

ADVENT

GUIDE TO A GREAT CHRISTMAS

Finding Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love



Third Sunday of Advent
Sunday, December 15, 2024



CRAZY CHRISTMAS SWEATERS & HOT COCOA BAR

Sunday is always a fun day at St. Matt's. Join us on Sunday, Dec. 22 at 10:30AM for our annual Christmas Sweater and Hot Cocoa Day. Put on your favorite holiday sweater and join us for a festive time with hot cocoa and lots of toppings!

Awkward family photo opportunities are optional, but highly encouraged!

If you'd like to learn more about our Sunday Fun Day planning, email Miriam at Office@stmmts.org



CHRISTMAS AT ST. MATT'S STMMTS.ORG/CHRISTMAS

Invite a friend this Christmas!

Christmas Eve

3 PM - Children's Christmas Nativity Play and communion

5 PM - Classic Christmas Mass with soloists and strings

8 PM - Festival Christmas Service with live band

11 PM - Traditional Midnight Mass with choir and strings and oboe

Christmas Day

10 AM - Christmas Worship

WELCOME

We know that going to church or to a new church for the first time can be nerve-racking. We want to help make your first experience at St. Matthew's a great one!

If this is your first visit to Saint Matthew's, we welcome you. Please join us between services for coffee, tea and refreshments in the Parish Hall. For more information about our community, visit our website www.stmmts.org. We are so glad you are here!



COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

All baptized Christians are welcome to participate in communion. If you would like to receive, simply place one hand on top of the other, palms up, and the priest will place bread in your hand. You may then consume the wafer. If for any reason you prefer to receive a blessing, simply cross your arms across your chest and the priest will give you a blessing. Gluten free wafers are available upon request.

Would you like to learn more about baptism? Please visit our website: stmmts.org/baptism or contact our office via email at Office@stmmts.org or phone at 703-430-2121.

INTERCESSORY PRAYER LIST

The Saint Matthew's intercessory prayer list is for those in or related to our community who are in need of prayer. It is designed so that all members of our community can pray for each other on an ongoing basis. In order to pray for those on the list, simply ask God to be with them and help them in any way needed - God knows what is going on, so we don't need to.

Please pray for the following:

Sean, Sieg, Chuck, Lea, Bonnie, Arthur, John G, Glo, Deb, Teresa, Mel, Eric, Debbie, Marshall, Ruth, Rennie, Arianna, Jeanine, Hunter, Amy, Jackie, Ann, Kay, Jane, Panita, Mary Ann, Sharp Family, Amelia, Kassadi, Samantha, Dawn, Rudy, Kay, Clarissa, Dottie, Jonathan, Ageanna, Becky, RL, Darla, Gerry, Jenny, Reena, Sarah, Brandi, Barbara, Michael, Peggy, Emmett, Cathleen, Ray, BMR, Asley, Robyn, Emma, Frances, Christy, Nick, Gus, Aldana, Clint, Chelsea, Edgar, Rusty, Anne, Shelby, Kiera, Marty, Greg, Candace, Kevin, John, Ome, Renee, Grace, Kristina, Fire and Hurricane Victims, Freya, Ava, Steve, Natalie, Kristen, Sophia, Sadie, Shaundra, Larry, Don, Fabiano, Diana, Phil, Luke, John, Brenda, Pete, Valorie, Cathy, Naomi, Dan, Christy, Dennis, Diane, Brent, Mary, Sybil, Judy, James, Rick, Avery, Emory, Mario, Molly, Cooper, Rose, Sarah, Jessica, Barbara, Jonathan, Jay, Amanda, Venessa, Desira, Rose, Sarah, Natalie D, Natalie S, Paul, Katy, Randy, Jean, Tony, and Martha.

If you or someone you care about are in need of Pastoral Care, please call 703-430-2121.

