

# NEWSLETTER

Saint Matthew's Episcopal Church, Sterling, VA

[www.stmatthewsterling.org](http://www.stmatthewsterling.org)

## June 2003



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# Saint Matthew's Episcopal Church

## Calendar of Events - June 2003

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Relay for Life 7 P - Prayer Meeting	2 7 P - Boy Scouts 7 P - English Classes 7 P - VBS Meeting	3 9 A - Classroom of Discovery 7 P - AA Meeting	4 2 P - Reading classes	5 9 A - Flower Ministry 3:30 P - Girl Scouts 4 P - Reading classes 6:30 P - Girl Scouts 7 P - Music Rehearsal 7:30 P - Worship Commission	6 9 A - Discovery play group 4 P - Reading classes 5:30 P - Sanctuary reserved	7 9 A - Flower Ministry 3 P - G-3 Study Group 7 P - AA Meeting
8 9:15 A - English Classes Graduation 2 P - Loudoun Chorale concert 5 P - G3/Youth Group 7 P - Prayer Meeting	9 7 P - English Classes 7 P - Boy Scouts	10 9 A - Classroom of Discovery 7 P - AA Meeting	11	12 9 A - Flower Ministry 6 P - Girl Scouts 7 P - Music Rehearsal	13 9 A - Discovery playgroup 5:30 P - Sanctuary reserved	14 8 A - Men's Breakfast 9 A - Flower Ministry 7 P - AA Meeting
15 12 P - Summer School Party and Trailer Open House 7 P - Prayer Meeting	16 7 P - Boy Scouts 7 P - English Classes	17 9 A - Classroom of Discovery 7 P - AA Meeting 7:30 P - Vestry Meeting	18	19 9 A - Flower Ministry 3:30 P - Girl Scouts 7 P - Music Rehearsal	20 9 A - Discovery playgroup 5:30 P - Sanctuary reserved 6 P - Girl Scouts	21 9 A - Flower Ministry 7 P - AA Meeting
22 11 A - Reading classes 5 P - G3/Youth Group 7 P - Prayer Meeting	23 7 P - Boy Scouts 7 P - English Classes	24 9 A - Classroom of Discovery 7 P - AA Meeting	25 Creation Fest 2003 4 P - Reading classes	26 Creation Fest 2003 9 A - Flower Ministry 6 P - Girl Scouts 7 P - Music Rehearsal	27 Creation Fest 2003 9 A - Discovery playgroup 5:30 P - Sanctuary reserved	28 Creation Fest 2003 8 A - Men's Breakfast 9 A - Flower Ministry 6 P - Pot Luck Dinner 7 P - AA Meeting
29 11 A - Reading classes 7 P - Prayer Meeting	30 7 P - Boy Scouts 7 P - English Classes					

## **LETTER FROM THE RECTOR...**

Dear Friends,

One of the things that typically happen when a church grows larger is that a smaller percentage of its members actually show up every week. Though new families are being added to the congregation, attendance may plateau or even begin to decline.

Perhaps one of the causes of this trend is that people don't actually have to be there. In a smaller church, most everyone has a job to do if they church is going to survive. Missing a Sunday just isn't an option! But as a church grows bigger, the volunteer pool also tends to grow. People might be able to go several Sundays without having any specific job to do, which in turn can foster the feeling that attendance isn't really necessary.

Maybe another reason for this tendency in many churches is that people can miss church without anyone knowing. When churches are smaller, everyone knows each other. They tend to only have one or two services. Even if there are two services, the people who are leaving one service see the people who are coming to the next. If someone isn't there on a Sunday morning, everyone notices. Phone calls are made. Concern is expressed. But as congregations develop scale (or size), it gets so much easier for people to simply slip through the cracks without anyone even being aware of their absence.

At St. Matthew's we are fortunate to be continuing in a high growth phase. So far, we haven't experienced the above trend—perhaps because so many of you know that church is about worshipping God, not just discharging a duty; and that God notices our absence (that we could not dedicate even an hour a week to Him) even when nobody else does. Perhaps it is because so many of you know that growing in our Christian faith—not some vague spirituality that really isn't spiritual at all but only a self-serving illusion—requires the kind of intentionality, focus, and yes commitment, that attending church brings. There may be those who can worship God on a golf course or fishing

stream, but it has never worked for me—I'm too darn busy trying to catch big fish!

