



**St. Matthew United Methodist**

A place to grow in Christ

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

**Winter 2024**

## *From the Pastor's Desk*



### **Finding Hope in New Beginnings**

St. Matthew family, can you feel it? That buzz of possibility as we step into a brand-new year? It's like God's whispering to us, "I'm not done yet." Isaiah 43:19 puts it perfectly: "See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland." That's the God we follow—the One who brings life out of dry places and hope into every moment. So, here's to fresh starts, deeper faith, and all the wild and wonderful things God has in store for us this year.

One of those wild and wonderful things might not be obvious to all of us: our kitchen is brand-new! Thanks to some incredibly generous grants, almost every major piece of equipment has been replaced, items have been restocked, and surfaces have been redone. Seriously, the trustees, staff, and our Mobile Meals and TFAP volunteers knocked it out of the park on this one. The space is now ready to handle the myriad of different ministries that feed our community, and it's going to be such a blessing. And there will probably be a few more changes before it's all said and done. Huge thanks to everyone who gave their time, energy, and resources to make it happen.

But if the only thing that was changing around here was our kitchen, we'd be in pretty rough shape. God also wants to work on our hearts! So, ready to dig into something inspiring? Starting January 15th, we launched a study on the book of Acts. This isn't just any Bible study—it's a chance to explore how the early church leaned into the Holy Spirit and changed the world. If they could do it, why not us? You don't have to have been to our introductory sessions to enjoy this study. Come join the conversation every Wednesday at 6:30 PM in the Prayer Room. Bring your Bible and your curiosity. We'll save you a seat.

One other big change this year involves the Worship Project. This modern worship experience is moving to Sunday nights! Starting January 26th you can join us at 6:00 PM for a worship experience that's casual, heartfelt, and all about connecting with God. Going forward it will generally be on the last Sunday evening of each month. Whether you're a regular or just checking it out for the first time, we'd love to see you there. Our hope is that by coming together and pouring our hearts out to God we can be a part of something incredibly special.

So as we kick off this new year, let's keep that hope alive. God's got big plans, not just for our church but for each of us. And here's the best part: we get to be part of what He's doing. So, let's show up. Let's love big, live bold, and trust that the best is still ahead. Remember, God is making streams in the wasteland and new life in us. Let's keep walking forward together.

God's peace and much love,  
Rev. Jonathon Clinesmith

**Worship Online 11am:** [www.facebook.com/StMatthewMWC](https://www.facebook.com/StMatthewMWC) or [www.stmatthew.org/sermons](https://www.stmatthew.org/sermons)  
**Give Online:** [www.stmatthew.org/giving](https://www.stmatthew.org/giving)



# *Words About Worship*

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## *From the Director of Music Ministries*



Happy New Year! I love the beginning of a new year! It seems as though the whole world sparkles! This is our chance to begin again, to start fresh. Last year is history. If it was a great one, celebrate! If it left a lot to be desired, shake the dust off and start again. Everything is new!

As we contemplate worship in this new year, I want to share a blog that I shared in my newsletter nine years ago. I think it is more timely now than it was then. Case in point, some of those small ones in 2016 are the older children who had leading roles in our Children's Christmas Program on Christmas Eve.

This article was written by Jamie Bruesehoff,\* It was titled, "Dear Parents with Young Children in Church." I think it is as timely now as it was when I originally read it. Bruesehoff said, in part, "You are doing something really, *really* important. I know it's not easy. I see you with your arms overflowing, and I know you came to church already tired. Parenting is tiring. Really tiring. I watch you bounce and sway trying to keep the baby quiet, juggling the infant car seat and the diaper bag as you find a seat. I see you wince as your child cries. I see you anxiously pull things out of your bag of tricks to try to quiet them...I watch you cringe when your little girl asks an innocent question in a voice that might not be an inside voice let alone a church whisper. I hear the exasperation in your voice as you *beg* your child to just sit, to be quiet as you feel everyone's eyes on you. Not everyone is looking, but I know it feels that way."