8 AM SERVICE

The Word of God

Entrance	
Opening Sentence	109
Light and peace, in Jesus Christ our Lord.	
Thanks be to God.	
Lighting of Advent Wreath	
Lessons	
First Reading • Zephaniah 3:14-20	
Canticle • 9: The First Song of Isaiah (Isaiah 12:2-6)	
Second Reading • Philippians 4:4-7	
Gospel • Luke 3:7-18	
Sermon	The Reverend C. Robert Merola, Jr.
Nicene Creed	358
Prayers of the People, Form VI	392
Confession and Absolution	393
Peace	360
Announcements	

The Holy Communion

Presentation of Tithes and Offerings	
<i>(An offertory plate is not passed at this service. If you wish to make a donation, the collection plate can be found at the back of the church, or donations are accepted online at www.stmmts.org/give)</i>	
<i>All things come of thee, O Lord,</i>	
<i>And of thine own have we given thee.</i>	
Great Thanksgiving • Eucharistic Prayer B	367
The Lord's Prayer	364
Breaking of the Bread	364
Invitation to Communion	364
Communion of the People	
Post-Communion Prayer	366
Blessing	366
Procession into the World	366

9:30 AM SERVICE

The Word of God

Welcome

Lighting of Advent Wreath and Prayer

Song • What a Glorious Night

Song • Jesus Christ is Born

Gospel • Luke 3:7-18

Sermon

The Reverend C. Robert Merola, Jr.

Prayers of the People

Peace

Announcements

The Holy Communion

Offertory

(An offertory plate is not passed at this service. If you wish to make a donation, the collection plate can be found at the back of the church, or donations are accepted online at www.stmtts.org/give)

Great Thanksgiving (stand through Communion)

Eucharistic Prayer

Sanctus • Christmas This Year

The Lord's Prayer

Breaking of the Bread

Communion of the People

Song • Make Room

Closing Prayer (stand through dismissal)

Blessing

Closing Song • Make Way

Dismissal

11 AM SERVICE

The Word of God

Welcome

Opening Sentence 109

Light and peace, in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Lessons

First Reading • Zephaniah 3:14-20

Canticle • 9: The First Song of Isaiah (Isaiah 12:2-6)

Second Reading • Philippians 4:4-7

Gospel • Luke 3:7-18

Sermon The Reverend C. Robert Merola, Jr.

Nicene Creed 358

Prayers of the People

Confession and Absolution 393

Peace 360

Announcements

The Holy Communion

Offertory Anthem • Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming Praetorius

Presentation of Tithes and Offerings

Doxology • Praise God from Whom all Blessings Flow

Great Thanksgiving • Eucharistic Prayer B 367

Sanctus • Holy, Holy, Holy • S130

The Lord's Prayer 364

Breaking of the Bread 364

Invitation to Communion

Communion of the People

Communion Hymn • #56 vs. 1, 2, 3, 7, 8 O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Post-Communion Prayer 366

Blessing

Procession into the World • Hymn #67 Comfort, Comfort Ye My People

Dismissal 366

ADVENT DEVOTIONALS

stmmts.org/Advent

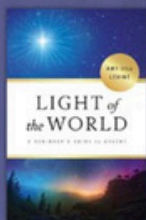
ADVENT DEVOTIONALS

We invite you to pick up a printed Advent devotional, Practicing Peace with All your Heart, Soul, Strength, and Mind by Living Compass and enjoy online at stmmts.org/advent.

We have plenty to share so feel free to pick up one to share with a friend or neighbor.



BREAD OF LIFE
BOOK GROUP
ADVENT STUDY



BREAD OF LIFE BOOK GROUP MONDAYS AT 7PM

This December, we invite you to explore the profound meaning of Advent through *Light of the World: A Beginner's Guide to Advent* by Amy-Jill Levine.

We meet every Monday at 7 PM (in-person and on Zoom) for engaging discussions that inspire, challenge, and connect us in faith. Whether you're new to Bible study or a seasoned reader, you'll find this four-week journey a meaningful way to prepare for Christmas.

Email office@stmmts.org for Zoom link if you'd like to join virtually.

GIVING TREE

ADOPT A FAMILY OR PICK A SINGLE GIFT

GIVING TREE 2024

GIFTS DUE TODAY - DEC. 15

Thanks for participating in our annual Giving Tree. Drop off labeled, unwrapped gifts by December 15.

GAME NIGHT

GAME NIGHT ON BLACK FRIDAY! FRIDAY, DECEMBER 27, 6-9PM

Do you love tabletop games? Uno, Machi Koro, Star Wars Deck Building, King of Tokyo, Tether, Forbidden Desert, Who Killed Dr. Lucky? There are so many great games! Which is your favorite? Bring your favorite game and a snack to share, as we hang out and try new games.

