



Saint
Matthew's
Episcopal Church

Newsletter

September 2008

201 East Frederick Drive • Sterling VA 20164



Photo by Karrie Anderson Welbern

*Enlighten by thy Holy Spirit those who teach and those who learn,
that, rejoicing in the knowledge of thy truth, they may worship thee
and serve thee from generation to generation.*

+

From the collect "For Education" ~ The Book of Common Prayer

SEPTEMBER 2008

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31							
16	PENTECOST Eucharist Rite I Contemporary	Labor Day Free to Live 7:00 PM Ministerio Cristiano Vida Nueva	9:00 AM Class- room of Discovery 7:00 PM AA 7:00 PM Band rehearsal: 9:15 service 7:00 PM Building Committee	9:00 AM Class- room of Discovery 12:00 PM AA	9:00 AM Class- room of Discovery 6:00 PM Interior Renovation Commit- tee 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal 10:30am Service	7:00 PM Ministerio Cristiano Vida Nueva	7:30 AM Men's group 5:00 PM Eucharist Rite II 7:00 PM AA 7:00 PM Ministerio Cristiano Vida Nueva
7							
17	PENTECOST Eucharist Rite I Contemporary	9:00 AM Class- room of Discovery 7:00 PM Free to Live 7:00 PM Ministerio Cristiano Vida Nueva	9:00 AM Class- room of Discovery 6:30 PM Outreach Committee 7:00 PM AA 7:00 PM Band rehearsal: 9:15 service 7:30 PM Boy	9:00 AM Class- room of Discovery 12:00 PM AA 7:30 PM WatCH	9:00 AM Class- room of Discovery 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal 10:30am Service	9:00 AM Class- room of Discovery 7:00 PM Ministerio Cristiano Vida Nueva	7:30 AM Men's group 8:00 AM Fellow- ship breakfast 5:00 PM Eucharist Rite II 7:00 PM AA 7:00 PM Ministerio Cristiano Vida
14							
18	PENTECOST Eucharist Rite I Contemporary	9:00 AM Class- room of Discovery 7:00 PM Free to Live 7:00 PM Ministerio Cristiano Vida Nueva	9:00 AM Class- room of Discovery 7:00 PM AA 7:00 PM Band rehearsal: 9:15 service 7:00 PM Vestry 7:30 PM Boy	9:00 AM Class- room of Discovery 12:00 PM AA 7:30 PM WatCH	9:00 AM Class- room of Discovery 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal 10:30am Service	9:00 AM Class- room of Discovery 7:00 PM Ministerio Cristiano Vida Nueva	7:30 AM Men's group 5:00 PM Eucharist Rite II 7:00 PM AA 7:00 PM Ministerio Cristiano Vida
21							
19	PENTECOST Eucharist Rite I Contemporary	9:00 AM Class- room of Discovery 7:00 PM Free to Live 7:00 PM Ministerio Cristiano Vida Nueva	9:00 AM Class- room of Discovery 7:00 PM AA 7:00 PM Band rehearsal: 9:15 service 7:00 PM Spiritual Formation Commit- tee	9:00 AM Class- room of Discovery 12:00 PM AA 7:00 PM WatCH	9:00 AM Class- room of Discovery 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal 10:30am Service	9:00 AM Class- room of Discovery 7:00 PM Ministerio Cristiano Vida Nueva	7:30 AM Men's group 8:00 AM Fellow- ship breakfast 5:00 PM Eucharist Rite II 7:00 PM AA 7:00 PM Ministerio Cristiano Vida
28							
20	PENTECOST Eucharist Rite I Contemporary	9:00 AM Class- room of Discovery 7:00 PM Free to Live 7:00 PM Ministerio Cristiano Vida Nueva	9:00 AM Class- room of Discovery 7:00 PM AA 7:00 PM Band rehearsal: 9:15 service 7:30 PM Boy Scouts	9:00 AM Class- room of Discovery 11:00 AM Girl Scout Mobile Shop 12:00 PM AA 7:00 PM WatCH	9:00 AM Class- room of Discovery 6:00 PM Interior Renovation Commit- tee 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal 10:30am Service	9:00 AM Class- room of Discovery 7:00 PM Ministerio Cristiano Vida Nueva	7:30 AM Men's group 5:00 PM Eucharist Rite II 7:00 PM AA 7:00 PM Ministerio Cristiano Vida Nueva

FROM THE RECTOR

Dear Friends,

I hope you've had a great summer, and have found some quality time to relax, have fun, and enjoy the company of family or friends. I hope you've had a chance to get away from it all, to do some traveling, or perhaps simply to take a "staycation" by staying home but letting the world turn without you as you make more time for the things you love.