"I know you're wondering, is it worth it? Why do I bother? I know you often leave church more exhausted than fulfilled. **But what you are doing is so important.** (emphasis added)...When you are here, the church is filled with a joyful noise. When you are here, the Body of Christ is more fully present. When you are here, we are reminded that this worship thing we do isn't about Bible study or personal, quiet contemplation but coming together to worship as a community where all are welcome, where we share in the Word and Sacrament together. When you are here, I have hope that these pews won't be empty in 10 years when your kids are old enough to *sit quietly and behave in worship*. I know they are learning how and why we worship now, before it's too late. **They are learning that worship is important.**" (emphasis added)

"I know how hard it is to do what you're doing, but I want you to know *it matters*...It matters to the congregation to know that families care about faith, to see young people...and even on those weeks when you can't see the little moments, it matters to your children."

"It matters that they learn that worship is what we do as a community of faith, that everyone is welcome, that *their* worship matters. When we teach children that their worship matters, we teach them that they are *enough* right here and right now as members of the church community. They don't need to wait until they can believe, pray or worship a certain way to be welcome here, and I know adults who are still looking to be shown that. It matters that children learn that they are an integral part of this church, that their prayers, their songs, and even their badly (or perfectly-timed, depending on who you ask) cries and whines *are* a joyful noise because it means they are present."

"I know it's hard, but thank you for what you do when you bring your children to church. Please know that your family — with all of its noise, struggle, commotion, and joy — are not simply tolerated, you are a vital part of the community gathered in worship."

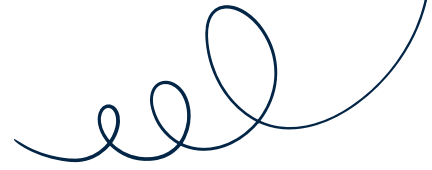
Do I hear an amen? I hope and pray that I do!

Email [gtatum@stmatthew.org](mailto:gtatum@stmatthew.org)  
for questions about music ministry.

*Shalom,*

Originally appeared on I Am Totally "That" Mom by Jamie Bruesehoff, Blogger, September 14, 2013 *Gayle Tatum*

# St. Matthew Young Adults



## Monday Night Small Group

Join us at 5:30pm on the first and third Mondays for dinner and fellowship with other young adults!



## Wednesday Night Young Adults

Join us on Wednesday at 6:30pm for our Midweek Programming! Olivia has some excellent lessons prepared for us, we would love to have you!



## The Worship Project

Join us on Sunday, January 26th at 6pm for a Modern Worship Experience!

There will be food, fellowship, and worship! You won't want to miss it!

Join our GroupMe to keep up-to-date with all our upcoming events

Director of Student Ministries: Kalyn Roark

# Alpha Omega News

Sunday School 9:40AM | Sunday Youth 5-7PM | Wednesday Youth 6:30-7:30PM

The purpose of Alpha Omega Student Ministries is to stand on the foundation, with a heart to worship, a mind to reach out, and hands to serve and love.

## Want to Volunteer?

We have many opportunities to hang out with our youth and help shape the future leaders of our church! If you are interested in volunteering in the following areas, please let Kalyn know!

- Mystery Trips, Lock-ins, and other special events
- Wednesday Night Activities
- Sunday Night Activities
- Mission Trips and Volunteer/Service Activities

## New Year, New Lessons!

With the start of a new year, that means its the start of new lesson series!

Christianity is more than just another spiritual option. It uniquely tells us the truth about God, the world, and ourselves. On Sunday nights, we will be looking at the foundations that go into our faith.

Wednesday Nights will kick-off with an in-depth look at the Fruits of the Spirit and how we can show them in our everyday lives.



## Worship Project

Sunday, January 26th is our Worship Project at 6pm! Come enjoy worship, snacks, and fellowship.

Youth will meet at 5pm for dinner and games, then go to the Worship Project together as a group.



## Interactive Bulletin Board

Check out our interactive bulletin across from the youth room!

This month's theme is Jokes! Take a few minutes to write a silly joke to make someone laugh!

\*Keep it Clean\*

## Upcoming Events:

- Jan. 5th: Sunday Night Youth
- Jan. 12th: Sunday Night Youth
- Jan. 15th: Midweek is BACK!
- Jan. 19th: Sunday Night Youth
- Jan. 22nd: Wednesday Youth
- Jan. 26th: Sunday Night Youth/Worship Project
- Jan. 29th: Wednesday Youth



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## Winter Retreat

Get ready for our first Winter Retreat, February 15th-17th!

