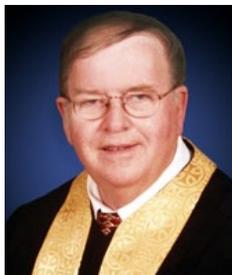


SAINT MATTHEW TODAY

Max's Corner



Got one more Sunday off—this Sunday.

I will return on July 6.

My doctor, Maria Gaydos, commented on my dress shorts.

She had never seen me in shorts—nor have you. Nor has anyone else in the world. I don't

wear shorts.

I have no shorts. To keep the cloth of my pants off my wounded knee, I shortened the legs of a regular pair of pants. The cut was jagged and uneven.

Looked pretty sad. This is what elicited the response from my doctor. She could not believe I did not have a regular pair of shorts.

Sorry. I'm just not a shorts person.

I've still got swelling and bruises, but Brian and Doug have the wheelbarrow ready, and I am

returning on July 6. Brian and Doug will roll me down the aisle while the congregation sings *Roll, Jordan, Roll*.

I enjoy watching our services from home.

I could hear the piano last week. That problem was fixed.

But Julian and Shannon do not need to share one microphone. Couldn't hear them. Could not hear a word of the hymns. Have no idea what the words are to that new hymn Mary likes.

Sounds pretty, though.

Thinking Differently

So—I have been in the place of the home viewer.

That home viewer is becoming more and more important to churches. Before people visit churches these days, they usually check them out online. That first impression is everything.

And we sometimes have more watching from home than we have in the sanctuary.

I got an e-mail recently from someone who watches regularly from Houston.

Let's give thanks—and get excited!

Breakfast this Sunday

It's a "We-Bring" Sunday.

If we don't bring—no breakfast.

Breakfast at 10:30.

Come early and eat.

This fellowship time is lovely.

July Experiment

During July, we will experiment with an

"Announcement" insert in the bulletin each week.

And there will be a brief-as-possible moment after the offering for vital information the congregation needs.

Please get all announcements to Vita, our church secretary, by Wednesday.

Bulletins will be printed on Thursday.

Worship is a kind of drama. We are going to see what

it feels like to let the drama of worship play out

without interruption. From Winston's eloquent

welcome to Kristi's postlude—just worship.

That's our July experiment.

For a whole month, let everything we do in worship—be worship.

A Mighty Thanks

It has been hard just doing the ordinary things after my fall.

My sister has carried extra work—especially in the days following the accident.

The food from the church has helped us carry on more normally. And the love and well-wishes have encouraged us.

A mighty thanks to all of you.

A special thanks to Mary Teague for just doing her thing and doing it so well.

I look forward to her sermon this week: *How We Talk to God*.

See you Sunday on my TV.

See you on July 6th in person.

God bless—MB

Did you know?

Chair Yoga is offered Tue., Thur., Fri. at 10:00 AM

Looking for a gentle way to improve flexibility, balance, and strength? **Chair Yoga** is a low-impact exercise perfect for all ages and abilities, providing the benefits of yoga while seated or using a chair for support. Whether you're recovering from an injury, managing mobility challenges, or simply looking for a relaxing way to move, this class is for you!

Mary's Corner



Greetings to all in the name of the risen Christ,

I want to share an important update from *Under the Bridge Ministries* in Fort Worth. They are currently in urgent need of the following items:

- Men's clothing (especially shorts)
- New underwear and socks
- Men's shoes, size 12 and up

There are also a few children now attending the Sunday gatherings. A small, easy-to-carry toy would bring them so much joy. For now, please hold on to any winter clothing, as this ministry has no storage space, and our church storage is also limited.

If you're able to help or if you have specific donations for this ministry, please speak with **Ronnie Sullivan**. Your generosity always makes a difference.

In other news, a neighborhood choir has reached out about hosting an *Eastside Community Assistance* benefit concert. I've tentatively agreed, pending approval from Pastor Max, and I'm hoping to schedule it for a Saturday night in July or August. Stay tuned for more details.

I pray you've spent this week speaking kindly to yourself. Life is too short to be unkind to others or yourself. This Sunday, we'll wrap up our *Words Matter* series by looking at how we speak to God.

May peace and blessings be with you—and a whole lot of shade! Please stay hydrated and take care in this summer heat.

With love,

Mary

Scan to Give Online



Friday's Word

Atheists are under severe threat. There is a minefield of evidence that God is real—and at any moment, the atheist may find his worldview blown to bits.



In my convalescence from my fall onto concrete (bruised but not broken), I've watched a lot of YouTube. And I watched a couple of NDE accounts, which triggered the algorithm—bringing up hundreds. My YouTube is wall-to-wall NDEs.

Many have titles like: *Life-long Atheist Dies and Meets God*.

And suddenly, those lifelong denials are shattered in seconds.

Their experience of God is undeniable. The NDE is said to be more real than anything in this world. And they don't want to deny it. Because the God they meet in their NDE is truly what they have looked for all their lives.