Here at St. Matthew's, it's been a whirlwind summer. Four mission trips, Vacation Bible School with 90 volunteers (Yes, you read that number right), small groups, weekly youth group activities including a whitewater rafting trip, and so much more.

I personally have had a delightful summer, and find myself feeling more refreshed and renewed than I have in a long, long time. Our mission trip to Belize was physically demanding, but energized my

heart and soul. Our family vacation was absolutely perfect; a week where we did nothing so much as rest and be together (and snorkel and fish and feed the rays and swim with the sharks, but that still left plenty of time for napping and laying around reading a good book). Our summer interns have been a HUGE help, and have made it possible for me to work fewer hours a week and enjoy the somewhat slower pace of summer. My only complaint is that it has flown by so very fast...

Now we come to fall. It's time to pick up our old routines once again. For me, that means getting back in the gym and eating healthy once again (cutting back on the many pints of ice cream I've been savoring this summer.) For our kids and young adults, it means going back to school. For others it will mean getting back in the swing of weekly attendance at church and Sunday school.

It will also mean lots of new opportunities. Our new Assistant Rector,

Anne MacNabb, comes on board, and we'll all certainly want to be present September 7 to welcome her as only St. Matthew's can. We'll start our new Saturday evening service (finally!). Watch will resume on Wednesday, September 10, with a photo presentation and compelling stories from our summer mission trips. We'll be preaching a sermon series on Perfectionism that you won't want to miss (and maybe you'll even want to invite your friends). We'll have our fifth mission trip as we return once again to Mississippi where they still need all the help they can get.

It's an exciting time to be alive, to be at St. Matthew's, to walk in the goodness of God's grace. I look forward to walking further in God's plan and purposes with you.

Faithfully,
Fr. Rob+

FROM THE ASSISTANT RECTOR

Dear Friends,

I hope you all had a wonderful summer – time with friends, family and hopefully found time for yourselves. In today's busy world it seems that when summer comes and things are supposed to slow down, they, in fact, speed up. Gone are the days of the "lazy days of summer."

I understand there have been several mission trips this summer! I'm very excited to hear of your experiences there. I have found that mission trips guarantee a life changing experience that makes us appreciate what work we can do for the kingdom of God and see firsthand results... not to mention they make us appreciative of the abundance we enjoy at home.

As I begin my time with you, I'm looking forward to meeting each of you. St. Matthew's is an exciting community of faith and my family and I are looking forward to joining you. It may take me some time to learn everyone's name, please forgive me if I ask your name more than once, but it won't take me long. Again, I'm looking forward to meeting you and becoming a part of the St. Matthew's community.

Yours in Christ,
Anne+

Join us in welcoming Anne and her family to St. Matthews on Sunday, September 7th. More details can be found on page five under Community.



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FROM THE SENIOR WARDEN

PAUL SCHMID

"What if God was one of us...
Just a stranger on the bus
Trying to make His way home."
~ Joan Osborne

It has recently become fashionable to work on reducing one's carbon footprint as an act of stewardship. Also, gas is over four dollars a gallon! So I decided to try an experiment this week. I wanted to see if I could commute to work by just using my feet, riding a big bus, taking the subway, and then riding another smaller bus. Hopefully I could accomplish all this without missing any work, or worse yet becoming a complete stranger to my family. I live in Cascades near the Home Depot (not the Bus Depot) and I work about 18 miles away in Fairfax. Since it is all about the journey and not the destination, it also gave me something to write about this month.

When I first started researching the Loudoun Connector schedule, I was encouraged by the fact that three of their bus stops are actually located directly in front of churches. I recalled that there was once a trucking company called G.O.D. (which stood for Guaranteed Overnight Delivery) but I think it went out of business due to blasphemy and/or high diesel fuel costs so I didn't want to read too much into this. Nevertheless, it occurred to me that moving people is a common theme for God's work and I remained confident that I would not become lost.