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church

FRIDAY FLASH

Weekly Newsletter

Email office@stmmts.org
to be added to the
distribution list today!

FRIDAY FLASH/NEWSLETTER

Email Office@stmmts.org to receive our weekly email, The Friday Flash, or monthly printed newsletter.



YOUTH GROUP

Activities, connection and conversation designed specifically for our middle and high school students.

WINTER BREAK LOCK-IN

Friday, December 27, 6 PM –

Saturday, December 28, 8AM

Get ready for games, food, movies, and more! Our winter lock-in is one you won't want to miss.

Scan the QR Code to stay updated with all the youth happenings.



ALPHA! Sunday, December 15 from 5PM–7PM

Join Ben and friends for a chance to enjoy dinner, games, and deep conversation about faith and life. This is our last Alpha for 2024.

DONUTS & DISCOVERY Sundays at 9:30AM

Middle and high school students are invited to start Sunday mornings with a treat and some thought-provoking conversations at Donuts and Discovery. Join us for donuts and engaging faith discussions tailored just for you. It's the perfect way to connect with friends, explore big questions, and deepen your understanding of faith.

CHILDREN'S NATIVITY PLAY STMTTS.ORG/CHRISTMASPLAY

All children and youth are invited to participate in this fun retelling of the Christmas story. Register today using the link above. Rehearsals are held each Sunday at 11AM.

Teens are also needed to assist with tech, costumes, welcome team, song leading, and more.

Questions? Contact Hilary at FaithFactory@stmmts.org



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL JULY 21–25, 2025

VBS 2025 will guide kids on the ultimate Alaskan adventure. Pointing them toward Jesus, True North VBS shows them that he is a faithful friend we can always trust—our True North. Register today or share with a friend at stmmts.org/VBS





**CHRISTMAS COOKIE DAYS
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15 & 29**

Gingerbread, oatmeal chocolate chip, snickerdoodle, white chocolate cranberry, toffee, chocolate chip and more! Who doesn't love cookies during the holidays? Join us for coffee hour at 10:30 AM on Sunday, December 15th and Sunday, December 29. Indulge in some favorite holiday treats while enjoying time with friends after worship. Do you have a favorite cookie? Bring some to share.



**CHRISTMAS DEDICATIONS
DUE: SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15**

Remember a loved one or give thanks for blessings received through the dedication of Christmas flowers. Donations of any amount are graciously accepted as we decorate the church to celebrate Christmas. Submit a dedication online at stmatts.org/flowers. Payment can be made online at anytime at stmatts.org/give—please indicate flowers in the memo line.



**MIDWEEK MINDFUL MOMENT
WITH ZORANA ON WEDNESDAYS**

Take a break from the hustle and join Zorana for a Mindful Moment. This is a peaceful 30-minute Zoom session designed to help you reconnect with God while enjoying meditation and a chance for women's fellowship – perfectly timed for midweek renewal. Bring your favorite cup of tea at 8PM on Wednesdays in December.

Zoom Meeting ID 747 4043 8363
Passcode: Stmatts



**PARISH WORK DAY
SAT., DECEMBER 21, 9AM-12PM**

Join us as we help prepare the grounds and church for a glorious Christmas celebration. Stop by for an hour or two. There are jobs for all ability levels. Enjoy coffee & donuts!

We'll also be meeting at 12PM on Sunday, December 22 to set-up for the Christmas pageant. We'd love to have your help setting up chairs, decorating trees, and



3 ADVENT

Third Sunday of Advent



Revised Common Lectionary

Sunday, December 15, 2024

COLLECT

Traditional

STIR UP THY POWER, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let thy bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be honor and glory, world without end. *Amen.*

Contemporary

STIR UP YOUR POWER, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. *Amen.*

FIRST READING: Zephaniah 3:14-20

SING ALOUD, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem! The LORD has taken away the judgments against you, he has turned away your enemies. The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more. On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak. The LORD, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love; he will exult over you with loud singing as on a day of festival. I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it. I will deal with all your oppressors at that time. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and

renown in all the earth. At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the LORD.

Refrain

Sing the praises of the LORD.

Canticle 9: The First Song of Isaiah (Isaiah 12:2-6)

Surely, it is God who saves me; * I will trust in him and not be afraid.

For the Lord is my stronghold and my sure defense, * and he will be my Savior.

Therefore you shall draw water with rejoicing * from the springs of salvation.

