

SAINT MATTHIAS

EPISCOPAL CHURCH

The Saint Matthias Messenger

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Holy Eucharist
Sundays at 8:00 & 10:00 AM
First Saturdays at 5:00 PM

Services streamed live on
Sundays at 10:00 AM at
[https://www.facebook.com/
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How Can We Help?

If someone asked you to describe God to them, or asked you why you are a Christian, or asked you what being a believer does for you, what would you say? Could you answer in such a way that they understood what being in partnership with God meant to you? Could you help them move from their unbelief to understanding the reality of God and all God brings to this life and to the next? Here are a couple of examples from scripture of folks who were facing that exact problem.

From Exodus: But Moses said to the Lord, "O my Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past not even now that you have spoken to your servant; but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue." Then the Lord said to him, "Who gives speech to mortals? Who makes them mute or deaf, seeing or blind? Is it not I the Lord? Now go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you are to speak."

From Luke: "When they bring you before the synagogues, the rulers, and the authorities, do not worry about how you are to defend yourselves or what you are to say; for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that very hour what you ought to say."

The Moses quote is particularly poignant because Moses wasn't satisfied by God's promise to tell him what to say. He needed more, and God being the unbelievable God that God is, gave him even another gift by letting Aaron speak for him, someone who did not have the speech problem to which Moses referred.

I once had the opportunity to speak with a Muslim woman from Iran who had fallen away from her faith and knew nothing about Jesus Christ. We were having coffee with three other people. This was before I had entered seminary or thought the possibility of priesthood even existed for me. It was an unbelievably enlightening experience for both of us. She was introduced to Jesus, and I was astounded by God's gift of eloquence to me on the subject.

Ladies and gentlemen our mission field is right outside our doors. We need not spend a lot of money going to Africa or El Salvador or anywhere else for that matter to find those in spiritual and physical need. The opportunities are everywhere.

We are surrounded by a hurting and confused world, a world in need of partnership with Jesus Christ. A third of the people around us under the age of thirty-five have never been inside a church and that group is growing larger every day. Many more only have a rudimentary knowledge of the



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meaning Christ can bring to their lives. Even more have no idea why church attendance might be a good thing.

This is our mission field. God has promised to supply us with the words needed to solve these massive problems as we encounter them, one opportunity at a time. Next time you get a chance, trust God, and reach out to someone in need. Talk to them about God. Talk about the difference Jesus makes in your life. Talk about the benefits of church attendance. These are the greatest gifts we have to give.

Fr. Bill +

Easter's Season of Glad Surprise

What a wonderful time this is! Many people think of Easter as one festive Sunday and no more. Easter is actually an entire season that kicks off with Resurrection Sunday and continues for 50 days until we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Long after the Peeps are eaten and the baskets are put away the celebration continues. Days get longer, the air is warmer and everything is blooming. (Check out the billowing yellow flowers on the trees on Bright about a block down from the church. Against a clear blue sky they're just spectacular!)

The season of Easter is especially meaningful this year. As more and more of us get vaccinated and so many parts of our world open up there's a sense of relief and joy. I hesitate to say we're returning to normal. To long for normal would be to settle. This feels like something brand new, a powerful resurrection – death into life – that is happening over and over again.

The wonderful theologian and writer Howard Thurman talks about this as the “glad surprise.” His emphasis is on glad. There are surprising things that happen that shock or frighten or bewilder us. But the glad surprise gives us a sudden feeling of delight and elation that lifts our spirits. This happens on many levels: the realization that you've forgotten your key but someone has left the door unlocked for you “just in case”; the appointment you've worried about that goes well; the treasured item you thought was long lost is found in a dusty box or drawer; when the happiest people you've seen in a very long time are those standing in long lines to receive a shot. One afternoon this week I heard for the first time in months an ice cream truck slowly moving down Washington Avenue playing Jingle Bell Rock. I hope you've had many such glad surprises.

