



Reaching out  
Reaching within  
Proclaiming God's Love

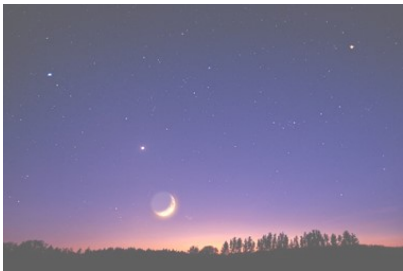
St. Matthew's Episcopal Church

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# The Messenger

June/July  
2021

## A word from the Rector



Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from

God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God." Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So, it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" Jesus answered him, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? "Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. "Indeed, God did not

send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

### John 3: 1-17

Nicodemus is one of the better-known characters in the gospel of John. His name means "Conqueror of the people". It is apparent he is a ruler, law-abiding Pharisee, member of the Sanhedrin, and a person of status and maturity. Yet, he comes to Jesus in the dark of night on "a seeker's quest". A "secret meeting" with Jesus seems strange for a "conqueror of the people", a leader of the Jews, unless he is fearful of judgment from the "religious folks" that he associates with in broad daylight.

Being a seeker of truth in the dark of night or the light of day requires a commendable vulnerability and courage not to be dismissed. Nicodemus is a religious insider fascinated by the subversive teachings and signs of a radical rabbi, and perhaps, even a secret believer unable to find the courage to profess his faith. It is not hard to imagine someone of Nicodemus' privilege struggling to side with the oppressed as Jesus does instead of the comfortable legalism of the Pharisees and the Sanhedrin. There is a tangible comfort that comes from institutionalized rules designed to protect power and conveniently blind us from seeing the needs of others, serving to keep those unlike us at bay and provides simple self-serving solutions to uncomfortable problems.

In this meeting by night, Nicodemus acknowledges Jesus as a teacher and a revealer of the presence of God. And yet, Nicodemus struggles to see and comprehend the signs, the "showing forth" or "revelation"

*Seeker*  
(Continued on page 2)



Seeker  
(Continued from page 1)

of the “Kingdom of God” and, better yet, how to participate in this new kingdom.

Jesus and Nicodemus miscommunicate creating a misunderstanding that remains to this day. There is a difference in being “born again” and being born “from above”. Our mothers would agree, being born again is not in question—it is not going to happen! Christians are fond of asking if you have been “born again”, but it is simply not what concerns Jesus... “What is born of the flesh is flesh”. Jesus’ concern is being born from above—being born in the waters of baptism and the spirit or breath of God. This is what grounds our being in intimacy with the sacred and God’s vision of restored humanity. It is a spiritual birth that changes the way we see or comprehend the world God so loves and reveals God’s desire to restore us as beloved daughters and sons in whom God is pleased. Steven Charleston writes “God can transform us, not by lifting us out of ourselves but by grounding us in the joy and struggle of being human (The Four Vision Quest of Jesus pg. 21)” To be born “from above” is not an escape from this place below, but instead, a rooting in everyday relationships and realities –raising families, work, paying bills, attending school.

Like Nicodemus, we seek membership in the kingdom of God come near – to be born “from above”– born of the breath of God first breathed in creation and to be given the power to become daughters and sons of the one who knows us best and loves us most.

Lord, give us hearts that believe and cling to hope, love, and mercy in the darkest night when thing seems divisive and filled with hatred. Birth us with your life-giving spirit. Grant us the vulnerability and courage to build up the kingdom of God and wisdom to know and deny hurtful actions in the stewardship of our relationships with others and your beloved creation.

