

St. Matthew Today

Wed., Nov 20th, 2024

St. Matthew United Methodist Church

Our 128th year

Thanksgiving Service—Dinner After



Friday's Word

There are some 40,000 Christian denominations worldwide. Most of us are familiar with 15 or 20 of them.

It sounds neighborly to say that we all basically believe in the same God.

But that's not true.

The God I believe in is summed up in Matthew 5:38-48 and Luke 6:27-36 (mostly the same material). I call this "core scripture."

Here, Jesus gives us His picture of God as loving all people all the time. He says God is kind even to "the ungrateful and the wicked."

The word for this kind of love is "grace."

Unconditional love.

And Jesus says this is the only kind of love that makes a difference.

Loving those who love you is easy. "What reward do you get" for doing that? He asks.

Many Christians do not share this understanding of God. How do I know?

We all know Christians who believe things that contradict Jesus.

Many Christians believe God destroyed the world with a flood.

They believe God decided creation was a mistake. God goofed!

Then God tried to correct the blunder by wiping out everything that would not fit on a big boat.

And then regretted that!

This angry, unhappy, vengeful, mistake-prone God is not the God we know in Jesus Christ.

This is not the God who loves all people all the time. If Jesus is right about God, the Flood Story is wrong.

So—

Which do you choose?

Try St. Matthew.

We choose Jesus.

Thanksgiving service at 11:00. Dinner after.

God Bless—MB

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Max's Corner

Please remember this: The number is 10.

Thanksgiving Worship

This Sunday will be *Christ the King Sunday* as well as our Thanksgiving Service—a double celebration and always a big deal!

We are providing the meal—thanks to those who signed up and anyone else who wants to help. The menu includes both turkey and ham, so any side dishes that go with those will be perfect.

BUT—you do not have to bring anything to eat.

What we really want is for all of you to join us for both worship and dinner.

The Class—Discovering God

This week's topic is conversion experiences. You're welcome to join at any time.

- Class starts at 9:45 AM.
- Light breakfast will follow.

Speaking of Breakfast

This Sunday, we'll enjoy a light breakfast of pigs-in-a-blanket and donuts, with orange juice and coffee available. To keep things organized, the breakfast table will be at the south end of the fellowship hall to avoid interfering with dinner preparations.

- Food and fellowship: 10:30 AM
- Worship: After breakfast
- Thanksgiving dinner: Following worship

Christmas Schedule

Christmas Concert: Saturday, Dec. 21, at 6:00 PM. This will also include our Christmas dinner and a visit from Santa for the kids!

Open House at the Brennans: Sunday, Dec. 15, from 3:00 to 5:00 PM.

Advent begins the first Sunday after Thanksgiving, with Mary preaching that day.

God Bless,
MB

The number is 10. Can you remember that this Sunday? I'll ask for a show of hands from those who know it. The number is 10.



Mary's Corner

Happy Wednesday to all of you in the name of Jesus Christ. As we make plans for our community meals, concerts, and personal holiday preparations, I don't want us to lose sight of the blessing it is to be the beloved children of God. Our small but mighty church has its hands and heart

involved in many ministries.

Just last week, eight women from our women's group put together 100 feminine hygiene bags for women living on the street without access to adequate shelter or the basic necessities of life. This is being the hands and feet of Jesus. And the week before last, Connie Michael delivered 10 to 15 new coats to the elementary school for children without warm winter clothing. This is being the hands and feet of Jesus. This past Sunday, I enjoyed a homemade biscuit with gravy and sausage, prepared with love and expertise by Mark and Winston in the kitchen. This, too, is being the hands and feet of Jesus Christ.

At the same time, we have many in our congregation who will experience their first holiday without someone they love. Others may be struggling to make ends meet during this season, and some are only able to join us through an online venue. While the holidays are meant to be a joyful time, many of us will live in the bittersweet—in that space between joy and heartbreak, where tears run freely and without warning.

Be patient with each other, please. As humans under high stress, we tend to get snappy with one another. Make space in your life to allow people to express themselves. Make space in your heart and mind for others' frustrations. Measure your words carefully, being respectful and kind. The harvest is great, but the workers are few. That does not mean we are allowed to turn on one another. Be gentle, please. We are all in need of grace and mercy.

Finally, over the next six to eight weeks, we will have many visitors among us. Between meals, special services, and one more concert before the year's end, everything we do will require all hands on deck. Even if all you can do is help prepare a meal, put a tablecloth on the table, or fill cups with ice, your efforts matter.

