

NEWSLETTER

Saint Matthew's Episcopal Church, Sterling, VA

www.stmatthewssterling.org


July 2003



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Saint Matthew's Episcopal Church

Calendar of Events - July 2003

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 9:00 A - Classroom of Discovery 7:00 P - S-Anon (12-Step Program) 7:00 P - AA Meeting	2 4:00 P - Reading classes 7:00 P - Spiritual Formation Committee	3 9:00 A - Flower Ministry 7:00 P - Music Rehearsal 7:30 P - Worship Commission	4 5:30 P - Sanctuary reserved	5 9:00 A - Flower Ministry 7:00 P - AA Meeting
						
6 5:00 P - G3/Youth Group 7:00 P - Prayer Meeting	7	8 7:00 P - AA Meeting 7:00 P - S-Anon (12-Step Program)	9 4:00 P - Reading classes	10 9:00 A - Flower Ministry 7:00 P - Music Rehearsal	11 5:30 P - Sanctuary reserved	12 8:00 A - Men's Breakfast 9:00 A - Flower Ministry 7:00 P - AA Meeting
13 5:00 P - G3/Youth Group 7:00 P - Prayer Meeting	14	15 7:00 P - AA Meeting 7:00 P - S-Anon (12-Step Program) 7:30 P - Vestry Meeting	16 4:00 P - Reading classes 7:00 P - Spiritual Formation Committee	17 9:00 A - Flower Ministry 7:00 P - Music Rehearsal	18 5:30 P - Sanctuary reserved	19 9:00 A - Flower Ministry 7:00 P - AA Meeting
20 5:00 P - G3/Youth Group 6:00 P - Girl Scouts-Wilson 7:00 P - Prayer Meeting	21	22 10:00 A - VBS Training 7:00 P - S-Anon (12-Step Program) 7:00 P - VBS Training 7:00 P - AA Meeting	23 4:00 P - Reading classes	24 9:00 A - Flower Ministry 7:00 P - Music Rehearsal	25 5:30 P - Sanctuary reserved	26 8:00 A - Men's Breakfast 9:00 A - Flower Ministry 7:00 P - AA Meeting
27 5:00 P - G3/Youth Group 7:00 P - Prayer Meeting	28 9:00 A - VBS - Potomac Falls E.C. program 5:30 P - VBS - Saint Matthew's program	29 9:00 A - VBS - Potomac Falls E.C. program 5:30 P - VBS - Saint Matthew's program 7:00 P - S-Anon (12-Step Program) 7:00 P - AA Meeting	30 9:00 A - VBS - Potomac Falls E.C. program 5:30 P - VBS - Saint Matthew's program	31 9:00 A - VBS - Potomac Falls E.C. program 9:00 A - Flower Ministry 5:30 P - VBS - Saint Matthew's program 7:00 P - Music Rehearsal		

LETTER FROM THE RECTOR...

Dear Friends,

Yesterday being Father's Day, I gave my dad a phone call. Though we started off with the normal polite pleasantries, the conversation took on a very different character when my father made a particularly honest comment about his own mental state that day. We dropped all pretenses and talked in a way that I have found adults seldom do. We talked as two fathers who are also sons; two flawed individuals keenly aware of their own faults and failings; two people who have seen the world change in ways that are often painful and confusing; and as two Christians attempting to discern God's plan and presence in the midst of it all.

As I have reflected on that conversation, I gained greater clarity about the magnitude of my father's achievements. The last child in a very large family, born to an older father, it does not seem to me that my father got the love and attention that every child dearly needs. Neglect, like legacies, whether anger, control, abuse, or regret, is all too easy to pass on, and more often than not, it is. What my father has done, in effect, is change the course of family history. He bequeathed to his

children a very different legacy than the one that was given him; a legacy of love, affection, and deep connection.

I firmly believe that the reason my father was able to change the course of our family history was because God changed the course of his personal history. When my father, at age 36, went from being a casual church attender to a devoted follower of Jesus, his life—and his heart—visibly changed. In the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, and in the love and support of other Christ followers (the Church), my dad found the grace, love, courage, and practical Biblical know-how to become the kind of father that is every son's hope, every daughter's dream.

