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# St. Matthew Today

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Wed., July 19, 2023

St. Matthew United Methodist Church

Our 126<sup>th</sup> year

## God Wants Us Here

### Friday's Word

An e-mail:

*Rev. Max—We may at times get direction from God, but I am leery of the kind of 'encounters with God' you speak of. They may come from other sources, our imaginations, psychosis, even from the adversary himself. -Tom*

Tom, Paul's Road-to-Damascus experience was not a psychotic event, nor did it come from the Devil.

His NDE described in II Cor. 12 was not imagined.

Peter's vision in Acts 10:9-16 did not reflect a deranged mind.

Conservative Christians are scared of religious experiences. They know people of all faiths can have them.

And the God we meet in experience is one who loves all people equally and unconditionally.

In other words, we meet in experience with the God we know in Jesus Christ. We do not meet the angry and vengeful God of right-wing Christianity.

Why?

Because that God does not exist.

But let's not let liberal Christianity off the hook. Liberal Christians often propose a useless God who does absolutely nothing.

That God does not exist either.

The God I know through both Jesus Christ and experience is one who is invested personally in our lives.

"In Him, we live and move and have our being." (Acts 17:28.) And this God is available to us and accessible to us through experience.

So, as a Christian, I am not liberal nor am I conservative. What am I?

I am a person committed to the evidence.

I don't just believe.

I know.

And you can, too.

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The July concert was a triumph. Don't miss the one in August.

### IT WAS A TRIUMPH

The Blake and Shannon concert of Broadway numbers was shockingly good. You seldom hear music done more beautifully or more professionally. There are no stars on TV or silver screen who could have done it better. (I am serious about that.)

We need to set a predictable time for our concerts. Let's call them our "Second Saturday Concerts." This would put the August concert on August 12. (That date may or may not work). The September concert would be on the 9th. We are not yet certain about the August concert, but on Sept 9th I will do a one-man show: "God, Grace and Gooseberry—The Musical." I may offer this concert to other churches as a fundraiser for St. Matthew. I will sing some of my favorite songs and tell some favorite stories.

### ONE MORE ME AND THEN MARY

I have a few more sermons in this series—which is really about who we are and why we are here in the world. I'll preach the third sermon this Sunday then Mary will be up for a couple of weeks. After that, I will take up where I left off. I feel that things are getting exciting around St. Matthew. I do. I feel it.

Get in on it. See you Sunday.

GOD BLESS----MB

### FOR SUNDAY, JULY 23

SERMON: *God Wants Us Here*

SCRIPTURE: Acts 17:26-28

*God Bless—MB*

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# Mary's Corner

Hello everyone,

I continue to spend considerable time humming Broadway tunes from our Saturday concert or just grinning and remembering the joy that filled my heart during the performance. I know many of you were also as moved as I was, I could see it in your smiles and tears. We are so very, very blessed that God sent Shannon and Blake to our congregation. I am looking forward to many more concerts at St. Matthew. Thanks to everyone who brought food and a HUGE thank you to those of you who stayed to help clean up.

Our next concert is scheduled for August, date and details to follow. Our BACK-to-SCHOOL bash is August 4th. Hot Dogs and Movie Night are on the agenda. I still need volunteers to help set up and clean up that evening. We also need a room full of school-age kids! Thank you to those folks who gave me money on Sunday morning for the gift cards we will be giving away that evening. I received 3 donations. Only 27 more to go!!

I will be away this weekend celebrating my nephew's wedding. I will join you online for worship. Blessings to all! Mary

## Sunday Breakfast

Come hungry. Leave filled! Breakfast is served in Brunson Hall each Sunday morning, starting at 10 am. Stay for service at 11 am.

## Chair Yoga

Join us each Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday morning for free Chair and Standing Yoga in Brunson Hall at 10 am.

# Kids' News

We had an interesting lesson about King Nebuchadnezzar. The king commanded his palace master to bring in some young Jewish men to be trained to serve in the King's palace. This may have been an attempt on the king's part to win over the Jews. If these young men learned the Babylonian language and culture, they were assigned to work in the King's palace. The King thought it might encourage all Jewish people to be loyal to Babylon.

As part of the training program, Nebuchadnezzar fed the Jewish men food from his own kingly menu. Think of the food you would eat every day if you were the king: this might have been the richest, most decadent food in all of Babylon, and these Jewish men would be able to eat it simply because the king allowed it. Daniel, however, knew that his food was more than a gift from the king—it was a gift from God. And to show that he was grateful to God for his food, Daniel declined to eat the king's food. The chief official told Daniel that eating the king's food was a requirement. For ten days Daniel arranged a test; for ten days Daniel and his friends ate vegetables and drank water. Mosaic Law allowed the Jews to eat more than vegetables and water, but Daniel thought that the meat and wine may have been given as a sacrifice to Babylonian gods, and he wanted to honor God in all his choices. God rewarded Daniel for his faithfulness.

We had a wonderful class of 6 youngsters that got to experiment with a different type of painting! I can't say enough about these well-behaved youngsters! See you in church Sunday.

Blessings, Mrs. Sue, Mrs. Vickie