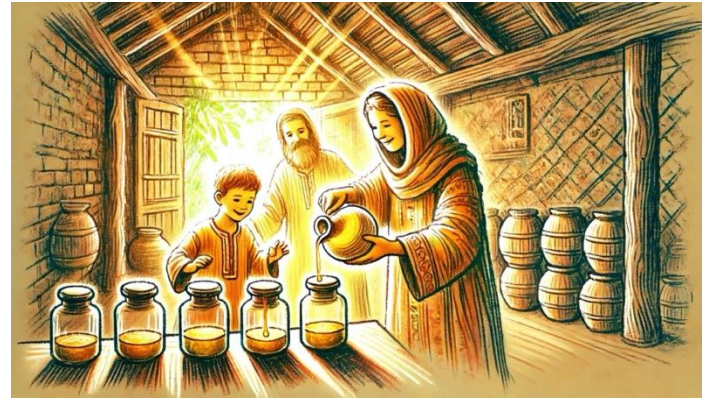
Our upcoming Thanksgiving meal this Sunday after church is a prime example of the need for everyone to pitch in. Turkey for the event will be provided, but Mark and Ronnie are handling preparations. Cleanup will require everyone's help.

As I close, I ask you to reflect on the various ways you already volunteer at the church and to prayerfully consider whether you want to continue in your current capacity. While we always need volunteers, I also encourage you to pray for God to lead you to a ministry that speaks to your heart at Saint Matthew.

The next few years may bring much suffering. Now is not the time to throw our hands up and say, "It's just too much." Take care of yourselves first, and then, with hearts full of gladness, look around to help others.

My love to you all,
Mary

Kids' News



This week, we learned about a widow who was facing a difficult situation. After her husband passed away, she was left with two sons and a lot of debt. The creditors came and threatened to take her sons as servants to repay the money. In her desperation, she turned to the prophet Elisha for help.

Elisha asked her what she had in her house, and she said she only had a small jar of oil. Elisha told her to send her sons to borrow as many empty jars as they could from their neighbors. Then, he instructed her to go inside, shut the door with her sons, and start pouring oil into the jars. Amazingly, the oil kept flowing until every jar was full! Once all the jars were filled, the oil stopped. Elisha told her to sell the oil to pay off her debts, and there was even enough left over for her and her sons to live on.

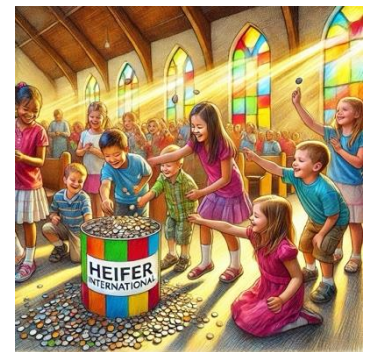
This story reminds us that God can take even the smallest things we have and turn them into something amazing if we trust Him.

We hope to see all our kids back at church soon! We're excited to start working on a Christmas program—and maybe even convince Santa to pay us a visit! Bring your kids to church this Sunday. Blessings!

Blessings, Miss Vickie, Miss Sue

Drop your coins in the bucket!

We're deeply moved by the generosity shown in support of our kids' Heifer International charity campaign, which helps families lift themselves out of poverty through livestock, resources, and training. Our work isn't done yet—continue contributing. Every donation, big or small, helps us reach our goal of empowering families to build a brighter future.



Be The Hands and Feet of Christ

Support Eastside Ministries' Christmas by Candlelight:

December 3 at St. Rita's Catholic Church, 6:30 PM dinner.

Enchilada Dinner: December 13, the Montréal sisters will host an enchilada dinner at the church, with plates priced at \$15 each or \$25 per couple. Vegetarian options and takeout will be available.

Christmas Concert: Saturday, Dec. 21, at 6:00 PM. This will also include our Christmas dinner and a visit from Santa for the kids!

- Reflect on how God is calling you to serve this season and explore a ministry that stirs your heart.
- Be a part of welcoming visitors this holiday season by helping with events or simply offering a warm smile.
- Extend a hand and share the load as we prepare for meals, services, and events this Advent season.

Thank you! Ladies of St. Matthew



Did you know?

We offer online giving through PayPal. Your gift can be drawn directly from a checking or debit account on any schedule you choose. Gifts of any amount help us to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout our community and the world via our online ministry.

Scan the QR code above with your phone's camera or visit our website to give online: saintmatthewumc.com/give