I pray every single day that I too can be that kind of father, person, Christian. And I pray with all my heart, with everything that is in me and then some, that St. Matthew's would be the kind of church that shares Christ's life in such a way that it continues to change the trajectory of people's lives in very real and meaningful ways.

Hopefully,
Rob+

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Strategic Planning Committee is moving forward, that's where you want a plan to go of course, forward. We have met three times and with each meeting more and more great thoughts, ideas and concepts are coming to the fore. We are still in the first stage of our 8 part process and that is Ministry Analysis. The committee has completed the internal audit from the Committee perspective and next we will be asking you for your perspective on Saint Matthew's through a survey. The Committee will be finalizing the survey over the next two meetings in anticipation of distribution this summer (that's of course if summer ever comes, or at least the rain stops for more than 3 days).

We, the members of the Strategic Planning Committee are investing our time and energies to help Saint Matthew's keep our focus on developing a great church that reaches people and touches their hearts. With all that power we will be able to create impacts and affects, greater than we thought possible and spread God's word. We will need to use everyone's talents to make a difference and isn't that what we are here for. The Committee is going to need your feedback on Saint Matthew's and ideas on how we can all build the momentum for this new future. We will be looking for LOTS of completed survey's that provide insight on your views.

In the meantime please feel free to contact me if you would like to participate on the Committee or if you have some suggestions or ideas that you would like to discuss. Ann Lowden 703 430 9678 atlaok@aol.com

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

It's not too late! Join the excitement of our Super Cool Undersea Bible Adventure! **SCUBA begins July 28th and continues through August 1st.**

St. Matthew's will be bubbling with excitement as we dive into a **Super Cool Undersea Bible Adventure!** Our **SCUBA** program will provide fun, memorable Bible -learning activities for kids of all ages. Each day kids will enjoy Bible point crafts and exciting games, experience thrilling Bible stories, sample tasty snacks and hear unforgettable music. Plus they'll meet lots of new friends! We hope SCUBA will help our community dive deeper into God's love.

- **Two Fun Sessions:** (same week, same place, same cost)
Morning Session from 9 am to 12 noon.
Evening Session from 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm.
(Dinner is included.)
Registration forms are in the narthex and this newsletter.
- **PARENTS:** Please register your children (age 4 through rising 5th grade) TODAY! Payment (or request for scholarship) should accompany your form(s). 3-year-olds are welcome if there is a parent volunteer accompanying the child.
- **KIDS:** YOU are our most important VBS ambassadors! Please take home several VBS forms and invite your friends/neighbors/classmates to join us!
- **THINKING OF HELPING WITH VBS?** We need adult and teen/preteen helpers- Please sign up on the volunteer form. **A training session** has been scheduled for **Tuesday, July 22nd**. All volunteers should attend one of the meetings either from 10 am- 12 noon or 7 pm-9 pm. Please meet us in the trailer. We will be decorating the church on July 26th and 27th.
- Look for our fish swimming in the narthex with items we are in need of and ideas for donations.

FOR MORE INFO: Jodie Leach 703-421-6310 or email JodieLeach2@aol.com

REPORT FROM WILLOW CREEK

Sue Reier, Leslie Tracy and Vicki Nelson had the opportunity to attend the Arts Conference put on by the Willow Creek Association in Barrington, Illinois June 4-6. It was held at the Willow Creek Community Church. Imagine Wolf Trap enclosed – that is what the church was like. Five thousand people attended the conference in the church and another two thousand watched from other sections of the campus via closed circuit television screens. It was truly a lifetime experience to worship with so many people and to watch truly devoted worship leaders at work!

In addition to soaking in the blessed aura of the overall conference, the three of us attended “break-out” sessions with topics such as “Leading and Building a Small Vocal Ministry”, “Engaging the Heart: Leading the Planning Process”, and “The Core Values You Need to Build a Vocal Ministry”, to name a few. The overall conference theme was “Imagine That”. Nancy Beach, the conference leader, spoke about using imagination to build an arts ministry that is authentic and spiritually-based. Benjamin Zander, the conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra spoke about the “Art of Possibility”. Mr. Zander explained that artists should be transformational, not motivational. We should live by our vision, not by mere goals.

The last day of the conference was just as uplifting as the first. John Ortberg spoke about imagining life in the Kingdom of God. He explained that the Kingdom of God is right here, right now. It is part of the job of a worship leader to narrow the gap between the kingdom of earth and the Kingdom of God. Now that puts it in perspective!

