
St. Matthew Today

Wed., July 5, 2023

St. Matthew United Methodist Church

Our 126th year

Taking Out the Trash

Friday's Word

Back in the pulpit this Sunday after a two-weeks absence due to illness.

Remember the classic novelty song from the late 50s: *Yakety Yak*?

*Take out the papers
and the trash—*

Yakety yak, yakety yak.

Ah, they don't write them like that anymore.

But that's what we will do in a series of sermons over the next few weeks: take out the trash.

Trash theology, that is.

In visiting old churches in England, I noticed the ground beneath the east window often rises up on the church. That's because so many people wanted to be buried there—close to the altar inside the church.

If you had money (like Mr. Shakespeare) you could be buried in front of the altar inside.

Those closest to the altar were believed to be the first to rise on Resurrection Day.

Silly—including the idea of a Resurrection Day.

It's trash theology.

We are "raised" the moment we die. Life continues uninterrupted.

In a spiritual world, we will have no use for those bones in the ground.

(Or that powder after a cremation.)

Paul said, "To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord." And every NDE tells us the soul, the true self, our consciousness, lives on.

Yet, surprisingly, many people still believe that, at death, we enter some "great sleep," to be awakened at the "General Resurrection."

Even the theologian John Pokingham says, "God will *remember* us back into existence." Great minds can come up with dumb ideas--and bad theology.

This Sunday we will take more bad theology out with the trash.

Join us at 11:00.

In-person, if you can.

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Let's Talk—One More Time

And then put it to rest.

You know we have a problem. I'm not sure why we thought it was a good idea to increase our spending beyond our income, It doesn't take high math to know that does not work. Some of the spending was essential. Some not.

In the essential category, we had to hire a Financial Administrator to do the work Harry Schneider (and Judy) did for free for 14 years. (Thank God for Harry and Judy. What a blessing they have been,) Their paid replacement costs over a thousand dollars a month.

But we are sticking by our decisions and commitments. We have what we need in place to move the church forward. But something must give somewhere. We are running about \$3,000 short every month.

To keep the church out of danger (and preserve my own ministry,) I will bear the burden of it. I will return \$3,000 of my salary every month, \$2,000 beyond my usual monthly giving of \$1,000.

This will go on until we reach the point where it is no longer necessary.

Now, let us put the matter to rest, trust in the Lord, and move on in our work for the Lord Jesus Christ.

I Look Forward to Seeing You

Yes, I hope it is this Sunday.

I *plan* for it to be this Sunday.

I'm still weak, but I can preach sitting on a stool if I must. The sermon title is, *Did God Create a Mess?* (Genesis 2:18-24) Is that what the world is? Did creation get away from God? Out of God's control? Did it all go wrong?

That *is* what most Christians think.

But does Jesus think that? Did he teach us that?

We'll look at that Sunday.

What a joy it will be to be back in church.

Thanks to Mary and all for holding down the fort.

God Bless—MB

Mary's Corner

Greetings from Lubbock! My son and I have ventured to West Texas to help the family with a few things and to visit will everyone. The evenings here are fantastic (low 80s) and the mornings here are luscious (71 degrees this morning). But there are still not enough trees for me! The cooler mornings made it very attractive to have an outdoor time of study and contemplation, so I took full advantage of the situation. I look forward to those 4 days in November when it is pleasant enough to sit outside and enjoy the morning. 😊 I learned something this week from the Fort Worth ISD website: the school district buys school supplies for all elementary school children! I had no idea. We will still host a back-to-school bash for the kids in our neighborhood on August 4th. I haven't heard from anyone who wants to help with this event yet. We can still get backpacks for the kids and some general supplies for the classrooms: tissue, sanitizing wipes, etc. August 4th is only one month away. We will begin advertising this weekend. Blessings to all! Mary

Kids' News

This July 4th holiday was hard on our attendance! But Julie Ann was right there with me so we could talk about Noah and the ark. We always talk about 40 days and 40 nights on the ark with all those animals. Before the rain started, God assured Noah that it would not last forever. When God told Noah to load the animals on the ark, He said the rain would begin in 7 days and would last for 40 days and 40 nights. However, Noah's family spent more than 40 days and 40 nights on the ark. Noah and his family were on the ark for about a year! Noah had to trust God during this time. Can you imagine being shut up on this ark for a year? God remembered Noah and made a wind pass over the earth, and the water lowered. The ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat. After 40 days, Noah opened a window and sent out a dove, which returned to him because there was no place to rest. He waited for 7 more days. Again Noah sent out the dove, this time it returned with an olive branch in his mouth. Noah removed the covering from the ark and saw that the earth was dry. Noah and his sons could let all the animals go. God told them to go forth and multiply. It is always wonderful to hear our kids tell these stories back to us! Julie Ann knew all the answers this week! See you in church Sunday. Blessings.