I am proud to be the priest of such a church. It is my prayer that we will always first and foremost be a place of genuine faith where people come to know and love God as He is made know to us in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Faithfully,  
Rob+

*Responses to the above article, perhaps including reasons why you think people don't go to church regularly, are invited via the Message Board on our Website (you can post anonymously). To do so, please go to <http://www.stmatthewssterling.org>, enter the site by clicking on the picture, and click Message Board at the top.*

## **SUMMER SEMINARIAN**

We are pleased to announce that once again we will have a Seminarian from Virginia Theological Seminary with us this summer. Her name is Jennifer McKenzie, and I know you will give a warm St. Matthew's welcome. Read a message from Jennifer on page 4.

## **SUMMER SERVICES**

After considering at some length several proposals for a changed Summer Service Schedule, we have decided to leave our services and our service times unchanged. That is, they will remain at 8, 9:15, and 10:30, each with their own unique character.

## **PENTECOST SUNDAY**

June 8th is the Sunday of Pentecost this year. You are cordially invited to help us celebrate by wearing red—the color associated with the fire of the Holy Spirit. As Pentecost is also widely regarded as the birthday of the church, you are also invited to join us after services in the Parish Hall for a slice of cake. Finally, we'd like to have the Gospel of the day read in a variety of languages. If you'd be interested in reading the Gospel in a language other than English, please let us know!

## DID YOU KNOW?

We now have the Certificate of Occupancy for our Portable Classrooms. With four classrooms and about 1800 square feet of space available, we enter a whole new chapter in what is possible for us!

Already we've made classrooms available for a Reading Enrichment Programs sponsored by George Mason University. Because we can offer our space at a negligible cost, they can then use the money saved to offer scholarships to the underprivileged and give them a shot at obtaining a quality of life that otherwise would not be possible. It is one more powerful way that St. Matthew's is reaching out into our community.

We are also able to move several of our Sunday school classes and G-3 into the Portables as well. This includes the teen class, which met in the room directly off the back of the church with only a thin divider between the two (which allowed for a good bit of noise bleeding from one into the other). And that is just the beginning!

With a nice fresh coat of paint that matches our building (also newly painted), professionally crafted decking, a concrete side walk just poured to give better access, and the beginnings of some beautiful landscaping that really sets it apart, it really looks great.

Thanks to all of you who gave so generously in so many ways to make this dream a reality!

## SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

The last day of regular Sunday School for all ages will be June 15th. We will have an Activity Sunday. Following the 10:30 service, we will have a picnic to celebrate the end of a great year and to **christen** the trailer. All are invited.

During the summer holidays, we will be offering a video series for the kids - more details to follow.

## NEWS FROM CYNTHIA

Grace and peace in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to my St. Matthew's family! Rob has conveyed to me your interest in my ministry as I complete my seminary studies. I am grateful for your continuing regard for me; rest assured it is reciprocated.

I have answered a call to be Assistant Rector and Director of Christian Education at Christ Church, Kensington, Maryland, under the rectorship of the Rev. Dr. William Hague. The church is located near Chevy Chase, just outside the Beltway on Connecticut Avenue. It is a vibrant, growing suburban parish with lots of families and children. My duties will include the supervision of all aspects of Christian formation, from preschool through youth to adult programs. This position will really tap into my teaching background! Officially I begin June 1, although I will be attending the annual Christ Church Parish retreat the preceding weekend.

Rich and I have no immediate plans to move. Remaining in Arlington maintains Ben's in-state student status at the University of Virginia, and the commute is not too bad, especially if I avoid the Beltway during rush hour!

I have spoken with Jennifer McKenzie, who I understand will be your summer seminarian, and filled her ear with good things about St. Matthew's. I hope you and she have a wonderful time together!

God willing, I will be ordained to the diaconate on June 14 at the Falls Church. Be on the lookout for the invitation I will send to the St. Matthew's office. It would be wonderful to see you there!

It gives me joy to consider that, though you and I will be working on opposite sides of the Potomac, we will be toiling in the same vineyard. Godspeed to you all.