I chose the stop in front of the Community Lutheran Church on Palisades Parkway which (in theory) was walking distance using the bike path that runs behind our house. I practiced walking there on a Saturday morning with my lollygagging kids who were also

hungry and it took us about an hour or so including a slight detour to the Corner Bakery. I concluded that it would probably take me about fifteen minutes in real life.

To increase my chances of getting two seats for myself (and my belongings), I selected the 5:17 AM pick-up time. Unfortunately, when I woke up at 4:00 AM I realized that unlike the practice walk that I took with my kids, this one was going to be into pitch black darkness and fog. Now I know it isn't totally normal for a grown man to be afraid of the dark. However, it is totally normal for a grown man not to want to trip and fall flat on his face or get an unexpected tree branch jammed into his eye... so I'm thinking that was probably what was causing my heart palpitations. Yet, I found myself walking faster than usual which in retrospect seems counter-intuitive since that would only make the imaginary stick in the eye hurt more; and as usual I was worrying about the wrong things.

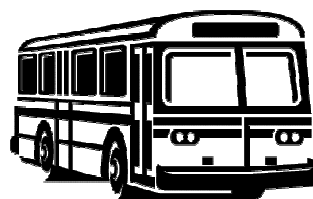
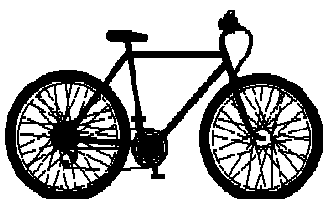
The real dangers on this walk turned out to be the sleeping deer that I surprised due to the fact that I was walking so fast. They leaped in front of me and ran through the woods crashing through the bushes making such incredibly loud noises that they caused me to jump higher than any professional basketball player ever could. As I contemplated a career change, I reminded myself that I still could not dribble or shoot - plus I look really bad in shorts. Therefore, I continued walking to the bus stop so I could resume my career as a software engineer. The entire walk took about two minutes.

Thankfully, the bus ride was not nearly as exciting. I was able to sleep some (and I had some bizarre dreams about poisonous deer who were in charge of dispensing fare cards at the metro station, and fortunately that startled me awake when it was time to get off the bus). The metro ride from West Falls Church to Vienna only took about thirty seconds, with ten of those seconds used at the Dunn Loring stop to open and close the doors. I brought stuff with me to read, but I didn't get past the table of contents. And the shuttle bus from the metro to my office was also right on time. I was pleasantly surprised to see how easy it was for me to use mass transit services. And although I had to wake-up much earlier than I usually do, I also got home much earlier than I usually do - in fact, the sun was still up!

At St. Matthew's I believe we have some of the capacity challenges similar to mass transit where we want each person to know that we are easily accessible while at the same time offer everyone enough space to worship comfortably without feeling overcrowded. The building committee is doing some pretty amazing work to forecast and fulfill the needs of the future.

I am certain that the mass transit systems are (and continue to be) underused but are nevertheless prepared to deal with the increasing demand caused by higher gas prices. I wonder what the spiritual equivalent of higher gas prices might be that would cause a widespread increase in the desire to know and share God's love. Whatever that might be, I know St. Matthew's will be ready.

"And yeah yeah God is great.
Yeah Yeah God is good."
~ Joan Osborne



COMMUNITY

Welcome to Anne MacNabb

To welcome Anne, our new Assistant Rector, to our St. Matthews community, we will be hosting an old-fashioned pounding on **Sunday, September 7th** after the 10:30am service.

Please bring one pound of "something" to help express our sincerest welcome to Anne and her family. Examples of possible pounding items include: chocolates, note cards, jelly beans, potpourri, soaps, etc... Be sure to wrap and decorate your pound to keep her guessing as to the contents.

Good-bye to Bill Podolski

It's time to say good-bye to our dear friend and Music Minister, Bill Podolski. Join us on **Sunday, September 14th** after the 10:30am service in the parish hall. Each family is encouraged to bring a card or note of thanks to wish Bill well on his new endeavor.