Amen  
Les+



**Birthdays,  
Confirmations  
and Baptisms**

*June and July*

**Remember to pray for each of these  
persons on their special day.**

Watch over your children, O Lord, as their days increase; bless and guide them wherever they may be. Strengthen them when they stand; comfort them when discouraged or sorrowful; raise them up if they fall; and in their hearts may your peace which passes understanding abide all the days of their lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

**June Birthdays**

- June 1 - James Lawrence Upton
- June 8 - Ryan Hutton
- June 19 - Gloria Ochs, Mike Irving
- June 21 - Maddy Vajnar Danby
- June 22 - Kyla Jantz
- June 29 - Brennan Parker Wald, Margie Knupp

**June Baptisms**

- June 3 - William Christopher Beck, Charles Joseph Collier, Mollie (Collier) Partridge
- June 4 - Brandon Ashcraft
- June 7 - Ryan Simmonds

**June Confirmations**

- June 3 - William Christopher Beck
- June 6 - Kathryn Bogner
- June 18 - Vince Collier

**July Birthdays**

- July 9—Juliana Loyd
- July 15—Mary Beck
- July 19—Lennon Tyner
- July 22—Steven Biddle, Bill Swendson
- July 26—Jessica Keenan
- July 27—Fred Schroeder
- July 29—Sean Hall, Jay Holstine

**July Baptisms**

- July 9—Jordan Brinkley Orr
- July 25—Ashley Lundblom

**July Confirmations**

- July 14—Haley Sage Southern, Juliana Mae Loyd, Katherine Grace Lindgren, Maddie Stonehouse, Logan Bradley Moulds, Ethan William Moulds, Ellen Elizabeth Moulds, Bradley William Moulds, Elizabeth Ann Moulds



## St. Matthew's Outreach

### Food Cart

29 non-perishable food items were delivered to the Salvation Army "Harvest of Love" food bank in May.  
29 non-perishable food items were delivered to the Salvation Army "Harvest of Love" food bank in June. For many, the need is great. In these trying times, hunger is common in many households. Thank you.

The food cart is located in the parish hall by the Outreach boards.

There is a list on the cart of the 7 "Most Wanted" food items. These items are:

Peanut Butter  
Spaghetti sauce  
Beans  
Jelly  
Hamburger Helper  
Pasta  
Rice

### Coffee Hour

It is now official!! Coffee hour has resumed!! Thanks be to God! We are keeping it simple for now. Coffee and treats in the kitchen. There will be a calendar in the parish hall for people to bring goodies and make coffee, and/or other refreshments. Packages of cookies to help out are always welcome!! Thanks!  
Any questions, please ask Melissa

### Shut Ins & Soldiers

We have 2 soldiers and 3 shut-ins on our boards. Please keep these people in your prayers.

Jordan Orr	Sharon Davis	Susan Koehn
Ryan Bernard	Stephen Biddle	

### Outreach opportunities

Since Church is opening back up, and we can do more, there will be a few Outreach projects, depending on guidelines and safety. We will be kicking off one of these in July.

### Back to School in July

No child wants to hear about school when they are just beginning to enjoy the freedom of summer!! However, every child deserves a chance to learn. It helps if they have the proper tools and supplies to achieve their dreams and education.

During the entire month of July, we will be collecting school supplies for Northridge Elementary school. There will be a display in the front hallway, and lists of needed school supplies will be available.

## An Online Giving Option for St. Matthew's Episcopal Church

St. Matthew's has an online giving option through Tithely. It is secure, convenient, and easy to set up and donate from your checking, savings, credit, or debit card accounts from wherever you may be.

You can designate your donation as Pledge, General Offering, Clergy Discretionary Fund, Payee Client Needs Fund, Flowers, Operational Endowment Fund (OEF), Permanent Endowment Fund (PEF), Columbarium, Music, or Memorials. Just go to <https://www.tithe.ly/give> and follow the prompts. Make sure to click on giving, give to a church, and give online. It will prompt you to establish a personalized pin and ask you to enter your payment information.

Tithe.ly charges 2.9% processing and a .30 cent transaction fee. If you would like to cover these fees in your donation simply check the box marked "cover fees".

Please feel free to continue to submit your pledge with a check. Send to St. Matthew's Episcopal Church at P.O. Box 342, Newton, 67114.

