it will include some of the best music ever!)



## Money & Marriage Event

Thursday, February 14, 7:30pm-10:30pm

Looking for something special (and free) to do this Valentine's Day? In our fast-paced, over-connected culture of busyness, sometimes our marriages take a backseat. When work, kids, commitments, and obligations compete for our attention, suddenly we look up and it's been a month—or months—since we've spent quality time with the person who means the most!

Why not dedicate one of the most special nights of the year to each other? A night to laugh, make plans, and grow together. A night to reconnect and realign the goals of your relationship and your finances.

That's what you'll experience at our special Valentine's Day Money & Marriage event! Via live stream you will enjoy hearing from relationship expert and author Dr. Les Parrott as well as money expert and #1 NYT best-selling author Rachel Cruze.

They will give you practical tools and clear takeaways to help you communicate more effectively. You will walk away with a better understanding of what you can accomplish financially. They'll help you get on the same page with a renewed vision for your relationship. Your marriage is worth it!

Email Miriam with any questions or to RSVP at [Miriam@stmtts.org](mailto:Miriam@stmtts.org)



## Valentine Kids Crafts

Saturday, February 9, 10am-12pm



Join Small Hands, Big Hearts and St. Matthew's Faith Factory for a FREE Kids Valentine's Craft Event! Make one to take home and one to share with local area Assisted Living communities. Share God's love through these adorable Valentine craft and snack activities! All are welcome!



## Love in Pictures

Saturday, February 16, 6pm

Please join us on February 16 after the 5pm service to share your pictures of love. Bring your wedding album, or pictures of those you love and share your memories. Bring along one single picture which will be displayed for our guessing game!! Also bring an appetizer to share.

# Young Professionals: Brunch and Zoom Bible Study Spring 2019

**Did you know that Mark is the oldest Gospel in the Bible?**

**Did you also know that the writers of Matthew and Luke borrowed much of their own Gospel accounts from Mark?**

This spring, our Young Professionals group will dive into the Gospel of Mark and discover what God has to say to and about our lives through it. We will continue to gather on the 3rd Sunday of the month for brunch and Bible Study at 12:30pm. Locations of the brunches will continue to rotate through member's homes and will be shared via text and email with group members.



In addition to our brunches, the Young Professionals will also begin meeting physically and virtually the first Saturday of each month at DRNK coffee shop in Cascades Overlook at 9am for continued Bible Study on the Gospel of Mark. For members who are not able to join us physically, you are invited to join in our conversations virtually through Zoom.

If you would like to join us for a Sunday brunch or a Saturday Zoom Bible Study, please text Emily Palmer at 703-587-2966 or Jimmy McKeown at 703-727-1137.

## Middle and High School Mission Trip: Appalachia July 13-19, 2019

Mission trips are an essential part of the St. Matthew's experience; it is our hope that all of us, at some point, will go on a mission. They are life changing experiences that many of us treasure as one of the highlights of our lives.

This summer our SNL (Sunday Night Live) middle school and high school youth members will be serving in the Virginia/West Virginia region of Appalachia from Saturday, July 13- Friday July 19.

The cost is \$450/person which includes everything but spending money. A deposit of \$100 is due by April 21 and the final payment of \$350 is due June 1. **Scholarships are available.** Please contact Miriam in the church office for more information. (Miriam@stmtts.org) Checks can be made payable to St. Matthew's designating them for the SNL Mission Trip. Chaperones are needed! Friends are welcome to join us!



# Be the Change You Wish to See in the World.

~Mahatma Gandhi

Saint Matt's is providing meals for the Cold Weather Shelters in Sterling and Leesburg on several dates in February and March. Please join us at 12:30pm on any of the following dates to help prepare meals: Sunday, February 3, 17, 24 or Sunday, March 3, 17, 24.

If you, a scout troop, or a group of friends would like to help please contact Adrian Mattina at [Adrian@stmtts.org](mailto:Adrian@stmtts.org).



The Outreach Committee has funds available and wants to give money to St. Matthews members to help support projects in our community.

Pitch the Outreach Committee your ideas either by emailing Adrian at [Adrian@stmtts.org](mailto:Adrian@stmtts.org) or attend an Outreach meeting the second Tuesday of the month at 7:00.