# *Saint Matthew Today*

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER AND PRAYER CORNER

**At Saint Matthew UMC, we believe in open hearts, minds, and doors. Whoever you are, wherever you are on your journey, you are welcome here.**

5 August 2026

How do we serve joyfully when life feels anything but joyful?

This Sunday, Rev. Mary Teague reminded us that joy is not pretending everything is okay. Grief, worry, pain, and life's distractions are real. There are seasons when healing requires us to be still before God. Yet even in those moments, God has given us practices that gently draw our hearts back to Him.

Drawing from Psalm 100:1-5, we explored how worship, gratitude, praise, and joyful service are more than spiritual disciplines. They are gifts God has woven into our lives for our healing. These practices do not remove the chaos around us, but they help keep that chaos from defining us by reminding us that we are God's beloved children.

In Colossians 3:23-24, we were encouraged to approach every task with wholehearted devotion, remembering that whatever we do, we ultimately serve Christ. Whether in worship, at work, or in caring for others, even ordinary moments can become acts of joyful service.

The good news is that God has already created us to Love Boldly and Serve Joyfully. As we choose gratitude, praise, and faithful service, we rediscover the joy that has been there all along, waiting to draw us closer to God.

**Aug 9: 1:35 pm – MLB Baseball Orioles @ Rangers, Globe Life Field**
Tickets are $43. Sponsorships are available thanks to the generosity of our church family. Please pay by separate check. We look forward to an afternoon of baseball and fellowship!

**Aug 9: Back to School Blessings Sunday** Bring any student you know to church Sunday for a special blessing and a small token of our love from Saint Matthew UMC.

> Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.
>
> *Colossians 3:23-24*

**Coming Soon to Saturday Mornings**

## Coffee and Conversations Grief Support Group

Watch this space for more details.

# A Word from the Pastor

## Living in the Ways of the Spirit: Loving Boldly, Serving Joyfully

This week's message invited us deeper into the 2026 theme shared by the UMC, the Horizon Texas Conference, and our own church: *Serve Joyfully.* After four weeks of exploring what it means to *Love Boldly*, we were reminded that loving God, loving our neighbors, and even loving ourselves is only part of the call—God also invites us to serve with joy.

Psalm 100 encourages us to "*Serve the Lord with gladness; come before Him with joyful singing*," shifting our focus from life's chaos to God's steady goodness. Eugene Peterson's Message translation urges us to "*Bring a gift of laughter, sing yourselves into his presence*," reminding us that joy is not a mood but a spiritual posture.

The sermon acknowledged that joyful service isn't always easy. Grief, exhaustion, and the noise of the world can distract us from God. Yet joyful practices—praise, gratitude, singing—are gifts God built into us for our healing. As the sermon notes, "*Serving God joyfully protects us from the chaos of the world… it keeps it from destroying us.*"

When we choose to love boldly and serve joyfully, we step into the rhythm God designed for our souls. May we walk forward ready to embrace that joy.

## Blessing of the Students

This Sunday we will offer a special prayer and anointing of our school students. Please bring any and all the students you know for this sacred event. And do not forget our baseball game outing this weekend. Texas Rangers vs the Baltimore Orioles. I have forwarded tickets to those of you with MLB app access. For others, I have your tickets and will meet you at the game to get you into the park.

We will continue this Sunday with the next discussion of Serving Joyfully. This week we will examine what happens when your mood does not match the joyfulness you want to exhibit. Anyone familiar with this problem? This will be another sermon preached to myself that you get to eavesdrop on.

Thank you to Shannon, Julian, and Joshua for a beautiful Disney concert last Saturday night. And thank you to Blake and Shannon for creating such a moving musical service on Sunday morning.

See you this week, my dear friends and family. Wednesday at 10 am for Bible Study or Sunday at 1030am for breakfast followed by worship at 11 am.

Love to all,
Mary

# Kids' News

***Behold the Face***

Have you ever looked so carefully at something that you noticed details you had never seen before? Sometimes the more we pay attention, the more we discover.

This Sunday, we learned that David trusted God to hear his prayers and longed to be close to Him. At the end of Psalm 17, David says, "*I shall behold your face.*" While we can't see God the way we see each other, we can notice His presence all around us—in moments of kindness, in the beauty of creation, and in the love we share with others.

This week, try slowing down long enough to notice where God is at work. The more we pay attention, the more we'll discover that God has been with us all along.

## Family Challenge

Choose one moment each day to get everyone's attention by ringing a bell. Sit or stand quietly for a few seconds. Invite each person to name one thing they noticed that day—a sound, a feeling, a kind act, or something beautiful. Ring the bell once after each person shares. This simple practice reminds us to slow down and notice God's presence all around us.

## Talk About It

- What is something beautiful or kind you noticed today?
- When have you felt especially close to God?
- How can paying attention help us notice God's love?

## Read

- Psalm 17:1–7, 15

## Prayer

God, thank You for being close to us. Help us notice You with us today and every day. Amen.

# A Word from our Church Family

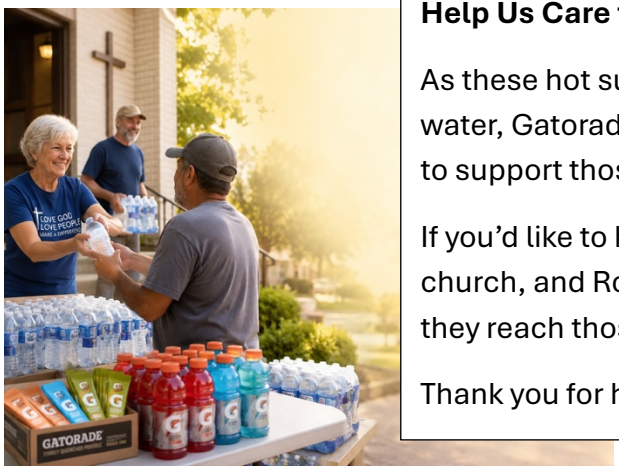
Thank you to everyone who helped make The Magic of Disney such a special evening for our church family!

We are especially grateful to everyone who brought food for the potluck dinner. Sharing a meal together after the concert gave us the opportunity to visit, laugh, and enjoy fellowship with friends old and new. Your generosity helped make the evening feel warm and welcoming from the very beginning.

A heartfelt thank you also goes to Shannon Davidson, Julian Rodriguez, and Joshua Rodriguez for sharing their incredible musical gifts with us. Their performances filled the sanctuary with joy, and the surprise appearance of Crouton, a lovable blue bird puppet created by one of Shannon's talented friends during "Man or Muppet," brought smiles and laughter to everyone in attendance.

Events like these remind us that some of our favorite memories are made when we gather together to share our gifts, our time, and our fellowship. Thank you to everyone who attended and to all who helped make the evening such a wonderful success.

*Would you like to share a word with our church family in next week's newsletter? We'd love to hear from you. Email pastor@saintmatthewumc.com.*




**Help Us Care for Our Community**

As these hot summer days continue, we're collecting bottled water, Gatorade, and individual Gatorade drink mix packets to support those in need in our community.

If you'd like to help, simply bring your donations to the church, and Ronnie and the outreach team will make sure they reach those who need them most.

Thank you for helping us share Christ's love in a practical way.