The youth will be spending the weekend at Oak Park Retreat Center in Perkins, Oklahoma!

We will be leaving the church at 10am on Saturday the 15th and returning by 2pm on Monday the 17th!

Cost is \$25 per person to help cover cost of t-shirts and food.

What to bring:

- |  |               |
|--|---------------|
| Clothes to work in that are warm (2 sets)              | Toiletries    |
| Clothes to hang out in                                 | Shampoo       |
| -Warm and comfy  | Conditioner   |
| Clothes to sleep in                                    | Soap          |
| Closed-toed shoes                                      | Hairbrush     |
| House shoes or shoes to walk around the retreat center | Toothbrush    |
| Medications  | Toothpaste    |
| Games you might like to play                           | Deodorant     |
|  | Phone Charger |

## Youth Sunday

Sunday February 23rd is Youth Sunday! Our theme this year is over Luke 6:27-38.

Youth will need to be in the sanctuary by 7:30am to get ready before the first service.

We will have rehearsal on Saturday the 22nd at 5pm. We should only go for about an hour and a half.



## Interactive Bulletin Board

Check out our interactive bulletin across from the youth room!

This month's theme is Love! Take a few minutes to write down something or someone you love!

## Upcoming Events:

- Feb. 2nd: Sunday Night Youth
- Feb 5th: Wed. Night Youth
- Feb. 9th: Sunday Night Youth
- Feb. 12th: Ding-Dong Prayer Dash
- Feb. 15th-17th: Winter Retreat
- Feb. 19th: Wed. Night Youth
- Feb. 22nd: Youth Sunday Practice
- Feb. 23rd: Youth Sunday - NO YOUTH - Worship Project
- Feb. 26th: Wed. Night Youth

# St. Matthew Young Adults



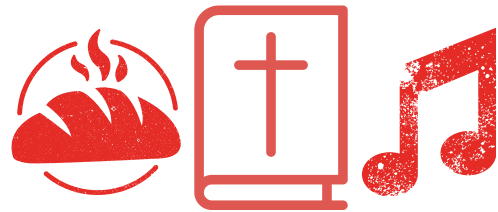
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**MIDWEEK**  
**@ST. MATTHEW**



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There will be food, fellowship, and worship! You won't want to miss it!

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Director of Student Ministries: Kalyn Roark



# LIBRARY NEWS



January/February 25

from Terri

## GENEROSITY ABOUNDS

Special thanks to the generous library patrons who stepped up and selected names from the 2024 Library Christmas Tree!

I'm so grateful for the generous support of Debi Alleman; Karren Brown; Kathy Ellis; Diana Hughes; Diane Mathis; Beverly McDaniel; Joyce Perkins; Marilyn Solomon; Carolyn Specht; Joan Tiernan; Cynthia Weldon; and one or more Anonymous donors.

We received books in every genre from Amish to Historical to Mystery to Suspense. Stop by the library and check one out today!

### CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2024 BIBLE IN A YEAR GROUP!

<i>Eric Autry</i>	<i>Donna Bassham</i>
<i>Jackie Elk</i>	<i>Dayna Heath</i>
<i>Lacey Holland</i>	<i>Larry Kisner</i>
<i>Chirlee Lang</i>	<i>Susie Larsen</i>
<i>Joyce Perkins</i>	<i>Carolejean Reynolds</i>
<i>Kaye Rhoades</i>	<i>Emily Robinson</i>
<i>Kay Ross</i>	<i>Cynthia Weldon</i>
<i>Terri Weldon</i>	<i>Karolann Whetsell</i>

They just completed reading the entire Bible!

### 2025 CHALLENGE

Have you considered reading the Bible in 2025? It's not too late to sign up, you can be caught up in no time. Sign up now and I'll help keep you on track. You can read your Bible with a daily reading plan or the library has copies of *A Bible In A Year*, or use an app. Sign up on the list on the bulletin board outside the library or contact Terri via Facebook or at [Westieplace@cox.net](mailto:Westieplace@cox.net) to get started.

