

St. Matthew Today

Wed., Nov 27th, 2024

St. Matthew United Methodist Church

Our 128th year

First Sunday of Advent



Friday's Word

In the midst of the disaster that has come upon us, there are some things we must remember.

This is still God's world.

And God, too, has intentions for us as individuals and for the world.

And God does intervene.

I cannot talk of God's grand design. But I know a thousand stories of God's intervention in individual lives.

This is from Rosemary Thornton, author of *Remembering the Light*.

One night when I was 22, I was driving on a dark road with a light rain falling. Visibility was poor.

I had an old car, and the defroster didn't work too well.

I wasn't going very fast, but I heard a voice urgently demand that I stop the car.

I ignored it at first.

But the second time, the voice was yelling and said, "Stop the car now!"

I didn't know what was happening, but I slammed on the brakes. The car stopped immediately.

I put it in park and exited the vehicle. Less than two feet in front of the car stood a tiny toddler in only a diaper and looking very frightened.

I scooped him up in my arms and moved to the side of the road and stood in the rain, holding him close as I figured out what to do next.

Rosemary says that's when the child's mother ran from a nearby house, screaming and crying. She had fallen asleep on the couch and awoke to find her baby gone.

God, too, has intentions.

God does intervene to work God's will.

We are, at all times, loved, watched over, cared for. That's my comfort in hard times. Be encouraged.

Trust God.

God Bless—MB

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Max's Corner

Please remember this. I will ask you this Sunday. The number is 10.

ADVENT

Yes—the four-week countdown to Christmas begins this Sunday. The colors go all purple, and the music gets sweet and tender—all for the Baby Jesus. Mary will preach on Advent 1.

We will light that first candle.

The Class—Discovering God

Did you see my little article this week on God's intervention in our lives? That was a voice from an unseen presence. But what about physical interventions in the created order? That's what we will talk about in class this week. Should be interesting.

Class at 9:45—breakfast after.

Speaking of Breakfast

Yep—Winston is up to bat this week. (Bring something if you wish.)

Food and fellowship at 10:30, followed by worship.

Christmas Schedule

I'm working to get ready for our Christmas Open House at my place on Sunday, Dec. 15. We've had some badly needed work done recently, so the house is a mess. That has got to change pretty quickly. And I will need to get my tree up earlier than usual.

++ We will need some of you to help with the refreshments. ++

The purpose of this event is just to give us a time of Christmas fellowship. And you may find the house interesting. Everything in it is pretty old—including me.

That's from 2:00 to 5:00 on December 15.

Our Christmas concert is late this year due to our singers' schedules: Saturday, Dec. 21, at 6:00 p.m.

But!!—you will be glad to hear, Christmas Eve remains on the 24th. Some things do NOT change. That's also at 6:00 p.m.

God Bless – MB



Mary's Corner

Happy Thanksgiving, friends and family of Saint Matthew!

I want to dedicate this letter to expressing my gratitude. Every week for the past six years, I've written a newsletter article. I may have missed one or two for vacation, but otherwise, I've consistently shared my

thoughts, requests, and updates with you. However, I don't recall ever taking an entire newsletter to tell you how truly grateful I am for you. Words cannot adequately convey my gratitude, but not having the perfect words has never stopped me before!

I'm grateful for the children in our congregation—the ones who show up every Sunday, those who come for holidays or special weekends with their grandparents, and even those I've never met but hear you lovingly talk about. I pray God's love and protection over their lives.

I'm also grateful for our young people—those between the ages of 18 and 40. I know that's a broad range, but you are few in number. I deeply appreciate your commitment to our congregation, your love for the people who brought you here, and your willingness to keep believing in the church when so many in your generation have walked away. Saint Matthew is blessed to have you.

To those in your 40s and 50s, I'm thankful for the responsibilities you've taken on as volunteers. If you're serving on staff, I'm especially grateful. The demands are significant, and the compensation doesn't always match the workload. Your servant's heart is evident, and I thank God for your dedication.

To those in your 60s, thank you for your continued hard work and your determination to keep pace with the younger generations while gracefully navigating the realities of aging. Your love for God fuels your efforts, and your hearts remain young and vibrant.

To those in your 70s and 80s—the majority of our congregation—I'm inspired by your unwavering participation in the life and work of our church. Your hearts are full of love and commitment, regardless of your physical age.