Your sister,  
Cynthia

## VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

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.

- **SCUBA begins July 28<sup>th</sup> and continues through August 1<sup>st</sup>.** With Potomac Falls Episcopal Church, we have a greater opportunity to reach more children. **We are hoping to host two sessions (morning and evening) during the week.** Registration forms are in the narthex and this newsletter. During the evening session, divers will meet each day from 5:30 pm until 8:30 pm (Dinner is included!). We will be hosting a morning session from 9 am until 12 noon during the same week, same cost, and same location. Select your preference for the morning or evening session to meet your families' needs.
- **PARENTS:** Please register your children (age 4 through rising 5<sup>th</sup> 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.

FOR MORE INFO: Jodie Leach 703-421-6310 or email [JodieLeach2@aol.com](mailto:JodieLeach2@aol.com)

## SPIRITUAL FORMATION

The Spiritual Formation Committee is off and running. During May the committee met twice to begin the process of mapping the Spiritual Formation process here at Saint Matthew's. This process, which would apply to adults, young adults, high schoolers, middle schoolers, and young children, should help individuals progress their Christian life. Once the map is completed we will work on curriculums and activities to achieve the goals identified in the map. These curriculums and activities would include Christian education, Confirmation and First Communion classes, small group studies / workshops, and retreats. If you have an interest in this area, please come to a committee meeting. All are welcome. To find out when the next committee meeting will be held, please check the announcements found in your Sunday Bulletin or contact Richard Leach at 703-421-6310.

## ENGLISH CLASSES

The English classes for adults has been a great ministry for all of us involved. We invite you to our graduation ceremony on June 8 at our 9:15 am. service. A reception will follow afterwards. We have asked the students to invite their families and friends as well.

Thank you for your support and prayers,  
Leanna Wilson, Coordinator.

## LETTER FROM SUMMER SEMINARIAN

Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Jennifer McKenzie and I am a rising Senior at Virginia Theological Seminary. I have been married for 15 years to Ken and we have three children – Ian and Gaines who are kind and energetic 8-year-old twin boys, and Augusta, our precocious soon-to-be 4-year-old daughter. I am a life-long Episcopalian who has been a member of or worked in 11 different Episcopal churches in five different dioceses. I served as a youth minister for about 15 years in both parish and diocesan ministries, and in both full-time paid and part-time volunteer positions. I have also worked as a parish administrator, director of Christian Education and led the development of Baptismal ministries, spiritual formation groups, and Moms groups. Most recently I have served as seminarian at St. David's Parish in Washington, D.C. during the 2002-2003 academic year and will return there in the fall.

I love God and I love the people who are the Body of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ – his Church. Helping people to discover their spiritual gifts and to discern how God is working in their lives particularly energizes me. I also have found great joy in exploring God's Word in community and then together exploring ways to live into that Word through action.

*"For wherever two or three are gathered in my Name I am in the midst of them."* (Matthew 18:20) I look forward to gathering with you, the people of God at St. Matthew's, in the Name of Jesus Christ. I will have the privilege of spending most of the summer at St. Matthew's beginning on June 8th, 2003. Please introduce yourself to me (a few times!) I look forward to meeting you.

## POT LUCK DINNERS

The dates for the next few are June 28, and July 26. Dinner starts at 6pm. Any questions, call Alan Denko 703-450-6637.

## INTEGRATING CHRISTIAN PRACTICES INTO YOUR SUMMER

This summer at St. Matthew's you will have a chance to explore one of the most ancient and long-standing Christian practices: Benedictine Spirituality! This series of mini-retreats is based on the Rule of St. Benedict who lived during the sixth century when the Roman Empire was disintegrating. He found a way to lead people into a deeper experience of love and obedience to God. It has been said of Benedictine spirituality, "If anyone wishes to know his character and life more precisely, he may find it in the ordinances of the Rule of St. Benedict."