Your generous and faithful support of St. Matthew's is greatly appreciated.



## St. Matthew's Prayer Chain

If you have a request for prayers for yourself or others, please contact Mary Upton at **316-841-1736**. The information you share with me will then be passed on to the chain leaders who will then pass the information on to their team. The members of the chain will then add your request to their prayers. The information you give me is confidential and will not be shared with others outside the prayer chain without your permission.

If you have a prayer request, would like more information and/or join the St. Matthew's Prayer Chain, please contact Mary Upton at **316-841-1736**.



### St. Matthew's Food Pantry

The Little Food Pantry can have donations of hotel soaps and shampoos as well as children's books and non perishable food. Remember as the temperatures go up to choose foods that won't melt or get too hot.

Thank you for your support.

Altar Team for the month of June - Twila, Scott, Maggie, Ruth  
Altar Team for the month of July—Melissa's team

### *Altar Flowers for June*

June 6 - **Charlie & Nancy Craig and Mary & Rick Beck**

*"In loving memory of Dr. Richard and Betty Glover, Margaret Hollingsworth, Marguerite and Dr. Harold Glover."*

June 13 - **Kathleen Leid**

*"In thanksgiving for the life of Fran Rogers, my Mom"*

June 20 - **Mary Werner**

*"For blessings of children"*

June 27 - **Margie Knupp**

*"In loving memory of Hal and Patty Knupp"*

### *Altar Flowers for July*

July 4 - **The Rev. Scott Hankins**

*"In loving memory of Sam and Vera Hankins."*

July 11—**Stephanie and Katherine Lindgren**

*"In celebration of life"*

July 18—**Oliver J and Carol Geiger**

*"In memory of Inez and Watt Geiger by their children and grandchildren"*

July 24—**Jim and Katie Reese**

*"In memory of Nomi and Royston Reese and Agnes Lundstrom."*

Since we are now having in person service every Sunday, we will be contacting everyone regarding the date they are scheduled to give Altar Flowers. If you would like to donate towards flowers for the Altar, please contact Twila Lockaby.



Altar Flowers



### Sharing of Your Time and Talents

As we continue to come back together and things start getting back to normal at St. Matthew's, we each need to consider where and how we can serve. St. Matthew's needs each of us to step forward to help reestablish our committees and service.

Can you usher, count, host coffee hour? Or maybe help with Outreach, the gardens, or serve on Vestry?

Maybe you can help in the kitchen or be a reader/lector?

Can you play an instrument or sing?

There is also a need for additional people to help with the Altar Guild.

There is a place for everyone not only to serve but to also just come and worship together.

Please let anyone on Vestry or Fr. Les know where you can help. Can't wait to see everyone back at church.



### Hopeful June

I've always thought of June as a hopeful month. I look around my garden and I'm hopeful for the produce that is to come. I'm hopeful that I can keep ahead of the weeds and varmints. I'm hopeful that the rain will be plentiful and the sun gentle. I'm hopeful that my neighbors will enjoy the flower gardens as they pass by. I'm hopeful for friends to come sit on the porch swing for an evening visit. I'm hopeful that all will be well. And finally, I'm hopeful that you will also have a marvelous June.

-Margie

#### From the Editor:

During the last year, the newsletter has been a little off schedule. With reduced services and changes at church, things got a little crazy!

But, I am attempting to get back on schedule. This month's newsletter has ended up being a combo for June and July. So the edition for August should be back on track and you will get it the 1st of the month.

We are currently sending these out by email to those that can receive it through email. Others that have requested, have been receiving the newsletter in the mail. If you are not receiving your copy, please let myself or Fr. Les know. Please verify your mailing or email address. There will also be copies at the church.

The St. Matthew's website is currently getting updated so the newsletter will be available on the website. And don't forget to check us out on Facebook.

Thanks for your patience during this past year.