As I looked around at lunch on Sunday, I thought about those who are no longer with us. I offered a prayer of thanks for their lives while missing them deeply. I imagine the heavenly Thanksgiving feast they're enjoying now. I also looked around the room at so many of you who are devoted to this church and its mission. Your dedication, love, prayers, and time spent volunteering are gifts I treasure.

Most of all, I'm grateful that, despite my many shortcomings, you love me anyway. I know I don't always say the right thing or remember everything I should, but you've taken great care of me and my family. You are my church home, and for that, I am forever thankful.

Peace, blessings, and all my love,
Mary

P.S. Shout out to Mark Eley, who has joined the ranks of those with prosthetic joints—a prestigious club. Welcome, Mark! And a special shout out to Connie, who has joined the esteemed

group of spouses turned caregivers. Continued prayers for healing and comfort for you both.

DON'T FORGET:

Eastside Community Assistance Candlelight Dinner

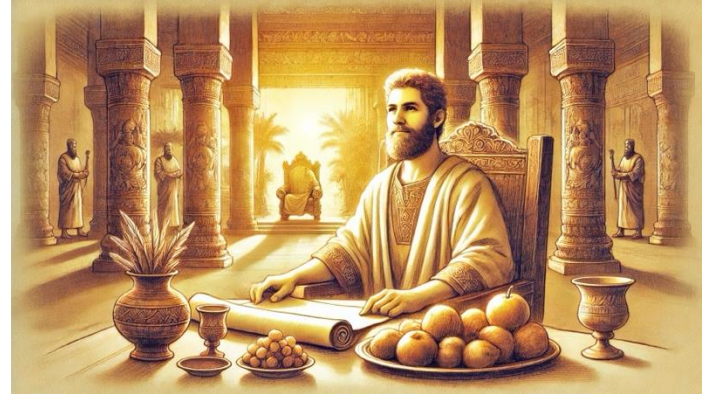
December 3 at Saint Rita's Catholic Church

Saint Matthew's Annual Enchilada Dinner Fundraiser for Eastside Ministry

December 13, Friday, at 6 PM

Plates are \$12 each or \$20 per couple. Please sign up or text/email me if you plan to attend.

Kids' News



This Sunday, we learned about Daniel, a young man who lived during the Babylonian Exile. This was a time when the Jewish people were taken to live in a foreign land with different cultural and religious practices. The ruler of Babylon, King Nebuchadnezzar, chose some young Jewish men to be trained to serve in his palace. This may have been a way to encourage the Jewish people to be loyal to Babylon.

Daniel was one of the young men selected, but because of his strong faith and commitment to God's laws, he refused to eat the king's food, which went against Mosaic laws. Even though this was a risky choice, Daniel stayed faithful to God and still excelled in his training. Because of his wisdom and understanding, Daniel was chosen by the king to be an advisor and interpreter of dreams. He served the king for many years, providing guidance and insight.

Like Daniel, we may not always get a thank you for the good we do, but that doesn't mean our efforts don't make a difference. Our faith in God and the wisdom we share can be a blessing to others.

Will you be like Daniel and join us in church? We need your help with our Christmas program! There's a wonderful program planned for everyone, and we'd love for all of our youngsters to be part of it.

Blessings, Miss Vickie, Miss Sue

Be The Hands and Feet of Christ

Support Eastside Community Assistance by attending the Candlelight Dinner on December 3 at Saint Rita's Catholic Church

Participate in Saint Matthew's Annual Enchilada Dinner Fundraiser for Eastside Ministry on December 13, Friday, at 6 PM. Plates are \$12 each or \$20 per couple.

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

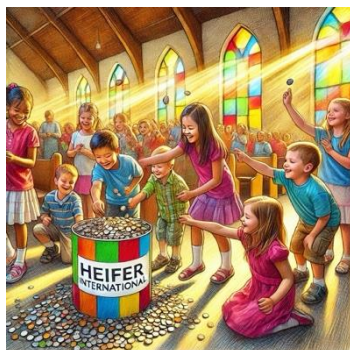
- **Reflect on how God is calling you** to serve this season and explore a ministry that stirs your heart.
- **Be a part of welcoming visitors** this holiday season by helping with events or simply offering a warm smile.
- **Extend a hand and share the load** as we prepare for meals, services, and events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

Blessings to Sabrina and Sergio on the birth of their child



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.



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