**Everyone** is invited to come to our "mini-retreats" as often as you are able. We will gather on Tuesdays and Thursdays from **July 1st – July 24th**. Led by our summer seminarian, Jennifer McKenzie, we will begin at 10:00 am with Morning Prayer, enjoy fellowship as we work, eat, and study together and end by 2:00 pm. Children of all ages are welcome and encouraged to join us. During our study time we will provide a program geared especially to children. Each Benedictine experience is an independent unit and so you may join us at any time during the course of the summer. The Rule of St. Benedict incorporates communal prayer, study, work, and table fellowship. So mark your calendars now! Invite a neighbor, bring your family, and expect an adventure in Christian Fellowship!!!

The list of topics for study will include: Praying the Scriptures, Hospitality, Simplicity, Prayer, Manual Labor, Rest, Stability, Conversion of Life, Obedience, and Life as Pilgrimage. We will be doing significant work projects around the church so prepare and bring a hearty sack lunch and wear comfortable clothing!!!

## **G-THREE HAPPENINGS**

We've had a very exciting May! We ran the 9:15 and 10:30 services on May 4<sup>th</sup>. There have been lots of compliments on how exciting it was to have the youth lead the service, and what a great job they all did. Afterwards we had a party at Tom's house, with the only casualty being a pair of glasses. We had a good time; everyone connected and had a great time together. We had a couple great youth group evenings, with a really large turnout. We had a lot of fun talking and playing around together.

We have been able to begin using the trailer regularly. Two televisions, a VCR, a Nintendo 64 game system and a sofa have already been donated to the trailer (and we are making GREAT use of them all). We could always use more for the trailer! While a big screen TV would always be nice, videos for the VCR or games for the Nintendo 64 would be appreciated. Furniture to actually put the TV's on would also be great.

June has a lot of great events happening. On May 31<sup>st</sup> and June 1<sup>st</sup> we will be going to Potomac Falls High School for the Relay for Life which benefits the American Cancer Society. We will be involved in several ways – selling glow lanterns; taking part in the relay for 2 hours between 7 and 9 on May 31<sup>st</sup>; pitching tents and staying the night; having fun.

On Saturday June 7<sup>th</sup> we'll be getting together from 3 to 6, at the church, for a study group. Everyone can work together or with the adults to discuss problems, get advice and simply study. We'll be ordering pizza and having soda while we get in that last bit of studying.

One of the biggest events we'll have is going to take place in June. We'll be going to the Creation Festival in Mt. Union, Pennsylvania for 4 days – June 25-28! We'll see some great speakers and hear a LOT of great music! At night we'll be sacked out in tents in a big field. All and all it should be a great retreat!

Anyone interested in helping out with any of these events would be greatly appreciated. I know we have some teachers who could help with the study session, music lovers and campers to help with Creation Fest, or planners for some other great events.

We have lots of pictures from our events. If you see any you would like to keep, please contact Tom and he'll be happy to get you copies. To sign-up for any of the events or help out please contact Tom Leary at YouthMinister@stmatthewssterling.org or by phone at (703) 858-1410.

## **STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Our plan for the future has begun and the first steps have been taken by the committee with two meetings since my last report. The committee has six members with a lot of work in front of us. The planning process will include eight steps

1. Ministry Analysis – internal audit from the leadership and a congregation survey
2. Value Discovery – what are the values that guide us
3. Vision development – discovering what God and our hearts see that St. Matthew's represents
4. Mission development – what we want St. Matthew's to become
5. Strategy – creation of the roadmap to reach our Mission while maintaining our Values and Vision. For this we will use the Balanced Scorecard tool to create our objectives, targets, measures and link all the activities at St. Matthew's to our one mission which will identify those for our focus.
6. Strategy Implementation – putting the plan in action
7. Ministry contingencies – monitoring of our implementation and adjusting for unexpected changes
8. Ministry Evaluation – the monitoring of our implementation to ensure targets are reached, focus maintained and measures applied.

So far, we are on Step 1. The internal audit and the preparation of the survey will last into June. Our meetings are providing a significant amount of dialogue and ideas but a common theme runs through the committee that the congregation of St. Matthew's has a strong spiritual and meaningful love of God. To know and share God's love is a true reflection of St. Matthew's.

# 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](mailto: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](http://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](http://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](http://www.stmatthewssterling.org) .

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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

**NON-PROFIT ORG.**  
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**PERMIT NO. 9**

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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 **JULY** newsletter must be submitted by **June 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**.