

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.

12 August 2026



Life has seasons when joy comes easily—and seasons when it feels almost impossible to find. This week, Rev. Mary Teague reminded us that Christian joy isn't dependent on our circumstances. It is rooted in God's presence with us.

Looking to Nehemiah's encouragement that "the joy of the Lord is your strength" and Peter's words to believers enduring hardship, we were reminded that God never promises an easy life. Instead, God promises to walk with us through every season, offering hope, strength, and a joy that cannot be taken away by life's challenges.

When we feel overwhelmed, discouraged, or weary, we are invited to turn back to God, who renews our hearts and reminds us that our hope is found not in what is happening around us, but in the One who is always with us.



St. Matthew UMC
2414 Hitson Ln.
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Aug 30: Worship Through Song

Sunday

Join us as our service will be focused on singing favorite hymns, praise and worship songs, and sacred text.

Coming Soon to Saturday Mornings

Coffee and Conversations

Grief Support Group

It looks like we will begin this group On October 24, 2026. I will confirm this with our facilitator, Mary Orndorff

Thank God, the God and Father of
our Lord Jesus Christ, that in his
great mercy we men have been born
again into a life full of hope, through
Christ's rising again from the dead!

1 Peter 1:3 (JB Phillips)



A Word from the Pastor

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

Welcome to the dog days of summer—the stretch of sweltering heat that leaves many of us feeling drained, irritable, and spiritually sluggish. Traditionally, this season marks not only the hottest weeks of the year but also a time of stagnation, when even simple tasks feel heavy. I'll be honest: these temperatures do not bring out my best mood. Once, I could work construction in any weather. Now, as a post-menopausal woman capable of generating my own internal furnace, one blast of that hot parking-lot wind can snatch my joy in an instant.

And that's the truth for many of us. Joy slips away for countless reasons. Physical or emotional pain interrupts it. HALT—being hungry, angry, lonely, or tired—blocks it. Sometimes the behavior of others interferes with it. In these dog-day moments, when our mood doesn't match the joy we want to show, we may wonder how to reconnect with God's strength.

Scripture reminds us that joyful service is not something we manufacture. Nehemiah told the newly returned exiles, "Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength." (Neh. 8:9-10) Peter wrote to scattered believers that even in trials, God gives "a joy that words cannot express." (1Pet. 1:8-9) This joy is not self-made; it is a gift from the risen Christ through the Holy Spirit.

Leading Courageously

This coming Sunday, we will continue our series on Living in the Ways of the Spirit: Loving Boldly, Serving Joyfully, Leading Courageously. Leading Courageously is the final theme for our 2026 UMC ministry series. Until then, remember these things:

1. Serving joyfully is a holy habit. When you notice your joy fading, pause. Pray. Ask God for a fresh dose of joy. Even in the hottest days of summer, God's joy remains steady, renewing, and ready to strengthen you.
2. Loving boldly is possible through the presence of God in our lives and so is serving joyfully. Our only task is to surrender to the power of God in our hearts and let that surrender be visible through our actions in this world.

Looking at the weather forecast, we are in for a few more weeks of heat. Please stay indoors, if possible, during the hottest parts of the day. Pay attention to the air quality warnings on the local weather forecast. And drink your water as your doctor instructs.

My love and blessings to all!

Mary



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Kids' News

Remembering Joy

Have you ever had something happen that was so good you wanted to tell someone about it?

This Sunday, we learned that remembering God's goodness can fill our hearts with joy. In Psalm 105, God's people are invited to remember the wonderful things God has done and to tell others about them. The psalm reminds us of Joseph's story. Even though Joseph faced some very difficult times, God never forgot him. God stayed with Joseph, guided him through every challenge, and used him to care for many people.



When we remember how God has been faithful in the past, it gives us hope for today. Joy isn't about having a perfect life. Joy grows when we remember that God is always with us, even when life is hard. Sharing those stories with others helps them remember God's goodness, too.

Family Challenge

This week, take turns sharing a story about a time when you saw God at work in your life. It could be a prayer God answered, someone who showed you kindness, or a time God helped your family through something difficult.

After each story, say together: "Thank You, God, for always being with us!"

Talk About It

- Why do you think God wants us to remember the wonderful things He has done?
- How did God stay with Joseph during the hard times in his life?
- What is one story of God's goodness that you can share with someone this week?

Read

- Psalm 105:1–6, 16–22

Prayer

Dear God, thank You for always being with us. Help us remember Your goodness, trust You every day, and share Your joy with others. Amen.



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.