

To Know and Share God's Love

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church

First Sunday after Christmas
Sunday, December 29, 2024 • 8:00am

JANUARY SERIES

THE MOST IMPORTANT YEAR OF YOUR LIFE

THE MOST IMPORTANT YEAR OF YOUR LIFE

Join us this January for our new sermon series. We get just one 2025—live it well. Your story. Your chapter. What will you and God write together this year?

Start the year with us as we explore the powerful potential of 2025 and how we can align our lives with God's purpose. Whether you're seeking new direction or reaffirming your faith, 2025 can be your most important year yet.



Episcopal
101

EPISCOPAL 101

JANUARY 8, 15, and 22

Where did the Episcopal Church come from? What makes us unique? Are we Catholic lite? What's with all the funny costumes? Join Genevieve Davis for two weeks of fun exploring "those Episkopals" (games! activities! group discussion!) on January 8th and 15th, followed by an AMA (ask me anything – yes! we mean it!) session with both Genevieve and Fr. Rob on January 22.

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, Martha, and Tony.

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

Opening Prayer	
Acclamation and Collect for Purity	355
Gloria	356
Collect of the Day (contemporary)	Insert
Lessons	
First Reading • Isaiah 61:10–62:3	
Psalm • 147:13-21	
Second Reading • Galatians 3:23-25; 4:4-7	
Gospel • John 1:1-18	
Sermon	Kara Laughlin, Seminarian
Nicene Creed	358
Prayers of the People, Form III	387
Confession of Sin and Absolution	359-360
Peace	360
Announcements & Welcome	

The Holy Communion

Presentation of Tithes and Offerings

(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)

*All things come of thee, O Lord,
And of thine own have we given thee.*

Great Thanksgiving • Eucharistic Prayer A	361
The Lord's Prayer	364
Breaking of the Bread	364
Invitation to Communion	364
Communion of the People	
Post-Communion Prayer	365
Blessing	
Procession into the World	366

9:30 AM SERVICE

The Word of God

Welcome

Opening Prayer

Opening Songs (stand through the Gospel)

Song •

Song •

Gospel • John 1:1-18

Sermon

Kara Laughlin, Seminarian

Prayers of the People

Peace

Announcements & Welcome

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

Sanctus •

The Lord's Prayer

Breaking of the Bread

Communion of the People

Song •

Closing Prayer (stand through dismissal)

Blessing

Closing Song •

Dismissal

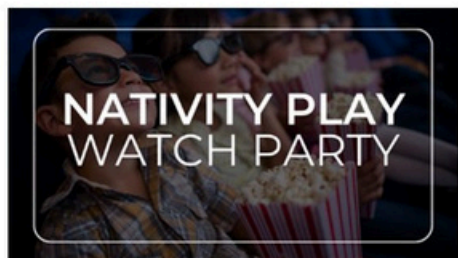
11 AM SERVICE

The Word of God

Processional Hymn • #87 • Hark! The Herald Angels Sing (all verses)	
Opening Acclamation	299
Gloria • Hymn #96 • Angels We Have Heard on High (refrain only)	
Collect of the Day (Contemporary)	Insert
Lessons	
First Reading • Isaiah 61:10–62:3	
Psalm • 147:13-21	
Second Reading • Galatians 3:23-25; 4:4-7	
Gospel • John 1:1-18	
Sermon	Kara Laughlin, Seminarian
Nicene Creed	358
Prayers of the People	
Confession of Sin and Absolution	359-360
Peace	360
Announcements & Welcome	

The Holy Communion

Offertory Anthem • One Bright Star	by John Jarvis
Presentation of Tithes and Offerings	
Doxology • Hymn #380 • Praise God from Whom all Blessings Flow (verse 3)	
Great Thanksgiving • Eucharistic Prayer A	361
Sanctus • Hymnal S130 • Holy, Holy, Holy Lord	
The Lord's Prayer	364
Breaking of the Bread	364
Invitation to Communion	
Communion of the People	
Communion Hymn • #89 • It Came Upon a Midnight Clear (all verses)	
Post-Communion Prayer	365
Blessing	
Procession into the World • #109 • The First Nowell (verses 1, 2, & 3)	
Dismissal	366



NATIVITY WATCH PARTY SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29, 9:30AM

Our children have been working so hard to bring the nativity story to life on Christmas Eve, let's enjoy it one more time! Sunday, December 29 at 9:30AM, preschool and elementary aged children are invited to a Nativity Play Watch Party in classroom 1. Popcorn provided!



BREAD OF LIFE BOOK GROUP MONDAYS AT 7PM

This January, we invite you to join us as we continue our study of Barbara Brown Taylor's *An Altar in the World*.