St. Matthew's Softball

The St. Matthew's softball team recently completed its second successful season in the Loudoun County Parks and Recreation Church Division #3 softball league. The team, which only won one game last year, improved its record to 5 wins and 16 losses this campaign. The early season was marred by several rain outs but that did not dampen the spirits of the lively gang in blue. The team entered the end of season tournament with a 4-14 record but finished strong. After losing the initial game of the double elimination tournament, St. Matt's fought back to win its second contest in spite of the fact that the team was short handed. The season ended in a loss, as it does for all teams except the eventual league champion, but as the players exited the field there was a constant refrain - "that's okay, we'll get them next year."

Congratulations and thanks to all who participated. The team successfully met its goal of having fun, winning a few games, and knowing and sharing God's love for each of us through athletic competition. If all of this sounds like fun to you - then consider joining us next year.



Two of our St. Matthews Stars are pictured above. Pete Hart (left) and Kenny Thayer (right).

REVERENCE

New Service in the Fall

Mark your calendar for our new Rite II Holy Eucharist service that will begin on Saturday, September 6th at 5:00 p.m.

OUTREACH

Mission Trip Update

There was something exceptionally wonderful about this year's mission trip to Pomona, Belize as it was the first time we had returned to a site. Many of us had stayed in touch with some of the villagers because we simply couldn't resist. We had established real relationships because they were so warm and welcoming last year and they were even more so once we arrived this year. We were welcomed back with open arms (and platefuls of delicious food – just like going to Grandma's house!) They remembered many of our names, had pictures of us, and apparently talked about us all year (as we did about them). Even the weather cooperated!

Our week of work began with Sunday service and Sunday school. We were blessed with time to visit and walk through the village passing out flyers to advertise our upcoming programs for the week. Sunday night we returned to Pomona for a lovely shared service. Pastor Wayne gave a very moving sermon about being tested and being intentional in our faith. We brought communion with us, too, to share all around.

Monday morning began with great excitement as we finally got to work on construction of the second story for Hope Preschool! It seemed a daunting task – over a thousand cinder blocks and a mound of sand were on the ground that we needed to get on the roof, with only a ladder to aid us. We, however, were not daunted. We simply formed an assembly line of sorts to pass them along and up the ladder. The sand simply got pulled up in a bucket by a rope. Not to fear, God was with us and saw to our accomplishments! Consequently, the construction work for the rest of the week was relatively easy. I have to say this work was a lot of fun. Very few, if any of us, had mixed cement and mortared cinder blocks before so we now have new skills.

The afternoons were filled with children. As we all know, Jodie runs a fabulous VBS program and it was no less so in Pomona. The kids were excited to return and some showed it by arriving at least an hour early every day. Leslie did a fabulous job with her music team and Chris Palmer stepped out as the emcee of the week. It was quite heartening to see the lingering effects of this program – later in the week many kids were still wearing their Monday craft (beaded necklaces with a cross) with lots of kids 'belting out' the songs they had been learning.

We were sustained and nourished by the church women who cooked for us morning, noon, and night. Not only did they nourish our bodies with delicious and fresh food, they were fulfilling spiritual nourishment as well. They are amazing examples of true believers and followers of Christ. Their hardships are many (imagine enduring your children going to bed hungry!) and yet every prayer uttered by them beings with, "Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Jesus". They are truly the most inspirational Christians I have ever met and when I feel my faith falter, I have only

them to think of and remind me I have all I need.

You would have been quite proud of our teens. They made themselves open and willing servants of the Lord that week and, truly, could we as a church have asked for more? I believe these teens will have even more grateful hearts and will be great examples to the younger kids for a long time to come.

So, thank you St. Matthew's, thank you! Thank you for your support both financially and prayerfully. Without you, this experience would not and could not have been as amazing as it was. I'm sure I speak for many that we can't wait to return and once again see, experience, and share God's amazing love and power.

~Vicki Nelson



SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Backpack Blessing

Save the date of **Sunday, September 7th**. All those attending school this fall (no age limit applies), Father Rob and the congregation of St. Matthews would like to bless you and your backpack for the upcoming school year. Please bring your backpack with you to the service you normally attend on September 7th.

Sunday School Begins Soon

An exciting new year of Sunday School will begin on **Sunday, September 14th**. Registration will start in late August, with forms available in the parish hall. Registration is free. Our Sunday School program is designed for children from age three through the eighth grade. Look for more information in the announcements in the worship bulletins as we approach the launch of this year's Sunday School program.

