

# St. Matthew Today

Wed., Jan. 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024

St. Matthew United Methodist Church

Our 127<sup>th</sup> year

## Just One Savior

### Friday's Word



You know, there is something seriously wrong with much of the church.

Not with its Founder.

Jesus was right about God. He preached a unique message of God's love for *all* people.

He told us to love even our enemies, because God loves "the ungrateful and the wicked."

He renounced revenge of all sorts.

Jesus got it right.

So why has the church, almost from the start, gotten so much wrong?

How could someone who claimed to follow Jesus write a revenge epic like the *Book of Revelation*?

And why did a council of Christians not see that this work teaches the opposite of everything Jesus said?

They put it in the Bible!

And now, along with the God we call Father who loves us all, we have that rough God who sends plagues and dumps bowls of wrath upon us.

And we pay the price.

For 2,000 years many in the church have sponsored inquisitions, crusades, and slavery—in God's name.

John Calvin had a man killed over doctrine.

My great, great, great grandfather, a Baptist preacher, owned slaves.

When I was growing up, nearly all of the folks in the pews on Sundays were loudly and proudly racist.

And now, it is mostly Christians who follow that man who is morally and spiritually bankrupt.

Why?

How could this be?

Here's the answer:

Many Christians read the Bible as if all of it reflects Jesus.

It doesn't.

*Revelation* and a number of passages in the Old Testament give us the very opposite of Jesus.

I just did a quick count. We have only one Savior.

It's time for the church to listen to him.

### God Bless—MB

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#### A Loss in Our Church Family

Curtis Anderson passed in his sleep during Sunday night.

Arrangements have not been made, but we will send out an announcement as soon as we know. Our love and prayers are with Linda and all of Curtis' family. May the Lord remind them that Curtis is feeling great now in the presence of the Lord and all of his family who went before him.

#### This Coming Sunday

Mary is back and will be preaching for us. Blake will be gone, but Julian Rodriguez will sing for us. Expect some high tenor notes.

Sunday, at church time, it will be 50 degrees under a bright sun.

Good weather for church. And don't forget breakfast—at 10:30 before worship.

#### End-of Year Reporting

On Monday, we turned in "the numbers" (our finances and membership statement) to the Conference, as we do every January. We had a successful year. Our people were faithful. All bills were paid.

In the coming year, I would encourage us to continue to be careful with our spending. A church growth expert has said a church needs to hold a third of their yearly budget in reserve. We do not have that much, but we do have some.

And we can depend on the faithfulness of our people. We also depend on the power of the gospel to continue to draw people to our church.

Every few Sundays we see new faces in our midst.

I am excited about 2024.

Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

God bless—MB



# Mary's Corner



Hello dear church and friends,

We lost Curtis Anderson on Monday morning. He passed peacefully in his sleep. Linda we are praying for you and your family. Linda and Curtis have been members of the United Methodist Church for a long, long time. They even have some original artwork from a Methodist circuit preacher from BEFORE the UMC was united at all. I wonder how all of those circuit riding

preachers would feel about the UMC if they could see us now? And the lay ministers who served in between visits from the circuit riders, what would they think of the church today? It was a very conservative time then and a little bit now; but, the UMC is slowly making progress in the areas of affirmation and inclusion. I am proud to say that our congregation moves faster than the majority. I say all that to tell you that I found out that Curtis and Linda Anderson are also trained and certified lay speakers for the UMC. They preached many years ago at Eastside UMC. I know how they feel about the church today. They love Saint Matthew and have become an important part of our history and community. Funeral arrangements are pending. You will receive a special email with the details.

I am back from my vacation to the beach. It was a peaceful and restful time for me. I hope to share some photos with you soon. Mostly, I hope to see you in church on Sunday.

Love to all, Mary  
[pastor@saintmatthewumc.com](mailto:pastor@saintmatthewumc.com)

# Kids' News

Jesus was walking along the shore of the Galilean Sea when he saw two brothers, Peter and Andrew, fishing with nets. Jesus called to them: "Come, follow me! I will teach you how to fish for people."

They dropped everything and followed Jesus. Further along the shore, Jesus saw two brothers, James and John, fishing with their father. He called out to them the same invitation and they left their father to follow Jesus.

The phrase "to fish for people" is Jesus' invitation for us to truly follow him. This is a calling for everyone. When we accept this calling, we are invited to be disciples and to share this message with the world. Everyone is called. We can all be a follower of Jesus; we are all included.

Thanks for being in church with us to learn more about this invitation. Blessings, Miss Vickie, Miss Sue

# Go Beyond.

Central Texas Conference laity are invited and encouraged to be a part of LEAD 2024: A Four-Part Leadership Training & Development Series for laity in Finance, Trustee, S/PPRC and Nominations and Leadership Development roles.



## **2023 Record of Giving**

Records of Giving were sent via US Postal Service last week. If you do not receive your Record of Giving by 1/27/2024 please contact the Financial Secretary by phone (817.680.5959) or email ([vitekdr@gmail.com](mailto:vitekdr@gmail.com))

## **All Council Meeting**

After service on Sunday, February 4th at 12:30 p.m.

## **Ladies of St. Matthew**

Luncheon on Thursday, February 8th at 11:30 a.m.

## **Media Team Training Session Cancelled**

Media Team Training Session is cancelled for Saturday, January 27th. A new date will be scheduled for February.

## **Chair Yoga**

Free Chair/Standing Yoga class each Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday at 10 a.m.

## **Sunday Breakfast**

A light breakfast is served each Sunday at 10 a.m.

## **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)