Ash Wednesday is on March 5<sup>th</sup>, so it is time to start thinking about a Lenten Study. The library has a nice selection to choose from. Plus, two of the Nobody Left Out books Karren donated are 40-day studies and one is a journey through the stations of the cross

### NEW NONFICTION BOOKS!!!!

Karren Brown donated the *Nobody Left Out* books by Michael Murray. They are: *A Walk With Jesus Down Hope Road*; *Nobody Left Out, Jesus Meets the Messes*; *Nobody Left Out, Jesus and the Way of Sorrows*; and *Nobody Left Out, Waves of Grace*. The author, Michael Murray, talks about the God he sees when he reads the Bible. A Jesus who invites and includes everybody. Who wants us all to follow Him one shaky step at a time.



### VALENTINE'S DAY BOOKS

Since this newsletter covers both January and February, I wanted to make sure I mention the library's selection of books for Valentine's Day. We have a trilogy by Melody Carlson that includes *Once Upon a Winter's Heart*, *Love Gently Falling*, and *Your Heart's Desire*. The library also has two additional romances: *Pieces from the Past* and *Love's Surprise*. If you prefer a little mystery at Valentine's Day, try *A Fedora Offense* or *Deceptive Hearts*.



### GENTLE REMINDER

Don't forget to return overdue library books!

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!

-Philippians 4:4

We're back full swing after the holidays! I'm so proud of each of the kiddos that performed in our Christmas program. They worked so hard, and did a great job bringing the true message of Christmas.

WOW is back on Wednesdays until May 14th. We are studying the stories of the Old Testament! Sunday School is every Sunday at 9:40am. We have some amazing teachers and would love to have more participation. Parents, while your kids are in class feel free to join our adult Sunday School class. Make 2025 a great year pointing your family towards God!

Thanks!  
Ms. Katelynn

AT ST. MATTHEW, OUR MISSION IS TO SHOWER GOD'S LOVE UPON OUR CHILDREN

**SO THAT THEY WILL KNOW:  
GOD LOVES THEM... UNCONDITIONALLY.  
CHURCH IS A WONDERFUL, SAFE PLACE TO BE.  
STORIES OF JESUS.**

WILL YOU ANSWER THE LORD'S CALL AND BE A PART OF THIS MINISTRY?  
CHRIST HAS NO HANDS BUT YOURS.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### MARCH

March 5-Ash Wednesday  
March 19-Spring Break NO WOW

#### APRIL

April 13-Palm Sunday/  
Eggstravaganza  
April 20-Easter

### WANT TO HELP OUR KIDS?

WE'RE LOOKING FOR  
MORE CHILDREN'S  
CHURCH TEACHERS!  
VOLUNTEER FOR 1 SUNDAY  
EVERY OTHER MONTH!

Contact Information:  
Katelynn Henderson  
405.740.4379  
children@stmatthew.org

### WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

#### SUNDAYS

Sunday School @ 9:40am  
Children's Church during 11am Service  
\*No Children's Church 1st  
Sunday of the Month

#### WEDNESDAYS

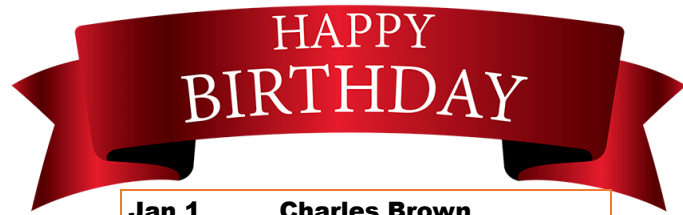
WOW @ 6:30pm



# January & February at St. Matthew

## Upcoming Events

Jan 26	6pm	Worship Project
Jan 27	6:30pm	Finance Committee
Jan 28	6:30pm	SPRC
Feb 6	8am	TEFAP
Feb 9	Noon	Widow and Widowers Lunch
Feb 14-16		AO Youth Winter Retreat
Feb 21-22		Church Directory Photos
Feb 23		AO Youth Sunday
Feb 23	6pm	Worship Project



For a more complete list of events and activities visit [stmatthew.org/calendar](http://stmatthew.org/calendar)