Yes, they have lived as atheists. They have not accepted Christ or held any religious beliefs. That does not change God's love for them.

The atheist encounters in heaven the unconditional love Jesus told us about. It's a love so powerful and so transforming, words cannot describe it.

Now—anyone, atheist or otherwise, who has lived an evil life may have a less pleasant experience. But most people are not evil. And most atheists just do not know enough to believe. They are, simply, ignorant about reality.

Everyone will eventually believe in God. We can resist God in this world. But the instant we die—God is there. Loving us.

So—
Why wait till we die to enjoy that love?

(I will return to the pulpit on July 6—in one week.)

Kids' News

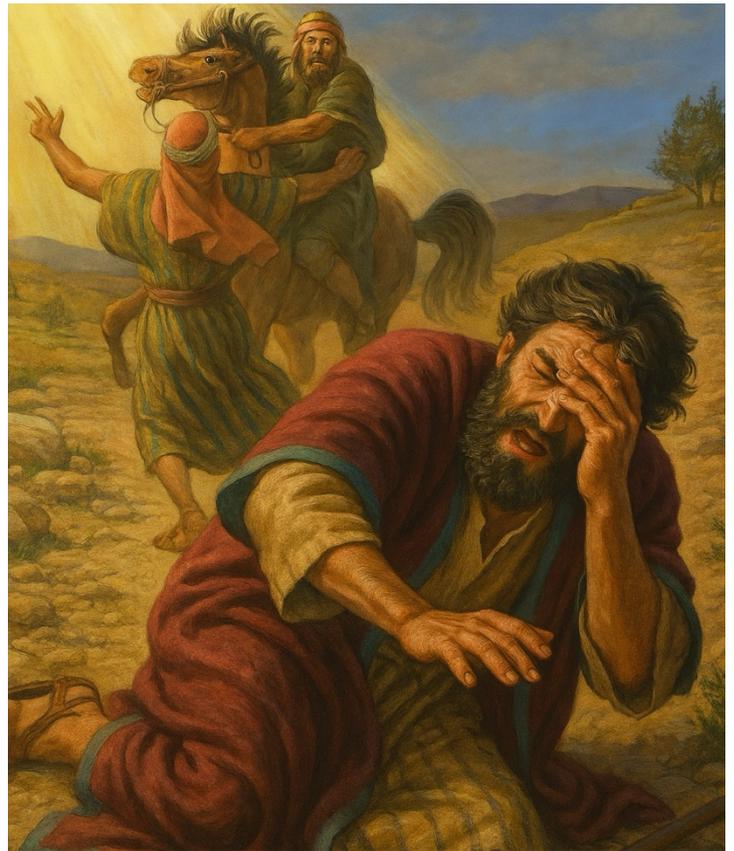
Saul's Big Surprise on the Road to Damascus

This week, we met a man named Paul—but when we first met him, he was known as Saul. Saul was a Pharisee, a religious leader who thought he was doing the right thing by stopping the followers of Jesus. He was full of determination—but it was the wrong kind. Saul was harsh and unkind to Christians, and he had permission to arrest them in faraway cities.

One day, Saul was walking the road to Damascus with a mission to cause trouble. But then something incredible happened.

Suddenly, a bright light from heaven flashed all around him, and he fell to the ground. He heard a voice say, **“Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?”**

Saul was stunned. “Who are you, Lord?” he asked. The voice replied, **“I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.”** (*Acts 9:4–5*)



When Saul got up, he couldn't see. He had been struck blind! His traveling companions had to take him by the hand and lead him the rest of the way to Damascus. For three days, Saul didn't eat or drink anything. He waited. He prayed. And in that waiting, something began to change deep inside of him.

Then God sent a man named Ananias to find Saul. Ananias was nervous—he had heard all the terrible things Saul had done. But God said, **“Go! This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name.”** (*Acts 9:15*)

Ananias placed his hands on Saul and said, **“Brother Saul, the Lord—Jesus who appeared to you on the road—has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit.”** (*Acts 9:17*)

Right then, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes. He could see again—and he saw everything differently. His heart was changed. Saul was baptized, and he became Paul, one of the most important messengers of Jesus the world has ever known.

But here's something important: Paul wasn't changed all at once. Even after his powerful encounter, it took time. He had to grow, to learn, and to be guided by others. Big changes don't always happen in a flash—even when God is involved. Sometimes, God works in us slowly, steadily, beautifully.

What We Learned

- ✓ God can change anyone—even someone who was once an enemy.
- ✓ Jesus meets us where we are, even when we're headed the wrong way.
- ✓ Real transformation takes time and sometimes help from others.
- ✓ God's love is patient, powerful, and always at work.

In class, we talked about what it means to grow and change with God's help. To celebrate transformation, each of our kids painted a colorful butterfly wind chime—a reminder that even when we can't see it right away, God is shaping something beautiful in us. We hope they bring joy and gentle music to every home.