

# SAINT MATTHEW TODAY

## Max's Corner



### I'm Back

For what it's worth, I'll return Sunday after a three-week absence following my collision with a concrete slab.

Great thanks to Mary for her loving and excellent work in my absence. I know you've enjoyed her sermon series—and so have I.

And online, Mary ended up doing a couple of solos last week when all help deserted her.

She was preacher and songleader. (Shannon and Julian were out, and Blake left early.)

But Mary's a singer. She's in our choir—one of her many hats.

I'm excited about being back.

If ministry were not at the heart of my life, I would have retired years ago.

But I warn you—I'm not moving very fast.

I know! I know!—I moved like a turtle before the accident.

Well, now I move like a dead turtle.

### Been Watching

I've been watching online like many of you.

I now realize that the primary microphones for picking up the organ are the ones on the pulpit and lectern. These are usually off at the beginning of the service, which makes the organ sound distant online.

Big in-house. Distant online.

We also hear almost no congregational singing, which is why Mary sounded like she was doing a solo. This is also why we mic Blake, Shannon, and Julian during the hymns.

### Breakfast This Sunday

If Winston is present, he'll be doing breakfast.

Feel free to help. Breakfast is at 10:30.

Come early and eat. This fellowship time is lovely.

### My Class

I'm easing back into things.

Preaching and Communion will be enough for my first Sunday back.

My class, **Discovering God**, will resume the following week—July 13.

Our topic: *What NDEs Tell Us About Salvation—Who Gets In, Who Doesn't?*

### New Procedure

I'm asking our musicians to get music titles to me by Wednesday morning by email or text. (It may not work this week.)

If you have announcements, get them to the church office—or to me—by Wednesday morning.

There will be an announcement page in the bulletin so that we do not have to take worship time for announcements—at least not much of it.

Veta will run the bulletins on Thursdays.

### This Sunday

It's Communion Sunday.

My sermon title is: **All Are One**

We'll talk about the first great truth of our existence: that we are all one with one another—and one with God.

I'll share a couple of wonderful and surprising stories.

We will sing.

We will gather at the Lord's Table.

And I will have the joy of being back in church.

Come—let us rejoice together.

### God bless—MB

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

Looking for a gentle way to stay active? Chair Yoga improves balance, strength, and flexibility—all from the comfort of a chair. Perfect for all ages and abilities!

# Mary's Corner



## Words That Carry Us Closer

Every breath we take, every move we make—everything we do is done in the presence of God.

Over the past three weeks, we've explored how *words matter*—how communication is not just between us and others, but between us and God. We talked about the way we speak to each other, the way we speak to ourselves, and the way we speak to God.

And what we've discovered is this: **it's all conversation with God.**

We are commanded to love our neighbor—that's how we speak to each other.

We are created in God's image and pursued by grace—that's how we speak to ourselves.

And when we pray, worship, sing, study, and serve—that's how we speak to God.

I hope you've found something meaningful in this sermon series. I know I have.

Please lift up our dear friend and church member **Linda Pruett** in prayer. She experienced a stroke last week and is now recovering at home. Her daughter is with her, and she's doing well—but prayers are deeply appreciated. If you're one of our *Methodist chefs*, a few small meals would be helpful in this season of healing.

And now... **Max is back!**

This Sunday, I encourage you—if you're able—to be present in the pews. If not, send him a note or a message to let him know you're glad he's back. I'll be sitting in the pew myself, feet up, simply ready to be fed by whatever word God has placed on Max's heart.

I love you all,

**Mary**

Scan to Give Online



# Friday's Word

*Rev. Brennan:*

*Treating NDEs as important puts a lot of credence on the functioning of an oxygen-deprived brain. I don't attach much importance to what our brains do when they are not working.*

— G.



Two lines from a longer, thoughtful email from a reader who calls himself an atheist.

I repeat: Atheism is as fragile as Fundamentalism. Both are ready to fall like a house of cards. They cannot stand up to reason and information.

Brains actually do not do anything when they are not working.

People having an NDE are absent from the brain—

yet they can often describe in detail everything doctors and nurses are doing to revive them. This can include what doctors and nurses say to one another—while there is no brain activity. Yes, the information is conclusive.

So, what I call highly resistant non-believers must run from this and all such evidence—just as fundamentalists must resist the clear truth that the Bible is not inerrant.

But I have absolutely no desire to fight reality. I want the truth.

Dr. Raj Parti, a Hindu who met Jesus in an NDE, concludes this:

- 1 – Consciousness exists outside the body.
- 2 – There is life after death.
- 3 – We are all connected to each other.
- 4 – There is one all-prevailing supreme love and intelligence which is the source of all creation.

No use to fight it.

Everyone who has an NDE says the same thing.

And so does Jesus.

I return to the pulpit Sunday after my accident. Worship at 11:00.

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# Kids' News

## Barnabas and Saul Are Sent

This week, we learned about the moment when the early church sent Barnabas and Saul (who we now know as Paul) on a very important journey. Before they left, the believers gathered to pray and worship. During that time, the Holy Spirit spoke and made it clear that Barnabas and Saul were being called to do something special for God.

Then something powerful happened: the church laid hands on them.

The laying on of hands is an ancient practice—a way of saying, “We believe in you,” and “We’re with you.” When the early believers placed their hands on Barnabas and Saul, they weren’t just sending them off—they were reminding them that they weren’t alone. The whole community was with them in spirit, and more importantly, God was with them too.

That’s how the Holy Spirit works. The Spirit speaks, calls, and sends. And the Spirit gives us strength, just like Jesus promised:

**“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you...”** (Acts 1:8)

Even today, the Spirit is still calling people to do big things in love, kindness, and faith. And sometimes the Spirit calls kids, too.

## What We Learned

- ✓ The Holy Spirit calls and sends people out to share God’s love.
- ✓ When we pray for each other, we are showing that we are a community of faith.
- ✓ God’s Spirit gives us power to be brave, loving, and kind wherever we go.
- ✓ We are never alone—our church and the Spirit go with us.

In class, we talked about what it means to be “sent” by God—not just to faraway places like Barnabas and Saul, but even to our schools, neighborhoods, and homes. We colored cutouts of hands and wrote encouraging prayers on them to remind each other: you’re not alone, and you are loved.

See you in church Sunday, where we’ll learn more about the Holy Spirit!