We came away in awe of all the ways in which God moved our hearts, and thoroughly confused as to what we were being called to do at St. Matthews! But if we are able to put together an arts ministry of the type we experienced at Willow Creek, watch out!

YOUTH MINISTER'S REPORT

As you read this, Rob, Peter Nelson, Linda Merola, myself, and the youth group, will have just returned from some amazing music and some beautiful weather in Hershey, Pennsylvania. I'm really looking forward to this event, even though people have had a difficult time explaining what will actually happen. The most popular description is (a very tame) Woodstock with Christian Music.

I had been a bit nervous about the lack of information I've received, and wondering what people will be doing all day. I was nervous that if we were all running around free for 4 days, a LOT of uncontrolled "life experiences" may take place. Even now I'm still wondering what this event really means.

Through all of the nervousness, there have been a couple of voices which keep speaking to me. From co-workers who in passing mentioned that they went to Creation, and what an incredible time it was for everyone. The Creation website had a long list of forums (people posting messages about the event coming up) explaining how much they are looking forward to the event. Even some of our own youth, one will be working there; others have friends with other churches going. The most prevalent voice has been Father Rob himself. It seems every time he opens his mouth something about the Creation Festival comes out. The main thing I hear is how great an experience this was for him and that it will really bring our youth together as a family.

God has been speaking to me with all of these voices, helping me to realize that no matter what I think about this event, it is a large part of His plan to bring us together. I've been listening to His voice, seeing that while I may have questions, He definitely doesn't. He's been working through others to inform me, and through me to inform the youth. This will be an incredible trip where we all grow as individuals, and, most importantly, grow together as one group.

While we are all amazing individuals, as you'll see from the list of awards each person has won over the year (later in the newsletter), I would

really like to see us grow as one truly gifted group. I've noticed that when we get together as a group we can perform some incredible feats. During our ski trip I saw some really nervous people actually take the intermediate slopes by the end of the day, all from their support within the group. There has also been tremendous support from each-other when bowling, making for some great evenings.

Over the coming months I would truly love to see our group realize that we can come together outside of special events, and even outside of our church. I've read recently about many youth groups where the youth simply gather together on their own at school, go to a movie together, or just spend a day at the mall. I've seen everyone enjoy one-another's company (especially during car trips) and I know everyone has a couple of friends in the group. My hope is that soon people will be making time to just talk with others they might not necessarily communicate with during school, or head out to the movies together.

As a last note, we've just finished the 2002-2003 Sunday School! We ended with a very lively picnic. I'd like to thank all of the Sunday school teachers (some of whom are also in youth group) for doing such a great job with the future G3 members. I'd especially like to thank Claude and Jack for all the effort they put in this past year with the high-schoolers. They've really worked to make Sunday School fun and entertaining for the youth (no small feat, trust me). I really appreciate the great interest and excitement they've brought.

Peace,
+Tom

G-THREE HAPPENINGS

While we've had a great end of the school year, we are gearing up for a really fun summer. We have a few really great events planned. Most important, Vacation Bible School is at the end of July! We need people who are eager and interested in having a great time to teach our younger kids about God. In past years this has been a very popular event for the youth group to help out, and I'm sure this year will be no different. We have some people signed up, but need a lot more. This really has been a great time, and, never fear, our mascot (Winnie the dog) will definitely show her face a few times again.

(cont'd on page 4)

A NOTE FROM THE SENIOR WARDEN

Just because it is time for us to go on vacation, does not mean that we should also take a vacation from God. God will not take a vacation from us so why should we take a vacation from him? What I mean by this is, while we are on vacation we should continue to pray, bless our food before we eat, and maybe even visit a church wherever we are vacationing at. I believe that God watches out for us 100% of the time and we should be thankful for that.

Earlier this year I had an opportunity to take a day trip to York, PA with three other men, two of whom I had never met before that morning. It turned out that these three gentlemen were three pretty nice guys, but there was one thing that really impressed me about them. We left early on a Saturday morning, something on the order of around 6:00 AM. We decided to stop somewhere up along route 30 in Pennsylvania for breakfast. Up until this stop the trip had been rather uneventful. We stopped at a restaurant and ordered the breakfast buffet. We all went and filled our plates and returned to the table. This is where I got a real pleasant surprise before we ate. One of the two gentlemen I had never met before that Saturday morning explained to me that they ALWAYS said the blessing before they ate, no matter where they were. I found this refreshing; I guess I had never really thought much about blessing my food in public establishments before I ate it.

