

# St. Matthew Today

Wed., Apr. 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024

St. Matthew United Methodist Church

Our 127<sup>th</sup> year

## God Hears Us

### Friday's Word



Elaine had been a member of a church youth group I worked with. I had not heard from her in 18 years. Then I got her letter.

She said she felt "compelled" by God to share her experience with me. Here's a brief excerpt.

*"I wanted a closer walk with God. I prayed every day for that. And one day, driving home from church, I demanded to know why I was unworthy to know Him better.*

*And God came, very literally, right into my car. I was suddenly viewing specific moments of my life replayed in my mind with every tiny detail.*

*God replayed all my prayers of recent weeks, word for word. I was hearing them and knowing them instantly.*

*Then I saw and felt this overwhelming light, the most amazing light I had ever seen—a mixture of amber and rose and gold.*

*And it was alive. I felt an awesome power and love."*

God let Elaine know her prayers were heard.

All of them.

Elaine called—and God responded.

God is accessible.

God is forthcoming.

I have known this since my own prayer experience at fourteen. I prayed and received an audible reply.

I said to myself after my prayer, "Nobody heard me." A voice replied clearly, "I heard you."

No, prayer does not work this way most of the time. But these events tell us that all prayers are heard.

And God will always respond in some way.

These events also tell us that God is real, God is personal, and God cares about us.

How often have I said this to you? God is an experienced reality.

A recommendation:

Worship somewhere this Sunday. For the joy of it..

**God Bless—MB**

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I'll admit, it was the hardest Holy week and Easter for this pastor. I was dysfunctional when it was over.

But it may have been the best.

Mary had a sweet and moving Thursday service. Steven Moore said Good Friday was his favorite (and he has seen every Good Friday services we have ever had).

And Sunday—for me—was the joy we want Easter to be. The music from Blake, Kristi, and our great choir, augmented with guest musicians, was over the top.

Powerful.

We had 120 in worship.

And how fun it was to hear the laughing and hollering of children during the big egg hunt!

And thanks to Mark Detrick-Kirkpatrick, we had an Easter with flair. His solid pink suit was a hit at church and on Facebook.

Thanks to all who worked to fix meals, get the Good Friday display together, place the lilies, make the music—and those who gathered to sing God's praise on Resurrection Day.

### Sunday's Sermon

The heart of the sermon may have been the story from Betty Ware, mother of Cindy Wheeler and Sheila Taylor—the "sister act" that sits on pew 2 every week.

Betty passed many years ago, but her story of an encounter with a Risen Christ lives on to remind us that our Lord is still working, still appearing, and still watching over our lives.

Now—life slows down a little.

That's OK. Preacher here can't take two Easters in a row! Mary will preach for us this Sunday.

The joy of Easter continues.

He IS risen.

See you Sunday.

**God bless—MB**



# Mary's Corner



Greetings St. Matthew!

What a glorious Easter service. If we could afford it, I would love to have a brass ensemble once a month. What a difference that sound makes and what a lifting of our spirits! I am still humming the choir anthem and Crown Him with Many Crowns.

The full house was a beautiful sight to see as well. It is always good to see so many children come to church to hunt for eggs and stay for the lesson. Thanks to everyone who helped with Holy Week this year. The food, services, and music were outstanding. It is a joy to serve you and a joy to serve WITH you.

I am preaching next Sunday. I spoke on Maundy Thursday about the importance of reading past the grammatical separations in the text. You cannot stop reading at the end of John. The story of Jesus' days on the Earth after resurrection begins in John 20 and continues all the way through the 1st chapter of Acts. My sermon text on Sunday will be from somewhere in those specific passages. I am elated to be in the service of a risen Christ. I pray that what I share with you this Sunday will draw you closer to our Lord.

Keith Butterfield has asked me to let everyone know that even with the solar eclipse glasses that you can purchase online or pick up in any grocery store, the glasses all come with a warning not to look at the sun for extended periods. The glasses, Keith got from his son actually say damage can be caused if you stare at the sun during the eclipse for more than three minutes at a time. Be smart and be safe with your eyes. You don't have another pair in your other pants.

Anna continues to slowly improve. She sends her love and gratitude for your prayers, cards, and visits. We hope to have her home soon. We are a family because you have taken us into your hearts. I am eternally grateful to you.

Mary

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## **Ladies of Saint Matthew**

The monthly Ladies Luncheon will take place on April 11th at noon. For those who wish to join our service project, we will meet before lunch at 10 am to continue work on the blanket project.

## **New Study: Near-Death Experiences**

Sunday mornings from 9:50 - 10:30 am  
Starting after Easter, Jackie Brennan will conduct a 6-week study of near-death experiences.

## **Methodist Discipleship Class**

Details coming soon! Over 6 weeks we will meet via Zoom. The class is for those who are new Methodists, or who did not grow up in the church.

## **Sunday Breakfast**

Served at 10:00 am in Fellowship Hall

## **Chair/Standing Yoga**

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

# Kids' News

Thank you, wonderful parents, and grandparents, for bringing all those sweet kids to join our Easter egg hunt. It was a joy to stand back and watch the excitement. Molly and Bridget helped Vickie and Doug put out at least a zillion eggs! Many of them were filled with prizes, they all had candy.

We had 2 golden eggs containing enough cash to make me wish I was a kid again! The kids had to look extra hard for those eggs. Noah and Reese each found one! Danny Eades took a picture of these happy guys. I am sure Danny has more pictures to share!

After our Egg Hunt, the kids went inside to watch The Easter Promise. They all had popcorn and juice. The kids all sit quietly as the Easter story unfolded before them.

The women were the first to see the empty tomb. As they approached the tomb, there was a great earthquake and they saw an angel roll away the stone and sit on top of it. The angel told the women not to be afraid; Jesus was not in the tomb. Jesus is alive!

As the women ran down the path to tell the others, Jesus appeared to them! They fell to their knees when they saw Jesus. He told them that they should "go tell the disciples I will see them in Galilee." A direct command from Jesus to the women to remember his resurrection and share the Good News with others.

Thanks again for being with us Sunday. Hope we see you all again on Sunday.  
Blessings, Miss Vickie, Miss Sue

## **Scheduled Giving**

You can make a special gift or automate monthly giving to Saint Matthew from your checking account or credit / debit card. Contributions in any amount help us to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the community and the world.

"Gain all you can. Save all you can. Give all you can." - John Wesley

Scan the QR code with your phone's camera or visit our website <https://saintmatthewumc.com/give>