WATCH

WATCH (Wednesday At Church) is our name for the Saint Matthew's mid-week program on Wednesday evenings. This fall's WATCH programs start on September 10. Our first special evening, September 10th, starts at 7:30 p.m. in the parish hall. Please bring a dessert to share this first evening. Future weeks will include a simple supper at 7:00 p.m. Programs last from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Our first Wednesday together will include a photo presentation and stories and memories from the summer's three mission trips. Come by yourself or bring the whole family! Be part of a community of people of all ages growing into the "whole measure of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13, TNIV).

Farewell from the Summer Crew

So this is it for St. Matt's Summer Crew...

We can barely believe that summer's almost over! We've had four amazing months filled to the brim with all sorts of exciting adventures. We've gotten to know each other through challenging and deep small group discussions, working side by side at community service, taking trips together all over Virginia, and of course worshipping God together. We've gone camping and whitewater rafting in Pennsylvania, tubing near Harper's Ferry, and we've been at Regal Cinemas pretty much every Thursday night at midnight to see movie premieres. We've had ice cream parties, pizza and game nights, gone bowling and mini-golfing, and put on open-mic coffeehouses and barbecues.

That's just the beginning of all the stuff we've been able to do this summer, and we couldn't have done any of it without the support and love all of you at St. Matthew's have shown us. Thank you so much for giving us the opportunity to work, play, and worship with your kids—it's truly been a great blessing to us. We've enjoyed every minute of it and have loved getting to know everyone better. It's hard for us to leave after having such an amazing summer, but we're excited to see the great work that Anne, the new assistant rector is going to do at St. Matt's and with the youth program.

Thanks for everything—we've had a blast. St. Matthew's has been an incredible blessing to us and we'll miss you all desperately while we're away at college—we're already looking forward to coming back and seeing you all again!

~Alex Davenport, Christine Merola, and Chris Palmer

STEWARDSHIP

I hope everyone has picked-up their first half of 2008 giving statement. If you see any discrepancies, please let Erin Leary or me know so we can correct it.

Through June, 2008, our pledge income is down 7% from our budgeted forecast (in other words through June we have received 93% of our pledge budget). While I have every confidence that when we close the books on 2008 we will have received our pledge target, it is very helpful to us if pledge payments are kept up to date as we go through the year.

I urge you to keep your pledge current; however, I fully understand that some of us may have financial challenges that prevent us from doing so. If you are able, keeping

your pledge payments up to date is helpful to the Vestry so they can accurately evaluate the financial performance of the church.

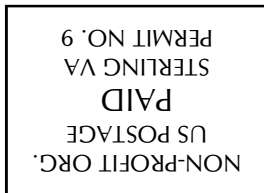
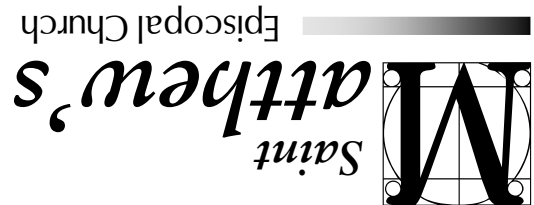
On the expense side, operating expenses are running a bit below budget. However, this is not compensating for the entire shortfall in revenue. Through June, our operating surplus has decreased by \$13K.

We remain in good financial shape, and with your help we will stay that way. Thank you for your continuing support.

May God bless you all,
Richard Leach

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

201 East Frederick Drive
Sterling VA 20164-2387



SAINT MATTHEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH • CAMERON PARISH

The Reverend C. Rob Merola • Rector

201 East Frederick Drive • Sterling VA 20164-2387

Telephone: 703-430-2121 • Fax: 703-430-2638

Saturday Service Time: 5:00 p.m. (Starting September 6th)

Sunday Service Times: 8:00 a.m. • 9:15 a.m. • 10:30 a.m.

Nursery provided at all Sunday services

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E-mail: officemanager@stmatthewssterling.org

Internet: <http://www.stmatthewssterling.org>

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Please note: deadline for submission to this newsletter is the first Friday of each month.

Content may be submitted in hardcopy to the newsletter mailbox in the church office,
or content may be sent by e-mail to newsletter@stmatthewssterling.org.