Since that morning I have noticed a lot more people in public eating places pausing to say a blessing before eating, some out loud and some, I suppose, in silence. I have also noticed an increased presence of God in many other respects. Have you noticed an increased amount of references to God in television shows? How about public officials, such as our president, making very public references to God in speeches and press conferences? I find this all refreshing and interesting, to me it just adds proof that God is everywhere and is working in our daily lives all the time.

Stay safe, have a wonderful summer and remember that God is present in our lives all the time and we should always take time to praise him and thank him for all the blessings he has bestowed on

Yours in Christ,
John Guenther
Senior Warden

SPIRITUAL FORMATION

The Spiritual Formation Committee is making good progress in developing a spiritual formation map that would help a person grow from a seeker of information about Christianity to a fully committed follower of Jesus. The committee will use the map to prioritize and plan curriculums and activities that are designed to help a person move along the continuum of spiritual formation.

These curriculums and activities would include Christian education, Confirmation and First Communion classes, small group studies/workshops, and retreats and apply to people of all ages. If you have an interest in this area, please come to a committee meeting. All are welcome. Please check the announcements found in your Sunday Bulletin or contact Richard Leach (703-421-6310) to find out when the next committee meeting will be held.

G-Three Happenings...

Be ready to spend July 26th and 27th preparing the church for VBS. We'll need to make water, underwater reefs, fish, underwater life, and all sorts of things to convert the church into an underwater adventure! This is a great time where we can convert the church into something more amazing than it already is.

We will also be holding youth group throughout July. We'll be getting together the nights of July 13th and July 20th. On the 20th we'll have a couple of events but also focus on God and showing children how to love Him.

One last thing to keep in mind is our white water rafting adventure! The weather has been pretty crummy all year, and we've been delaying this event a bit. Right now we're hoping to have the trip either August 15th – 16th or August 22nd – 23rd. These dates will especially depend on what the rain does to the river, as they are currently too high to raft. Mark your calendars for these tentative dates for the trip, and we'll send out more as we get it.

G3 AWARDS

We've had an amazing number of awards come out of the G3 group over the past year, and I know we've left out a couple of awards and unfortunately missed a few of the members. Below are the awards each person has earned over the year. Please take some time and congratulate each of them on their hard work.

Jonathan Bouges

- Captain - travel ice hockey team
- Hockey team qualified to participate in 2 national tournaments
- Presidential Physical Fitness Award

Alex Leach

- Debate Letter
- Debate Scholarship
- Team Academic Excellence Recipient

Madison Leach

- National Physical Fitness Award

Taylor Leach

- National Physical Fitness Award
- Leo Club Member
- Dean's List

Elise Lintelman

- Honor Roll
- National Physical Fitness Award
- Most Comical
- Program Aide Award
- Leadership Award

Elizabeth Lunn

- Dean's List all 4 semesters
- National Physical Fitness Award
- Soccer team won 2nd place in division

Christine Merola

- Principal's List
- Faculty award for Best Eight Grade Artist

Mary Merola

- Principal's List

Andrew Nelson

- Honor Roll
- Panther Pride award for the freshmen team A
 - Academic Achievement
 - School Citizenship
 - Personal Integrity
- Most Dependable

Nick Nightingale

- National Physical Fitness Award
- Principal's Award
- Leadership Award
- Attendance

Rebecca Nightingale

- National Physical Fitness Award

Chris Palmer

- Excellent rating for Orchestra quintet at Solo and Ensemble Festival
- President's Award for Educational Excellence
- Physical Education Outstanding Student Award
- Civics Class "Outstanding Character" Award

Emily Palmer

- Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Good Citizenship Award
- President's Award for Educational Excellence
- Dranesville Elementary School Outstanding Citizenship Certificate

Jessica Pett

- National Physical Fitness Award, 1st semester
- Outstanding Math Student

Nicole Pett

- Presidential Physical Fitness Award

Kate Strong

- President's Award for Educational Excellence (Outstanding Academic Excellence 2003)
- Principal's Club - Seneca Ridge Middle School (all A's all year)
- Most Outstanding Student - Honors English

