

St. Matthew Today

Wed., Jan. 3rd, 2024

St. Matthew United Methodist Church

Our 127th year

Old Christmas

Friday's Word



Exciting, isn't it?!!
I'm sure you are all a-twitter with expectation.
January 5, tonight, is Twelfth Night!
Wow!
On second thought—yes, I know.
Twelfth Night has lost all of its "wow!"
It is still the last day of the Christmas season, but you may have thrown out

the tree days ago.

And it is still the Eve of Epiphany, Jan 6.

But I don't know anyone sitting on the edge of their seat with expectation.

Epiphany used to be the big day. It was like Christmas Day is now.

And Twelfth Night was like Christmas Eve.

And people gave gifts on all of the 12 days of Christmas.

See what we're missing out on? When's the last time you got five golden rings—or a bird of any kind in a pear tree?

Things began to change in the 18th century.

The old ways died out and the "big day" shifted from Jan 5 to Dec 25.

But a memory lingered on in my family.

My grandmother said her mother used to talk about old Christmas, Jan. 6.

And the day was said to be so holy, at midnight on the night before, all the cattle in the barnyard knelt in prayer.

Mother, age nine, wanted to check this out herself.

So, at midnight, as Jan 5 turned to Jan 6, she went to the cattle barn to see the cows in prayer.

Turns out—not a holy cow in the bunch.

But the story of Old Christmas has lived on in our family for 200 years.

And the cows may not know it, but every day is holy. Have a blessed Epiphany.

And join us at the Lord's Table on the first Sunday of 2024. At 11:00.

God Bless—MB

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St. Matthew Begins a New Year

It seems this is a blessed time at St. Matthew.

We had a great Christmas.

We had a wonderful year as a church—2023.

And I am tremendously excited about the coming year.

We have had so many visitors recently.

It is a joy to meet new people.

And I guess my excitement is based on this understanding: The Lord is with us—and where the Lord is, wonderful and beautiful things happen.

I think often of some of our members who are not able to come to church any longer—and others who are facing illness or other difficulties.

I want you to feel a connection to your church in 2024.

And I pray that the Lord will hold you in his love.

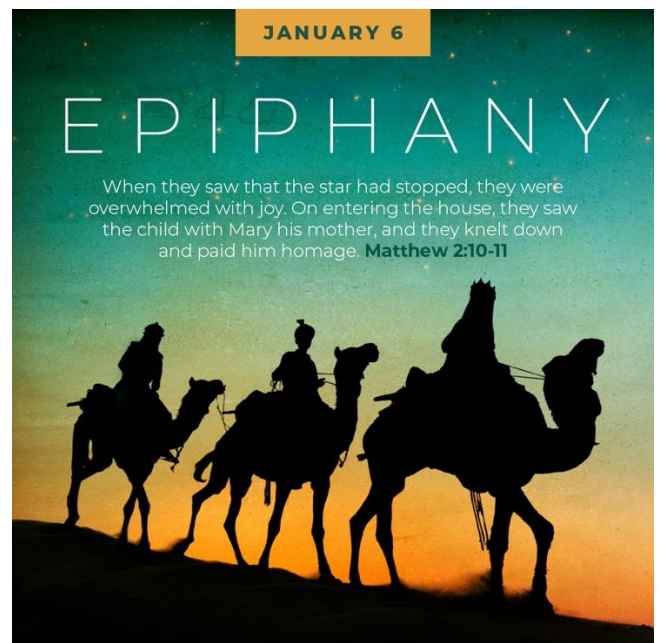
And that you will know it and feel it.

We gather at the Lord's Table again this Sunday.

I hope you can be with us this Sunday.

God bless—MB

Tracy Maxwell is back home and doing well after surgery. He and Julie will be out for some six weeks as Tracy recovers.



Mary's Corner



mother feel so welcome on Sunday.

Happy 2024 to all. May each day be filled with the peace of Christ and the knowledge that you are God's beloved child. We had another amazing service this past Sunday capped off by a great sermon from our senior pastor, Max Brennan. We are blessed beyond belief to have such a gifted and insightful person to shepherd our congregation. Thank you for making my

Many folks in the community are coming down with flu/COVID/RSV or a variety of other upper respiratory and some stomach issues. Please be careful. We have made many advances in the treatment of all of these illnesses; however, we are not free of any of them. Wash your hands frequently, stay away from folks who are sick, stay home if you are one of the sick folks, and avoid large gatherings.

I look forward to 2024 with you. My ordination interviews are coming quickly and then, with God's grace, I will be ordained a provisional elder in June at Annual Conference. Details to come! I could not be in this position without your love and support.

IF YOU ARE AN ADMIN BOARD, FINANCE COMMITTEE, PASTOR/PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE, or ANY OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBER AT SAINT MATTHEW, WE MEET THIS SUNDAY AFTER CHURCH. We will be discussing some very important plans for 2024 so you don't want to miss this meeting or others will be making your decisions for you.

Love to all, Mary
pastor@saintmatthewumc.com

Kids' News

We have been exploring many aspects of the birth of baby Jesus. This week, we met the Magi. The Magi were wise men who studied the stars. They saw an unusual star in the sky one night and knew from their studies that a king was born. We don't know the number of Magi for sure; but because we hear of them bringing gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, we usually refer to them as the three Magi.

Like the shepherds, the Magi were unexpected people who visited the Holy Family. The Magi brought gifts to share with Jesus and we also have gifts to share. We need to remember that gifts can be something that we do for other people or things we can share with the world. Jesus was born so all people would know that God loved them.

The Magi are considered the first people to worship Jesus, and they were not Jewish. This is one of the first signs that God's love is open and free for everyone, no matter who they are.

We had a visitor in class, Mr. Brian McCosky. Mr. McCosky told the kids about his visit to Jerusalem and Bethlehem. He visited the birthplace of the baby Jesus and described the hill where the cross was placed. The kids had many questions for him because they wanted to know where he had visited and what it looked like. Hopefully we see you in church this Sunday so we can continue our journey with Jesus.

Blessings, Miss Vickie, Miss Sue



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



Memorial Service for Larry Norris

Saturday, January 6th at 11:00 a.m.

All boards / Church Council Meeting

Sunday, January 7th at 12:00 p.m.

Ladies of St. Matthew Luncheon

Thursday, January 11th at 11:30 a.m.

Media Team Training and Interest Session

Saturday, January 27th at 2:00 p.m.

Chair Yoga

Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday at 10 a.m.

Sunday Breakfast

Sunday at 10 a.m.