

St. Matthew Today

Wed., Jul 3rd, 2024

St. Matthew United Methodist Church

Our 128th year

Keeping Bad Company



Friday's Word

We are in trouble as a nation because many Christians have such a strange idea of the Gospel. Clearly, they don't seem to know the Gospel I know and preach. Which I think of as the Gospel of

mainstream Christianity.

Consider this:

One of the guys on that debate stage last week is supported by Christians, racial hate groups, and Neo-Nazis. Strange combination.

Why would Christians be with racists and Nazis?

Paul tells us to be careful about the company we keep. I would call Nazis bad company.

Yet there they are, Christians with bad guys.

But this is a different *kind* of Christianity.

It has nothing to do with the Christianity I know.

Let me say something that may sound a bit radical here: All who use the name "Christian" do not worship the same God.

Someone wrote to me recently, "You went so far as to say that God is only a God of love."

He said that's not true, then he listed some really mean things he says God did. He wants me to know God is a rough customer.

Another said to me, "God does not love all people. God loves only the people who keep his commandments."

Here are two Christians who do not believe in grace, God's unconditional love for all humankind.

Their idea of "God" is so different from my idea of "God" that I don't think we share the same religion.

Yet, we are all called "Christians."

But some Christians see God as love. Some see God as stern and exclusive.

And the meaner your God is, the more likely it is you will find yourself marching in lockstep with racists and Nazis.

God Bless—MB

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Funeral Service

Ronnie Sullivan's mom was buried today (Monday) in a service in her Catholic church in Abilene.

Mary will be back on Sunday.

Mary is feeling better and Ronnie and Mary are adjusting to life without Ronnie's mom.

Our love is with them and the whole family.

Breakfast This Sunday

It's a "Winston Sunday."

Food and fellowship at 10:30.

Yes—A Hard Time

The Supreme Court decision announced Monday changes the nature of the presidency and places our nation in danger.

The possibility is real—we could lose our democracy.

We will not get discouraged.

We will pray.

And we will work.

This Sunday

Life is not easy.

Not for us. And certainly not for Paul.

You might think God would lay out an easy path for the greatest of all the apostles—called specifically—and dramatically—by God to proclaim the Gospel. He left us a list of his hardships.

And he shared two experiences that kept him going.

Sermon Sunday: "My Grace Is Sufficient."

Barring unforeseen events, my sister's study of near-death experiences will begin on Sunday, July 14, from 9:45 to 10:30 am. (Over at breakfast time.)

The memorial service for Julie Maxwell will be Saturday, July 20, at 1:00 pm.

Worship this Sunday will be at the same time it has been since 1897—11:00 am.

Some things don't change.

See you then.

God Bless—MB





Mary's Corner

May the peace of Christ dwell within your heart and mind today and may your life match!

Two Sundays away from the church is way too much. I am looking forward to being back with you on July 7th for our worship and communion services. I listened to church Sunday morning but am missing my hugs and warm smiles. The service was great on Sunday. And there are no adequate words for the beauty of the music we enjoy every week with Kristi, Blake, and Shannon. We are truly blessed to have this much talent in a church our size. God is good to us.

The children of Cris Monrrial did an amazing job putting together the funeral service for their mother. Every single thing was just a Cris wanted it to be. The entire clan was in attendance: 11 children, 30 grandchildren, 39 great-grandchildren and 7 great-great-grandchildren. Plus neighbors, friends, and other family from everywhere. The church that hosted the service and meal is the same church that the children grew up in and the church where their mother could be found organizing volunteers to help a family in need or cook a meal for a family who had lost a loved one. Cris worked with 2 other women in the 1970s to found a dance group for the children and teenagers of the congregation. "Ballet Folklorico" is the name of the Mexican dance genre, complete with brightly colored, flowing dresses and the "charro" dance uniform of the male dancer. I am attempting to describe all of this because, after the family meal, the dance troupe performed for the guests. It was breathtakingly beautiful and brought tears of joy to my eyes.

Our postponed concert on Saturday will be rescheduled soon. Nicholas was unable to attend due to circumstances he could not control. We will have time for some more advertising and preparation. May the Lord be with you.
Mary

Kids' News

The holidays are hard on our attendance for our kids. We had a wonderful lesson this week known as the Beatitudes; this is part of the Scripture called *The Sermon on the Mount*. As word of Jesus' Ministry spreads, large crowds began to follow him. The Sermon on the Mount is a series of teachings by Jesus that helps us know how God wants us to live.

The Beatitudes can take time to grasp fully. However, most children can comprehend being a peacemaker. We are not always happy, but we can spread God's peace. We are called "God's children" because we work for peace, just as God does. This practice brings joy and happiness. Praying you all had a wonderful and safe 4th of July and we will see you back in church Sunday. Blessings.

Blessings, Miss Vickie, Miss Sue

Study on Near Death Experiences

Starting July 14th, join Jackie Brennan for a 6-week study on near-death experiences. The sessions will be held on Sunday mornings from 9:45 - 10:30 am in the Disciples classroom.

Chair/Standing Yoga

Join us every Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday morning at 10 a.m. for Chair/Standing Yoga. This accessible and gentle yoga class is perfect for all levels, focusing on improving flexibility, balance, and relaxation. Come and rejuvenate your body and mind in a supportive community setting.

Sunday Breakfast

Join us every Sunday at 10:30 am for a delightful breakfast and enriching fellowship. Enjoy fellowship and engaging conversations with your church family! It's a wonderful opportunity to grow spiritually and strengthen our community.



Help us pass on a legacy of spiritual nourishment and community by including Saint Matthew UMC in your estate planning. You can also make a special gift or automate monthly giving from your checking or debit account. Contributions of any amount help us share the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the community and the world. Visit saintmatthewumc.com/give or saintmatthewumc.com/info/estate-planning for more information