But there's a deeper understanding of the glad surprise that speaks to our Easter season. It is the very ground and nature of hope about life itself. At the end of a long tunnel of anxiety, fear and tragedy, the ultimate glad surprise of the empty tomb leads from darkness into light. It's when we step into that light following the teachings of Jesus Christ that we feel resurrection that is compelling and exhilarating to our very core. It is the announcement that life cannot be conquered by death and that life is bottomed by the glad surprise from which we spring into resurrected life. “Take courage,” Thurman tells us.

“When we have exhausted our store of endurance,
When our strength has failed before the day is half done,
When we reach the end of our hoarded resources,
Our Father's full giving is only begun.”

Personally I don't want 2019 back. As we re-open for Sunday worship and gatherings of our various ministry groups, I'll take the resurrection moments of glad surprise we'll see together each day in Easter 2021 and beyond.

Blessings, Rev. Carole+



Detail of a stained glass window in Howard University Chapel featuring Thurman

How to Pray Without Ceasing - Part III

"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

-1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

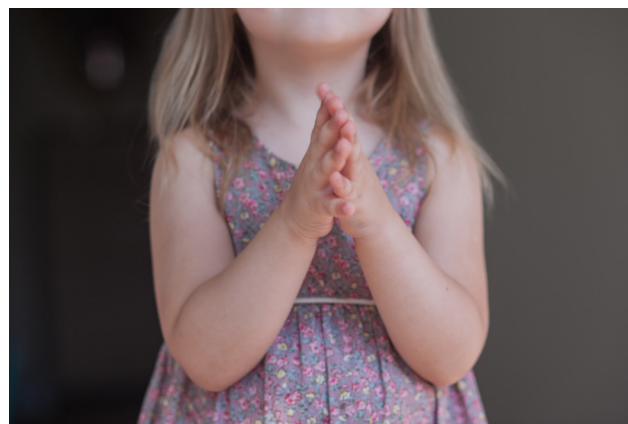
Before I pick up the question of how to pray without ceasing again, I feel that I should write an introduction-in-retrospect and tell you the story behind this series of articles that J.D. and I are now writing. With only one caveat: there isn't a story. Or perhaps to put it more accurately, the "story" doesn't look like what you'd expect it to; it doesn't start with either of us planning on writing a series of articles. When I sat down to write my first article about prayer two months ago, I thought I was just writing a standalone piece - just pouring words onto a page, like I do, and that would be that. But then...

...J.D. decided he wanted to write a part 2. Now I feel compelled to write a part 3. And we both suspect we are currently at the beginning of this project, rather than at its end. In other words, I cannot explain the origin of this series by pointing to a plan that J.D. and I schemed up before we started writing. So what can I point to? Why are we doing this? Where is our writing about praying flowing from?

As soon as I typed out the questions above, the answer came to me quite quickly: I myself want to pray without ceasing. I believe it is possible. I believe Paul really did mean to invite the Thessalonian church into neverending prayer - and that he really did expect many of them to accept this invitation, and step into this life. But I'm still fuzzy on how exactly to get there. And that is why I write.

I write to solidify my own commitment to pursuing neverending prayer. And I write because I have made many discoveries and uncovered many clues over the years regarding the path that leads into neverending prayer. I want to synthesize these insights into something more robust and helpful. And the fact that I am doing this in front of you, and other St. Matthias parishioners, is important. Because this pushes me to say things in a way that makes sense to other people, and not just myself - a pressure which has always done good things for my writing in the past.

So that's the "story." That's why I write (I think something similar can be said for J.D.), and will continue to write. You're basically being pulled into something that is part research project, part expedition diary, and part something else too, probably. Whether I should say "sorry" or "you're welcome" for this fact, remains to be seen. And before I close, let me share a short discovery I made years ago about the path that leads to neverending prayer.



The journey into deeper prayer must always begin with a prayer. Some form of this one: "God, help me to pray." Other forms it can take: "God, help me to pray without ceasing" - "God, increase my desire to pray" - "God, I don't know how to pray... please help me." Now this might seem like an obvious insight... that if we want to pray more frequently, more truthfully, or to start praying for the first time - the first thing we should do is ask God for help. And yet if it is obvious, why aren't we praying this prayer every hour? "God, help me to pray." This is the prayer that begets prayer. The key which unlocks a life full of prayer. Pray it as frequently as you can think to. And help will come.