This thought provoking book invites us to discover the sacred in the ordinary, weaving together spirituality and everyday life in a meaningful way.

We meet every Monday (in-person and on Zoom) for discussions that inspire, challenge, and connect us in faith. Whether you're new to Bible study or a seasoned reader, we invite you to join us. Email office@stmmts.org for the Zoom link if you'd like to join virtually.



2030 BOWLING-JAN. 12, 12:30PM

Whether you're single, married, or starting a family, our 2030 group is a great opportunity for those in their 20's and 30's to build friendships and community. Join Robby and Emily Stevens, to connect with others and enjoy an afternoon of fun. Meet at Bowlero at 46490 Woodson Dr., Sterling. Cost is approx. \$30 for bowling and shoe rental.

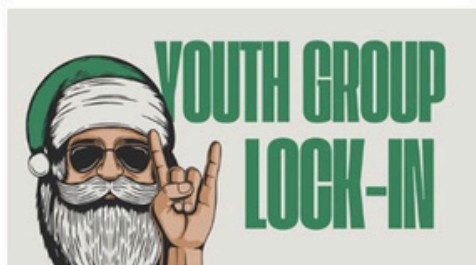
Need child care? Contact Miriam in the church office—we'd love to help.



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



YOUTH GROUP

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

BOWLING AT BOWLERO

Sunday, January 5, 12:30PM

Kick off the new year with bowling! Meet at Bowlero 46940 Woodson Dr. Sterling. Cost is \$12.

SNOWBOARDING

Sunday, January 26, 11AM-4PM

Depart immediately after the 9:30AM service to carpool to Harpers Ferry. Cost \$22. Equipment rentals and lunch are additional.

Scan the QR Code to stay updated with all the youth happenings, or contact our Youth Minister, Ben at Ben.Merola@stmtts.org.



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.

FAITH FACTORY KIDS LABS

Children's ministry gets messy with a special lesson each Sunday in January, followed by more messy fun during coffee hour at 10:30AM.

Jan. 5—Slime Sunday

We'll learn that life is messy, but Jesus helps us get through it. Then join us at coffee hour for karaoke and a silly string battle!

Jan. 12—Soap and Water Sunday

Celebrate the baptism of Jesus with some wet and wild fun. Then join us at coffee hour for a bounce house and games.

Jan. 19—Wacky Science Weekend


The Lord transforms us, just as Jesus transformed water into wine. Then join us at coffee hour for a visit with special animal friends.

Jan. 28—Faith Factory Fitness

Fun physical activities that show us how we are each important to the Lord, just like parts of a body. Then join us at coffee hour for a rock your body game of Twister and bubble ball battle.

WOW! What January. You won't want to miss it!

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

 @stmttssterling

 @StMatthewsEpiscopalChurch



BACKPACK BUDDIES STERLINGHELP.ORG

Backpack Buddies returns in 2025 with our first pack on Sunday, January 5 at 10:30AM. HRTS packs 280 bags of food each week to feed local school children. Pack with us on Tuesdays at 12pm in the Classrooms on the Hill, and the first Sunday of each month at 10:30am in the Parish Hall.

Do you know a teen looking for service hours? We are actively seeking people or companies interested in hosting neighborhood or company food drives.

Learn more about feeding children in our community by visiting the link above or contact Hilary at Hilary.Hultman-Lee@hrtsterling.org.



MEN'S GROUP SATURDAYS AT 8AM

All men are welcome to meet in the classrooms on the hill for fellowship, Bible study, and encouragement. Contact mensgroup@stmtts.org.



YEAR END GIVING

Diapers cost just \$.24 each, but an average baby needs five per day. Now imagine Maria, a mom of **18-month-old triplets—that's a lot of diapers!** Thanks to St. Matthew's, Maria and other moms like her receive the help they need to care for their little ones. This vital support is made possible entirely by the generosity of members and friends like you.

There's still time to make your 2024 gift! Year-end donations can be made anytime online at stmtts.org/give or by check. Tax-saving options, like IRA or stock donations, are also available. For details, please email office@stmtts.org.



PODCAST NOW AVAILABLE STMTTS.ORG/PODCAST

Love the sermon? Want to listen again or share with a friend? Check out the weekly podcast on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, or Google.



1 CHRISTMAS

First Sunday after Christmas



Revised Common Lectionary

Sunday, December 29, 2024

COLLECT

Traditional

ALMIGHTY GOD, who hast poured upon us the new light of thine incarnate Word: Grant that the same light, enkindled in our hearts, may shine forth in our lives; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Contemporary

ALMIGHTY GOD, you have poured upon us the new light of your incarnate Word: Grant that this light, enkindled in our hearts, may shine forth in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

FIRST READING: Isaiah 61:10–62:3

I WILL GREATLY REJOICE in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations. For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her vindication shines out like the dawn, and her salvation like a burning torch. The nations shall see your vindication, and all the kings your glory; and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will give. You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

Refrain

The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.

