

# St. Matthew Today

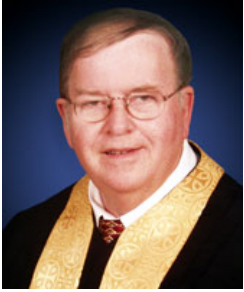
Wed., May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024

St. Matthew United Methodist Church

Our 128<sup>th</sup> year

## Lord Jesus, Lead the Way

### Friday's Word



Funny—there is a kind of giddy hopefulness in the United Methodist Church now.

We've lost a third of our churches nationwide. Most of them are smaller churches, but some are very large.

But ah!—the freedom we feel! It's like a great load has been lifted.

As Bishop Saenz put it, "We are no longer supporting homophobia in the name of Jesus Christ."

Or as I have said, we are no longer promoting hate.

The vote at the General Conference was 93% in favor of removing the hateful language against gay people in our *Book of Discipline*.

It was placed there in 1972, a darker time, a time of greater ignorance about human sexuality.

Many churches are still trapped in that time. They push a gospel that excludes people for being who they are. And until recently, we United Methodists were in on that sin.

But God has delivered us. And we are reveling in the freedom to live for Jesus Christ.

You know, evil has an allure and it is the allure of power over others.

It leads to a perversion of Christianity.

Christians in Germany wanted power over the Jews.

White Christians in the South wanted power over black people.

Men want power over women—and in many churches, they still have it.

It is all wrong.

This lust for power over others who are different is a sin. And United Methodists have had a conversion experience.

Praise the Lord!

We are free now to love others as God loves us.

And we are ready as a church to go where God calls us.

Lord Jesus, lead the way..

*God Bless—MB*

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

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

#### "After Pentecost"

This Sunday is Trinity Sunday, but from then on until Advent the bulletin will say whatever Sunday it is "After Pentecost."

We had a wonderful Pentecost Sunday. Thanks to all who brought food for that great meal. (I wish I had some of that brisket right now.)

We had a meeting of pastors with Bishop Ruben Saenz today. As I said in Friday's Word, there is a kind of new joy in the church at large—a sense of freedom to preach and live the Gospel.

We have, as a denomination, lost people—and gained our souls. The truth is, we could not move forward until those who left were gone.

They were not advancing the Kingdom.

They were standing in the way.

Jesus told the Pharisees, "You are not entering the Kingdom yourself and you are preventing others from entering."

The United Methodist Church is now smaller—and stronger.

The Pharisees have left.

We love them.

But now that they are gone, we can move on.

#### Breakfast This Sunday

It's a "We-Bring-It" Sunday.

Our "do-it-ourselves" breakfasts have been surprisingly good. Not up to the Winston standard—but still mighty good. Sunday at 10:30.

#### Mary Up to Bat

The Rev. Mary T. will preach for the next two Sundays.

And our choir is down for the summer. Expect a great solo—like the one from Shannon last week.

Next time I preach, I am doing a solo.

It goes with my sermon.

After Mary's big singing debut a couple of weeks ago, we need a solo from her very soon.

What do we expect of the rest of you?

Well—just come. Sing. Pray. And rejoice.

This Sunday.

#### God Bless---MB

ON MY MIND—the folks we love who are sick and others who have lost loved ones. May God's grace and comfort be with those who need it most.

# Mary's Corner



Greeting siblings,

The joy that accompanies my newfound freedom continues in my life this week. I am constantly aware of the weight removed from my shoulders. There is peace and power in knowing that the UMC is getting back to the work of the Gospel. There is also tremendous relief found in the

liberty to live one's authentic life. I cherish these feelings and I am grateful for you. Your love and support gave me the courage to press on.

Many of us either love a person who is marginalized, or we are marginalized. The removal of that horrible language from our Book of Discipline brings relief to many of us.

I attended the East District Conference meeting on Sunday afternoon and confirmed that the changes to the Book of Discipline were effective at the end of the General Conference! No waiting until the Annual Conference approves! No waiting until January 2025! I have also learned today that I will be able to interview again with the board of ordained ministry. That may happen as soon as November. If not, I can move forward with another board of ordained ministry interview in March 2025. Love to all of you and may Christ's blessings and peace be with you.

# Kids' News

This Sunday, we talked about the birthday of the church — Pentecost.

Pentecost originated as a Jewish festival — one of the feasts where Jews gathered in Jerusalem. Jesus told the disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the gift of the Holy Spirit. While the disciples and other followers were celebrating Pentecost, the Holy Spirit arrived, sounding like the wind and appearing like fire.

This was a great mystery. Everyone could understand and speak in different languages. They knew that God was working in their lives in mysterious ways. The exciting arrival of the Holy Spirit attracted a crowd. The Spirit gave them the courage to continue to spread the Good News of Jesus.

God's spirit continues to empower us and encourages us to do God's work. The main thing we need to remember is that God is always with us through the Holy Spirit. I hope to see you in church this 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>



## Sunday Breakfast

Join us for Sunday breakfast and fellowship at 10:30 am.

## Chair/Standing Yoga

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