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# St. Matthew Today

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Wed., Dec. 6th, 2023

St. Matthew United Methodist Church

Our 126<sup>th</sup> year

## Advent Two

### Friday's Word

John Cleese (yes, the British comedian of *Faulty Towers* fame) has a great interest in near-death experiences.

He says he finds that people who dismiss them have not read the literature.

This goes for religious experiences in general.

A grieving father shared this with me:

Remember that fire we had over here last year. My little nine-year-old girl died in that blaze.

She was all I had.

I couldn't eat or sleep. Couldn't work. I grieved till I thought I would die.

One day I wandered back into the rubble of the place we had lived. I sat down in the midst of the rubble. The sorrow was heavy on me.

But then I felt a presence—a power—like a million volts of electricity. I felt it could blow up the world, but it was full of love.

The love surrounded me, and I heard a voice.

The voice from the power said, 'Your little girl is safe and well. She is with me.' And the power began to let me go. My heart was changed. I still hurt, but I do not hurt like I used to.

I know a thousand stories like that. They point to a personal God who cares about our pain.

But how many such stories do you know?

I was guest preacher in a church some years ago. I talked about religious experiences.

A woman said to me as she was leaving, "Pastor, I've been in church all my life. This is the first time I've ever heard that God does anything."

A lot of people believe in a God who doesn't do anything.

If that's your God, you've been running from reality. It's time to slow down and take notice.

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The Christmas Show

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

*God Bless—MB*

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### Eastside Dinner

If you missed it last year—you don't have to miss it again. Ronnie Sullivan's family is cooking a big enchilada dinner for us as a fundraiser for Eastside Ministries.

This is a great event.

Unfortunately—I will NOT be there.

Still recovering from my intestinal virus.

I am still at the Jello stage.

### Second Sunday of Advent

This Sunday.

Second of four Sundays.

And this is the way it falls every few years—Advent Four is on Christmas Eve.

### Pomp and Circumstance Got Delayed

The additional pomp and circumstance of Advent begins THIS week.

My sermon Sunday: "Jesus Got It Right"

Keep this in mind: Both The Christmas Show on Saturday, Dec. 16th and the Christmas Eve Service on Sunday the 24th are at 6:00 p.m.

### Service for Eloise Rhodes

Friday—11:00 a.m.

Laurel Land Funeral Home  
7100 Crowley Road, 76134.

A viewing will be held on Thursday from 5p-7p

GOD BLESS—MB

# Mary's Corner

Good morning, folks!

I have quite a bit to share today. Most important is to share with you how very grateful I am for all of you and how important you are to me.

Memorial for Eloise Rhodes: Viewing is Thursday Dec. 7 from 5p-7p; Funeral is Friday Dec. 8 at 11am. Laurel Land Funeral Home 7100 Crowley Road, 76134.

Ongoing fundraiser for Eastside Ministries due to the devastating fire they experienced that completely destroyed the food service building. If you would like to make a tax-deductible gift to this ministry, please make the donation to Eastside Community Assistance or Eastside Ministries (eastsidecommunityassistance.org). You may also bring your donations to the church, and we will deliver to the organization. Our next Christmas concert is December 16th at 6pm. Santa tells me that Bill and Cindy Wheeler will be feeding us pulled pork sandwiches with all the trimmings. If you would like to bring a dessert, please feel free. Finally, St. Matthew will be collecting lunch items for those folks living without adequate shelter. Items to be collected are:

- Packaged tuna or chicken salad (not canned)
- Individually packaged crackers.
- Individually packaged candy bars, chewy granola bars, or cookies.
- Fruit cups
- Gatorade or water bottle (can be reused/recycled)

We will assemble 30-35 lunches per week. The church purchased the items this week. The total to purchase all these items for was \$161. If you prefer, you may give money to St. Matthew designated for this project. You may also bring the listed items, no more than 36 of each please. We will have to store these things until they can be packaged and distributed, and we do not have a large space for storage. Please let me know if you have any questions. We are looking for volunteers to help assemble lunches. Give your name to Bill Parker if you can help with this.

Blessings to all of you! Mary  
pastor@saintmatthewumc.com

# Kids' News

We have spent quite a bit of time studying the twins- Esau and Jacob. Even though they were twins, they were quite different in many ways. We may revisit them in the future, but now it is time to meet Mary. She was young and poor. The last person you would think would be the mother of the son of God. The message that called her to fulfil this task was delivered by the angel Gabriel, who declared that nothing is impossible for God. Though she was frightened and confused, Mary accepted the call with joy and sang God praises. This must have been difficult news for Mary to process. You might wonder how Mary, then a teenager, could have such joy in the midst of so much chaos and confusion. Mary was able to accept that although her life is drastically altered, there is joy to be found.

Joy does not always have to be big smiles or ecstatic jumping; it can be an attitude of gratefulness and it can be quite tears. While it is sometimes hard to find joy in the unexpected, our Bible story teaches us to find gratitude even in the most unanticipated moments of life. This is the beginning of the wonderful story of Jesus' birth. Be with us as we explore this miracle.

We had some illness in our class this week. We made Get Well cards for Miss Vickie and for Eliza Koenig, who broke her leg badly and is confined to bed rest for at least 3 months. The kids all made cards are taking books and games for her to play while she is confined to bed. And some painting projects so she will feel our love for her as she mends. Praying that they both feel 100% soon.

We are getting into a really busy time at church, will you help us by being with us as we celebrate this beautiful season?

Blessings  
Blessings, Miss Vickie, Miss Sue

**The 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