-Sam Hayashida, Youth Sunday School Teacher



YOUTH & CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES Coming Back to Church

This Easter was a particularly joyful one for our families with youth and kids. After a year of seeing each other only on Zoom, we were finally able to be with one another in person again. On March 21, we met to assemble Easter baskets for the local food bank using the materials donated by our parish throughout Lent. Seven of our youth and kids attended, along with parents and older siblings. Kathy Adams and Janice Webster of the Episcopal Church Women set up an incredibly well-organized Easter basket assembly space on the St. Francis Patio, and Rev. Carole opened the activity with a devotional on sharing God's love with others. In about an hour, we assembled all 200 baskets!

On Easter Sunday, we met on the patio again for a short Easter service followed by an egg hunt. Twenty-seven people attended, including parents, kids, clergy, and Sunday school teachers. The youth and older kids read the scriptures, and some of our youngest children helped with communion. All went home with Easter baskets and hearts full.

Our next family activities will be on Sunday June 6 and July 11: we'll be resuming monthly playground days. Families are invited to bring their own lunch and stick around after church for a picnic on the playground. This is a wonderful opportunity for both kids and parents to socialize. For details about these or other youth and kids activities, please feel free to get in touch with me at andrea@stmatthiaswhittier.org.

-Andrea Schmid, Youth & Children's Ministries Coordinator



Services, Events, and Small Groups

Many of our small groups are currently in the process of returning to in-person meetings, some are using a hybrid model, and others are choosing to stay on Zoom for now. Contact the small group leader or see the church website for the most current info.

- ✦ **Holy Eucharist**, Sundays at 8am (in-person only) and 10am (in-person and streaming live at <https://www.facebook.com/stmatthiaswhittier>)
- ✦ **Sunday School** - Contact Andrea Schmid (andrea@stmatthiaswhittier.org) for details.
- ✦ **Daughters of the King**, 3rd Sundays at 1pm - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/618771589>
- ✦ **Bible Study**, Wednesdays at 10am - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/778461428>
- ✦ **Men Eating Badly** - First Saturdays at 8 am, Greenleaf Cafe - Contact Fr. Bill for details.
- ✦ **Men's Bibliophile Group**, next meeting June 17 at 6:30 pm to discuss *For Whom the Bell Tolls* by Ernest Hemingway - Contact Chuck Carrillo for the Zoom meeting ID and pass code.
- ✦ **Women's Book Group**, next meeting May 2 at 7pm to discuss *At Home in Mitford* by Jan Karon- Email Andrea Schmid at andrea@stmatthiaswhittier.org for details.
- ✦ **Divine Connection Through Body and Breath**, Fridays at 10am, Saturdays at 10:30am, and Sundays

EPISCOPAL CHURCH WOMEN

A "Sweet" Way to Support Saint Matthias!

ECW is having their annual bake sale. This is our major fundraiser for the year. It helps fund our Easter Basket Project, Teacher Appreciation and various other activities throughout the year, and it allows us to support other St. Matthias groups. The bake sale will be online again this year. You will be able to bid on all types of deliciousness from May 30th through June 13th. The buyer and baker will arrange the delivery/pick-up between themselves. The men created some popular items last year, so, men, please join the creative women of St. Matthias and create your masterpieces! Everyone is welcome to make an item or two to sell, and everyone is welcome bid. To participate in baking, please email the following information to Kathy Adams (ktouch52@gmail.com) between May 1st and May 23rd: the name of the baker, the name of the item(s), the quantity, a short description, and if you will deliver your item or if it must be picked up by the buyer. Please check in upcoming Midweek Updates for details on how to bid. Your participation will be greatly appreciated. Happy eating!