## Week at a glance

<b>Sunday</b>		<b>Wednesday</b>	
8:30am	Worship	5:30pm	MidWeek Meal
9:40am	Sunday School	6:15pm	Spirit Singers
11am	Worship (w/ LiveStream)	6:30pm	MidWeek Programs
5pm	AO Youth Group	7:15pm	Choir
<b>Monday</b>		<b>Thursday</b>	
9am	Mobile Meals Prep	10am	Mobile Meals
<b>Tuesday</b>		1pm	Moving for Balance
7am	Mobile Meals	6pm	OK Scottish Pipes & Drums
10am	Quilters Sew&Go	<b>Friday</b>	
1pm	Moving For Balance	7am	Mobile Meals Prep
6:15pm	Toastmasters Meeting	<b>Saturday</b>	
7pm	Okie Dokie Banjo Band	9:30am	Girl Scouts

Jan 1	Charles Brown
Jan 2	Hal Miller
Jan 3	Susie Dealy
	Zachary Lang
	Kay Ross
Jan 6	Linda Smith
Jan 7	Carol Marsh
	Brantley Neidhardt
Jan 12	Lynn Bunting
Jan 14	Jenette Milburn
Jan 16	Miles Adame
Jan 22	David Hughes
Jan 24	Katelyn Ackerman
Jan 26	Ronnie Creager
Jan 27	Deanna Thomas
Jan 30	Rachel Evans
Feb 2	Mitzie Dixon
Feb 3	John Alleman
Feb 5	Max Wilson
Feb 6	Gayle Tatum
Feb 12	Charlie Stephens
Feb 13	Justin Ballow
Feb 15	Patty Avery
Feb 17	Edward Esk
Feb 18	Dayna Heath
	Carl Tatum
Feb 22	MaryAlice Evans
Feb 24	Tyler Ramsey
	Ashely Wallace
Feb 25	Rebecca Arkoh
Feb 27	Brock Wallace
Feb 28	Donna Bassham

Lydia Circle will be starting a new bible study "Unoffendable" at their January meeting on Tuesday January 28th at 7pm in the parlor. All women are invited!

*Happy Anniversary!*

Jan 4	Tom & Necia Miller
Jan 12	David & DesiRae Keenum
Jan 26	Edward & Mary Ellen Esk
Feb 11	Tom & Sandi Patterson
	Steve & Gayla Wilson



# St. Matthew United Methodist

A place to grow in Christ

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

300 N Air Depot Blvd  
Midwest City OK 73110  
www.stmatthew.org  
405-732-6831

*The Mission of The United Methodist Church  
is to make disciples of Jesus Christ  
for the transformation of the world.*

Happy  
Valentine's  
Day

St. Matthew is having a W&W (widows & widowers) Valentines Luncheon on Sunday, February 9th at 12:30 in Wesley Hall. Please rsvp to the church at 405-732-6831 to let them know you will be attending. We want to extend our love and appreciation for you.



### St. Matthew Staff

<b>Rev. Jonathon Clinesmith</b>	Pastor
e-mail: <a href="mailto:jonathon@stmatthew.org">jonathon@stmatthew.org</a>	
<b>Stephanie Ballow</b>	Business Manager & Nursery Director
e-mail : <a href="mailto:businessoffice@stmatthew.org">businessoffice@stmatthew.org</a>	
<b>Kalyn Roark</b>	Director of Student Ministries
e-mail: <a href="mailto:youth@stmatthew.org">youth@stmatthew.org</a>	
<b>Katelynn Henderson</b>	Director of Children's Ministries & Program Director
e-mail: <a href="mailto:katelynn@stmatthew.org">katelynn@stmatthew.org</a>	
<b>Gayle Tatum</b>	Director of Music Ministries
e-mail: <a href="mailto:gtatum@stmatthew.org">gtatum@stmatthew.org</a>	
<b>Susie Larsen</b>	Spirit Singers Director
e-mail: <a href="mailto:spiritsingers@stmatthew.org">spiritsingers@stmatthew.org</a>	
<b>Emily Robinson</b>	Organist/Pianist
<b>Drew Andrews</b>	Custodian
<b>Louise Barnett</b>	Financial Secretary