Psalm 147 (or Psalm 147:13-21) *from the Book Common Prayer*

- | | | | |
|---|---|----|---|
| 1 | Hallelujah! How good it is to sing praises to our God! * how pleasant it is to honor him with praise! | 8 | He covers the heavens with clouds * and prepares rain for the earth; |
| 2 | The LORD rebuilds Jerusalem; * he gathers the exiles of Israel. | 9 | He makes grass to grow upon the mountains * and green plants to serve mankind. |
| 3 | He heals the broken-hearted * and binds up their wounds. | 10 | He provides food for flocks and herds * and for the young ravens when they cry. |
| 4 | He counts the number of the stars * and calls them all by their names. | 11 | He is not impressed by the might of a horse; * he has no pleasure in the strength of a man; |
| 5 | Great is our LORD and mighty in power; * there is no limit to his wisdom. | 12 | But the LORD has pleasure in those who fear him, * in those who await his gracious favor. |
| 6 | The LORD lifts up the lowly, * but casts the wicked to the ground. | 13 | Worship the LORD, O Jerusalem; * praise your God, O Zion; |
| 7 | Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving; * make music to our God upon the harp. | 14 | For he has strengthened the bars of your gates; * he has blessed your children within you. |

- 15 He has established peace on your borders; * he satisfies you with the finest wheat.
- 16 He sends out his command to the earth, * and his word runs very swiftly.
- 17 He gives snow like wool; * he scatters hoarfrost like ashes.
- 18 He scatters his hail like bread crumbs; * who can stand against his cold?
- 19 He sends forth his word and melts them; * he blows with his wind, and the waters flow.
- 20 He declares his word to Jacob, * his statutes and his judgments to Israel.
- 21 He has not done so to any other nation; * to them he has not revealed his judgments. Hallelujah!

SECOND READING: Galatians 3:23-25; 4:4-7

NOW BEFORE FAITH CAME, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law until faith would be revealed. Therefore the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian. But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

GOSPEL: John 1:1-18

IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into

being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

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THIS WEEK AT ST. MATT'S

Sunday, December 29th

- 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 - Classic Worship Service
- 2:00 pm - Alcoholics Anonymous

Monday, December 30th

- 12:00 pm - Social Time with Candace
- 7:00 pm - Bread of Life
- 7:30 pm - Free to Live

Tuesday, December 31st

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

Wednesday, January 1st

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

Thursday, January 2nd

- 9:00 am - Serve Pro
- 6:15 pm - Girl Scouts
- 7:30 pm - Choir Rehearsal

Friday, January 3rd

- 8:00 pm - Compline (on line)

Saturday, January 4th

- 8:00 am - Men's Group
- 6:30 pm - Alcoholics Anonymous
- 7:00 pm - Narcotics Anonymous
- 8:30 pm - Narcotics Anonymous

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

- December 29th: Amalia Rouse
- December 30th: Peter Nelson, Nathan Hartsel
- December 31st: Nick Hunter
- January 2nd: Cheryl Cranson, Jason Gould, Andrew Nelson, Cole Deaso

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

- December 29th: Polly & David Middleton

ATTENDANCE December 22, 2024

Time or Place	Attendance Online	Attendance In-Person
8:00 AM		
9:30 AM		
11:00 AM		
Faith Factory		
Youth Group		

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
stmtts.org/live

Sunday services are broadcast on Facebook and YouTube.

St. Matthew's Staff & Vestry

Rector, Rev. C. Robert Merola, Jr.
Rob@stmtts.org

General Manager, Miriam Turner
Office@stmtts.org

Audio, Livestream Coordinators,
Colin Leary and Kaylyn Burakowski and
Christian Turner

Bookkeeper, Wendy Filler
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Youth Ministry and Marketing Coordinator,
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VESTRY

Robby Stevens, Senior Warden

Andrew Wright, Junior Warden

Craig Dubishar

Bob Henry

Julie Kane

Sharon Muniz

Stephanie Zebrowski

Service Volunteers

Ushers | Fred Brittain, Dee Carter, Michael Horrigan, Cheryl Gilligan, Sharon Ferguson

Lectors | Julie Kane, John Druva

Eucharistic Ministers/LEMS | Haley Elliott, Heather Tomaszek, Tom Leary, Gerry Wardell

Tellers | Dan Robertson

Altar Guild | Richard Henry, Ann Lowden, Sue Reier