-Janice Webster, ECW Co-Chair

At Home with Christ

In *The Longing for Home*, Frederick Buechner writes: "The word longing comes from the same root as the word long in the sense of length in either time or space and also the word belong, so that in its full richness to long suggests to yearn for a long time for something that is a long way off and something that we feel we belong to and that belongs to us. ... The home we long for and belong to is finally where Christ is. I believe that home is Christ's kingdom, which exists both within us and among us as we wend our prodigal ways through the world in search of it."

While awaiting our heavenly home, we pray: Most High God, be our shelter from the storm and our dwelling place. May we always be at home with you in the eternal household you have prepared for those who love you. And may Christ always find a pleasant home in and among us. As you have welcomed us into your family, give us the compassion to welcome others into our own homes and lives, knowing that as we do it unto the least of these, we do it unto Jesus, in whose name we pray. Amen.

(Source: *The Newsletter Newsletter*)

PUZZLE



A lasting promise

Before ascending into heaven, Jesus speaks a final promise to the disciples.

Directions: Use the picture clues to find the letters. Then write that word below to complete Acts 1:8, NIV.

Find a letter that's in  but not in . _____

Find a letter that's in  but not in . _____

Find a letter that's in  but not in . _____

Find a letter that's in  but not in . _____

Find a letter that's in  but not in . _____

“But you will receive _____ when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

ACTS 1:8, NIV

Answer: power

Bible Quiz

Acts 1:1 (NIV) reads: “In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach.” What “former book” did the author write to Theophilus?

A. Matthew
B. Mark
C. Luke
D. John

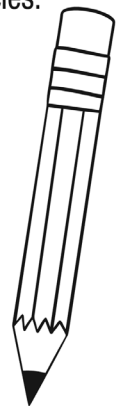
Answer: C (See Luke 1:1-4)

WHERE IN THE WORLD?

Jesus commands us to be his witnesses. This craft is a reminder to reach out to all our “circles.”

What you need:

- 5 bowls or cups (assorted sizes)
- Construction paper
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Brad fastener
- Crayons or markers



What you do:

1. Place the bowls and cups upside down, each on a different color of paper. Trace around the circles and cut them out.
2. With a pencil, pierce a small hole atop each circle. Layer circles on each other from largest to smallest, aligning the holes. Insert the brad through all layers.
3. Starting in the center, label the circles *my house, my city, my state, my country, the world*. Draw a picture on each one.
4. Pray, asking Jesus how you can spread his message.

Thank You for Sponsoring the *Messenger*

If you're interested in sponsoring the *Messenger* by purchasing space on this page, please contact Andrea Schmid at andrea@stmatthiaswhittier.org.

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Thank You



Wow! We are overwhelmed by the support we've received from this wonderful church community. Thank you, people of St. Matthias, for opening your arms and hearts to our growing family. The ECW shower was truly an outpouring of love, as well as the spontaneous expressions of support we received separately. To everyone who provided a gift, sent a kind thought and shared love with us for our new addition, we are forever grateful. Our baby girl could not have asked for a warmer welcome to the world. Thank you for remembering us and doing the loving thing.

*Sincerely,
The Corbitt family
(Ben, Sarah, and Baby Isla)*

Worship at Saint Matthias - May 2021

May 2

Fifth Sunday of Easter

Scripture:

Acts 8:26-40, 1 John 4:7-21, John 15:1-8, Psalm 22:24-30

May 9

Sixth Sunday of Easter

Scripture:

Acts 10:44-48, 1 John 5:1-6, John 15:9-17, Psalm 98

May 16

Seventh Sunday in Easter

Scripture:

Acts 1:15-17, 21-26; 1 John 5:9-13; John 17:6-19; Psalm 1

May 23

Pentecost

Scripture:

Acts 2:1-21; Romans 8:22-27; John 15:26-27, 16:4b-15; Psalm 104:25-35, 37

May 23

First Sunday after Pentecost: Trinity Sunday

Scripture:

Isaiah 6:1-8, Romans 8:12-17, John 3:1-17, Psalm 29



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