

# St. Matthew Today

Wed., Jun 05<sup>th</sup>, 2024

St. Matthew United Methodist Church

Our 128<sup>th</sup> year

## Beware the Orange Man

### Friday's Word



Even after the verdict, millions of Christians still cling to the orange man. How can that be? Christian conservatives are morally conflicted. What is a Christian conservative? Anyone who reads the Bible as if it is inerrant. As if it is a monolith.

As if literature written over one thousand years (and more) speaks with one voice.

As if the images of God from ancient Israel match the image we have in the teachings of Jesus.

As if Moses has the same authority for Christians as their Savior.

As if *Deuteronomy* is as important to Christians as *The Sermon on the Mount*.

Inerrancy breaks the first commandment. It makes the Bible an idol. It turns the Bible into God.

And it diminishes the authority of Jesus.

Jesus tells us to love those who don't love us, even our enemies.

The Old Testament says God ordered the Israelites to kill their enemies.

Who wins out?

Bible inerrantists take an average. Jesus loses.

His message of God's unconditional love for all people is rejected.

For Bible inerrantists, love is not an absolute standard. This puts them on shifting sand.

This is why Conservative Christians are vulnerable to the orange man.

And vulnerable to others who preach vengeance and self-interest.

Someone analyzed the sermons of a well-known inerrantist preacher. Over 90 percent of his scripture references were from the Old Testament.

Yes, the Bible is our authority. But it has within it an even higher authority.

Jesus.

If you don't know this—the orange man may get you.

*God Bless—MB*

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### Great Service Last Week

But I wasn't there.

My sister had a blood pressure flare-up and we spent the night before in ER.

I plan to be back this Sunday, but I am not preaching. Rev. Beverly Tye will deliver her "farewell address."

Bev will be moving soon. We will miss her tremendously. She will have her chance Sunday to share her love with you and we will all have a chance to give thanks for her.

Expect another great Sunday.

Sunday afternoon I will be leaving for Round Rock for our two-day Annual Conference. We will be celebrating the *new* United Methodist Church—the one that is free to live up to its motto: "open minds, open hearts, open doors."

This is the LAST Annual Conference of the "Central Texas Conference." Due to the loss of churches in the great dispute, we will be combining three conferences under a new name. Bishop Saenz will continue as our bishop.

And Mary and I will be returning to St. Matthew, appointed once again to serve this church. (My 43rd time. Not so many for Mary.)

Announcing where ministers are appointed to serve the coming year is the last order of business at Annual Conference before the closing worship, which includes a sermon from the Bishop.

Mary and I will report briefly on the conference the Sunday following—June 16th.

### Breakfast This Sunday

It's a "We-Bring-It" Sunday. At 10:30.

Something strange happened on our last we-bring breakfast. *It was a feast! Lots of food!* Still don't understand it.

Remember—"Beverly Sunday"

I know you will be present if at all possible.

### 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



It is a HALLELUJAH kind of day! I pray that you are also experiencing the kind of joy that comes with knowing that God loves you and that God is walking with you no matter what's going on in your life. I am so grateful for the powerful presence of the Holy Spirit Sunday morning in our services. Your voices were beautiful as you sang both the traditional and praise and worship

hymns. I'm grateful for your willingness to be flexible and to try new things. I'm excited to begin a new tradition at Saint Matthew, where we are able to learn a new song once or twice a month. I'm also profoundly grateful for the three new church members that joined us on Sunday morning. Carlene, Kathy, and Lynette have no idea really what they're in for but I know that God is part of this and brought them to us for a very special reason. If nothing else, I know we will have great fun with them; they are always smiling! We have gained many new members this year. More so than in the last several years. And while we struggle to look around the world and find places where the church is relevant to the world, Saint Matthew continues to draw folks in who are looking for a place filled with God's authentic people. I am so grateful to be a part of this ministry.

I had my first meeting this week with my mentor pastor, Reverend Kissa Vaughn, from Saint Barnabas United Methodist Church in S Arlington. We talked for a long time about the things I need to do to be successful with the board of ordained ministry. She also shared some wonderful programs and insights she had about doing ministry in the neighborhood where we live. I'm grateful for the time with her and grateful for another chance at coming before the board of ordained ministry. I'm living in that space right now between wanting to do so many things at the church and in the neighborhood and still having to work full time at the hospital. Please know that the hours I have after work and on Saturdays and Sundays that I spend doing church work are precious to me. The work I do as the associate pastor at Saint Matthew United Methodist Church fulfills me and lets me know that this truly is God's calling on my life. I do not know what God has next, but I do know that God has this in God's mighty right hand.

My love to all of you, Mary

# Kids' News

We were all prepared to meet Abraham and Lot Sunday. Abraham was a very rich man who was traveling with his family and livestock. Can you imagine traveling with your family and livestock!? He made and broke camp each night. His wife, Sarah, and his nephew, Lot, were with him. Abraham and Lot had so many cattle and possessions between them that the land could not support them both.

Conflicts began to break out between their herdsmen. Abraham and Lot realized that the two groups could no longer travel together. So, for the sake of everyone they made an agreement about how and where they will live in the future. To ensure peace, Abraham gave Lot the choice of two lands. Lot chose the Jordan Valley because it was lush and green. There would be plenty of food and water for his animals. Without complaining, Abraham moved his animals and servants to the drier land.

In the story, we hear God promise Abraham many descendants. Abraham sacrificed the better land for the sake of keeping peace. The story shows us that we can work together if we try. It also shows us that compromise does not necessarily mean loss.

On another note, I purchased 12 caterpillars to release as butterflies with our kids. The little guys had their own schedule in mind and transformed into butterflies a week early. Since they have such a short life span, we released them last Saturday. The butterflies were so happy to be free that they flew across the street and high into my neighbor's tree. Sunday when I arrived home from church, I noticed one was still flying in their habitat. Yes, you guessed it, he flew away as well! We may have to try this again.

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>



### Ladies of St. Matthew Luncheon

Please join us on Thursday, June 13th. Contact Veta McCulloch for more info!

### 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.