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# St. Matthew Today

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Wed., Nov. 22nd, 2023

St. Matthew United Methodist Church

Our 126<sup>th</sup> year

**Happy Thanksgiving!**

## Friday's Word

Most people get it wrong.

We sinned, people say, and this caused a separation between us and God.

Not so.

God created a distance between us and God—and this allowed us to sin.

This is clear even in the symbolic language of the story of Adam and Eve.

God places the forbidden trees in the midst of the garden—tells Adam and Eve not to touch them—and leaves the garden.

They must make a choice. To be human is to choose. To be human is to have freedom to choose.

It is the seeming absence of God that allows Adam and Eve to try the fruit.

The Garden of Eden was like heaven. We cannot grow as human beings in heaven—and God wants us to have this human experience.

So, God has placed us here—and given us a little distance.

Like the mother who knows her child will never learn to walk if she carries him all the time.

She puts him down and steps back, watching him at every moment.

This is Kierkegaard's analogy: He says the mother must be both fully present and seemingly absent at the same time.

The child will fall as he learns. He will get some bumps and bruises. But the child will learn to walk.

Kierkegaard is actually talking about God.

God is always with us.

But God has given us the freedom even to deny God's existence.

It must be this way—if we are to be human.

If we are to have the freedom to grow in grace and understanding.

We must choose love—in a place where love is not always easy.

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The Christmas Show

Sat., Dec. 16, 6:00 p.m.

*God Bless—MB*

[saintmatthewumc.com](http://saintmatthewumc.com)

[revmaxb@tx.rr.com](mailto:revmaxb@tx.rr.com)

### Big Weekend!

Yes—it was.

The bake sale and silent auction raised \$1,687.

Wonderful!

Julie Maxwell, in charge of the auction, is an old hand at such things. People gave some good stuff. The cakes were delish. (The ones I tasted.)

Sunday we had a great service with many guests and a good Thanksgiving dinner after.

### Unusual Calendar This Year

Advent One is not the Sunday after Thanksgiving this year. This Sunday is Christ the King. Mary is preaching. No choir this week. Julian Rodriquez is bringing our solo.

The last three choral anthems have gotten a lot of comments. Three weeks ago, we had Julian on the flute. Then the guest on the cello. And this last week, just a lovely melody and beautiful words.

All “mighty purdy,” as folks around Kemp used to say.

### Time to Prepare

Let me use this space for some “housekeeping” business. The big tree needs to go up after this Sunday.

And we need a smaller tree (six ft.), decorated with lights, to be placed up on the chancel the night of The Christmas Show. So, it will be moved in for the show—and out after the show.

We will need a third tree for the fellowship hall (for the children and Santa).

(Do we have someone in charge of trees? Do we have a Tree Committee? I leave all of this up to the Tree Committee—if we have one!)

I'm ready for Christmas.

I had COVID last year. Missed it all.

No church service. No decorations on my tree.

Fortunately—the Lord is born every Christmas without my help.

See you Sunday.

GOD BLESS—MB

# Mary's Corner

I am grateful for all of you and feel so very blessed to be a part of this congregation. I pray that you have a peaceful and love-filled Thanksgiving. As you gather with friends and family, remember to take care of yourself by avoiding crowds, washing your hands, and staying away from folks who are ill. Remember in your prayers our folks who are hospitalized or recovering. Send a card or make a phone call when you can.

December will be here very quickly, and it will be another great month for us. November 26th is Christ the King Sunday and I look forward to bringing you a message of hope and joy as we wrap up this ordinary season and move into the expectancy of the Advent season. Advent begins December 3rd, and "Hope Sunday" is the theme for the first Sunday of Advent. Each Sunday of Advent has a theme: hope, peace, joy, and love.

Stay warm and rest; the season is upon us!  
Love, Mary  
pastor@saintmatthewumc.com

# Kids' News

We are still learning about the twins- Jacob and Esau.

Just as we started talking about the twins, we were totally shocked when one of our twins walked in!! Robert walked in with Julie Ann!!

We were all so excited that they were visiting. Robert has gotten so much taller that we couldn't believe our eyes! They are doing very well in school and get to visit often with their grandma and cousins they didn't know. As we got over the excitement of having Robert with us, in walks Kaylee. She is quite a beautiful young lady. Of course, she also is doing very well in school. They will be in high school next year and Julie Ann is a 3rd grader. They started coming to our Sunday school class when Kaylee was 8 and Julie Ann was 3.

We all loved these kids beyond words and everyone in church was so happy to see them! The timing was perfect because Robert got to have fried chicken for lunch!

I was also very happy that I looked up and Jason popped in! He should have been resting, but he needed to check on us! My day was filled with joy that I got to see all these kids that I love so much!

Hope you all enjoyed lunch as much as we did! See you Sunday.

Blessings  
Blessings, Miss Vickie, Miss Sue

## **Eastside Ministries Annual Fundraising Enchilada Dinner**

The Fundraising dinner will be held at St. Matthew UMC on Tuesday, December 5, 2023 @ 6:00 pm. RSVPs are required. We will have a sign-up page on the bulletin board this Sunday. A vegetarian option will be available.

## **The Christmas Show**

Our next "Second Saturday Concert" is also the annual Christmas Show!  
Saturday, December 16th at 6:00 p.m.  
Potluck dinner after the show.  
Santa will be there, will you?

## **Chair Yoga**

Join your friends at our free Chair/ Standing Yoga class each Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday at 10 a.m.

## **Sunday Breakfast**

Please join us in the Fellowship Hall for a light breakfast each Sunday at 10 a.m. while the kids are in Sunday School.

## **Give to Saint Matthew UMC**

Please feel free to contribute in any way you can and help us in our efforts to continue spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the community and the world.

Scan the QR code with your phone to securely give online or visit our website at [saintmatthewumc.com/give](http://saintmatthewumc.com/give)