Matt Tracy

- Volunteer work within community

Kim Tracy

- Pony Club

Caitlyn Tracy

- Pony Club

Heather Vereb

- Lettered in
 - Varsity Swimming
 - Academics
 - Chorus
- Won a poster contest in history class, based on a book.
- District Swimming in 500 freestyle
- All County Chorus
- All District Chorus
- Excellent Attendance for each quarter and for the year
- A honor roll the first quarter
- A, B Honor roll the last three quarters
- Concordia (school choir), received an EXCELLENT rating at competition in Myrtle Beach
- Outstanding Concordia Student of the year
- Recognized for volunteer hours
- Made the Dance Team

Michael Vereb

- Winner of the Continental Math League competition
- Presidential Physical Fitness for the fourth year
- Presidents Club

Alex Wilson

- Best Bowler in Huntsville, AL for the 12-16 division

S.C.U.B.A.

Super Cool Undersea Bible Adventures

Vacation Bible School

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church,

201 E. Frederick Dr., Sterling VA 20164

July 28-Aug. 1, 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Dinner is included!

For age 4 and rising grades K-5 !

(Age 3 if accompanied with a parent volunteer)

Cool crafts, games, Bible stories

and theater, fun songs – and meet lots of new friends!



Open to all!

Register before July 14! \$15 one child, \$25 for 2 siblings,
but no more than \$30 per family,
payable to St. Matthews Church (memo: "VBS")– scholarships available!

(Mail this form, with payment –or scholarship request – to St. Matthews, 201 E. Frederick Dr., Sterling, VA 20164-2387; (703) 430-2121; e-mail officemanager@stmatthewssterling.org)

Student's name _____ Birth Date _____ Age _____

Fall Grade _____ Allergies or other medical conditions _____

Parent's Name _____ Name of Adult picking up child _____

Daytime Phone _____ Evening Phone _____ Emerg./Cell _____

Address _____ City, State _____ Zip _____

Student's T-shirt size: Adult XL ___ L ___ M ___ S ___ Child L(14-16) ___ M(10-12) ___ S(6-8) ___ XS(2-4) ___

I give my permission for my child to be photographed during VBS with the knowledge that such photos may appear on the St. Matthew's website, www.stmatthewssterling.org .

Signature: _____ Date: _____



S.C.U.B.A. VBS - Open to all!

Register before July 14! \$15 one child, \$25 for 2 siblings,
but no more than \$30 per family,
payable to St. Matthews Church (memo: "VBS")- scholarships available!

(Use for Second Child in family)

Student's name _____ Birth Date _____ Age _____

Fall Grade _____ Allergies or other medical conditions _____

Parent's Name _____ Name of Adult picking up child _____

Daytime Phone _____ Evening Phone _____ Emerg./Cell _____

Address _____ City,State _____ Zip _____

Student's T-shirt size: Adult XL L M S *Child L(14-16) M(10-12) S(6-8) XS(2-4)* _____

I give my permission for my child to be photographed during VBS with the knowledge that such photos may appear on the St. Matthew's website, www.stmatthewssterling.org .

Signature: _____ Date: _____



(Use for Third Child in family)

Student's name _____ Birth Date _____ Age _____

Fall Grade _____ Allergies or other medical conditions _____

Parent's Name _____ Name of Adult picking up child _____

Daytime Phone _____ Evening Phone _____ Emerg./Cell _____

Address _____ City,State _____ Zip _____

Student's T-shirt size: Adult XL L M S *Child L(14-16) M(10-12) S(6-8) XS(2-4)* _____

I give my permission for my child to be photographed during VBS with the knowledge that such photos may appear on the St. Matthew's website, www.stmatthewssterling.org .

Signature: _____ Date: _____

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church
201 East Frederick
Sterling, VA 20164

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Join us next Sunday at one of the following services:

- 8:00am Rite One Service
- 9:15am Contemporary Service
- 10:30am Traditional Family Rite Two Service

Deadline for Submissions. All content for the **AUGUST** newsletter must be submitted by **July 15**. Content can be submitted in hardcopy or on disk to the newsletter mailbox in the Church office. Content may also be emailed to **Newsletter@stmatthewssterling.org**.