And on that day you shall say, * Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his Name;

Make his deeds known among the peoples; * see that they remember that his Name is exalted.

Sing the praises of the Lord, for he has done great things, * and this is known in all the world.

Cry aloud, inhabitants of Zion, ring out your joy, * for the great one in the midst of you is the Holy One of Israel.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit * as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

SECOND READING: Philippians 4:4-7

REJOICE IN THE LORD ALWAYS; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

GOSPEL: Luke 3:7-18

JOHN SAID TO THE CROWDS that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise." Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages." As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and

to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.” So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

The Scripture quotations are from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright © 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Used by permission. Collects and Psalter translation are from The Book of Common Prayer, 1979.

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 **CHURCH
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BLA0103 / 301003-3

THIS WEEK AT ST. MATT'S

Sunday, December 15th

- 8:00 am - Rite II Worship Service
- 9:30 am - Festival Worship Service
- 9:30 am - Faith Factory
- 9:30 am - Middle & High School Student
- 11:00 am - Christmas Nativity Play Rehearsal
- 11:00 am - Classic Worship Service
- 5:00 pm - Youth Group: Alpha

Monday, December 16th

- 12:00 pm - Social Time with Candace
- 5:30 pm - Girl Scout Troop 2157
- 7:00 pm - Bread of Life
- 7:30 pm - Free to Live

Tuesday, December 17th

- 9:00 am - Staff Meeting
- 12:00 pm - HRTS/Backpack Buddies Packing
- 6:30 pm - Alcoholics Anonymous
- 7:00 pm - Education for Ministry
- 7:00 pm - Band Rehearsal
- 8:00 pm - Compline (on line)

Wednesday, December 18th

- 12:00 pm - Alcoholics Anonymous
- 8:00 pm - Women's NA Group
- 8:00 pm - Mindful Ministry with Zorana

Thursday, December 19th

- 6:15 pm - Girl Scouts
- 7:30 pm - Choir Rehearsal

Friday, December 20th

- 7:00 pm - Old Dominion Dancers
- 8:00 pm - Compline (on line)

Saturday, December 21st

- 8:00 am - Men's Group
- 9:00 am - Altar Guild Polishing
- 9:00 am - Parish Work Day
- 10:00 am - Choir Rehearsal
- 6:30 pm - Alcoholics Anonymous
- 7:00 pm - Narcotics Anonymous
- 8:30 pm - Narcotics Anonymous

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

- December 15th: Kathleen Bellamy, Joshua Hart, Logan Bidlack
- December 18th: Diana Wright
- December 20th: Mary Buitrago, JR Franks
- December 21st: David Lathrop

ATTENDANCE December 8, 2024

Time or Place	Attendance Online	Attendance In-Person
8:00 AM	25	24
9:30 AM	29	179
11:00 AM	14	86
Faith Factory		24
Youth Group		17

HELP SUPPORT ST. MATTHEW'S MINISTRIES



GIVE ONLINE



stmmts.org/give



venmo



@stmmtssterling



CASH OR
CHECK

Checks can be made payable to "St. Matthew's Church"

For more ways to give and information on automatic giving:

stmmts.org/give

WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

In-Person & Online

8:00AM | This is a traditional communion service using Rite II from the Book of Common Prayer.

9:30AM | This is a vibrant communion service with our very own live band. If you are looking for a joyous family service with some of the best music around, this is the service for you.

11:00AM | A classic communion service with our fabulous choir. We use Rite II from the Book of Common Prayer.

Compline (evening prayer) Tuesday & Friday at 8pm on Facebook

Online Worship
stmmts.org/live

Sunday services are broadcast on Facebook and YouTube.

St. Matthew's Staff & Vestry

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Andrew Wright, Junior Warden

Craig Dubishar

Bob Henry

Julie Kane

Sharon Muniz

Stephanie Zebrowski

Service Volunteers

Ushers | Fred Brittain, Emory Henderson, Maria Palmer, Cheryl Gilligan, Lorenzo Martini

Lectors | Debbie Majewski, Carolyn Wright, Katie Robertson

Eucharistic Ministers/LEMs | Darrell Breed, Cindy Steinman, Brian Bellamy, Gerry Wardell

Tellers | Dan Robertson

Altar Guild | Ann Lowden, Adrienne Miller, Sue Reier