If you ever have anything you would like to contribute (or have suggestions) to the newsletter, please let me know.

Elizabeth Hill—[ejuphill@fhrd.net](mailto:ejuphill@fhrd.net)—316-371-0846



Please join Deacon Barbara for Evening Prayer every Wednesday at 6:30 pm on Facebook.

Everyone is welcome

Come take a few minutes to end your day with prayer



## From Sea to Shining Sea



calm. "I used to enjoy shooting fireworks too," he said, adding that he knew it was a fun way to celebrate. "But many in this town are gathered in worship, and the noise is very distracting. All I'm asking is that you wait until church services are over — about noon — and then shoot firecrackers all you want." The pastor smiled at each youth and returned to church.

Recounting that experience in *Liberty* magazine, Johnston said he half-expected to hear defiant explosions. Instead, the kids waited respectfully until worship was over. When conflicts loom, may we heed that example — and this advice from Proverbs: "A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger." (15:1, NRSV).

As it does this year, July 4 fell on Sunday in 1937. While Pastor Eldred Johnston led worship that morning in Paulding, Ohio, local kids set off firecrackers nearby (restrictions were rare back then). Realizing he needed to act, the pastor slipped outside during a hymn and found the revelers.

But instead of scolding or shouting, Johnston stayed



### **That you may live**

During the pandemic, I've worshiped online with several congregations. The web address for one ends ".net/live." As I navigate to this site, I tend to read the adjective form "live," as in "livestream." One Sunday, however, the verb form, as in "Worship and live," popped into my mind. I had almost slept in and skipped that morning's service. But as I worshiped with others, albeit remotely, my spirit indeed felt increasingly alive. That whole day I felt I was *living* more fully because I'd been inspired by God's Word in sermon and song and shared in praising God with others. Worship reminds us there is something — Someone — greater than ourselves. Worship opens us to new ways of living.

Moses, after he had passed along God's gift of the Ten Commandments, including the rule to keep the Sabbath day holy through rest and worship, told the people, "Walk in obedience to all that the Lord your God has commanded you, so that you may live" (Deuteronomy 5:33, NIV).

We too worship God regularly — so that we may more fully live.

—Heidi Hyland Mann

### **Bible Quiz**

An unnamed relative of Paul obstructed a conspiracy to kill the apostle. What was this rescuer's relation to Paul?

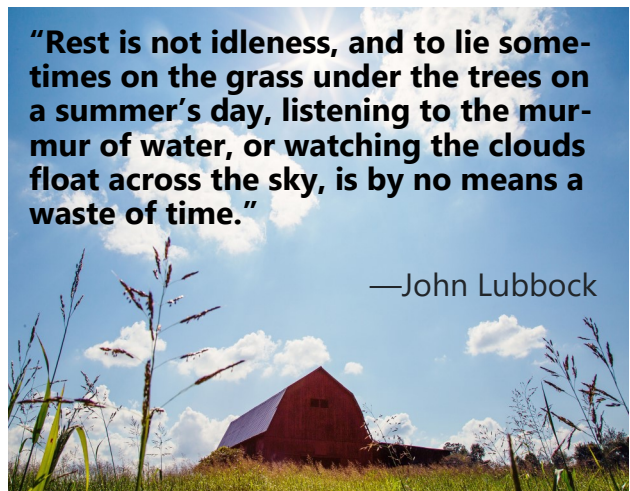
- A. nephew
- B. niece
- C. brother
- D. sister



Answer: A (See Acts 23:12-22, esp. v. 16)

**"Rest is not idleness, and to lie sometimes on the grass under the trees on a summer's day, listening to the murmur of water, or watching the clouds float across the sky, is by no means a waste of time."**

—John Lubbock





ST. MATTHEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
**MEMORIAL  
REMEMBERENCES**

ST. MATTHEWS HONORS YOUR LOST  
LOVED ONES THIS MEMORIAL DAY  
WEEKEND.

VOLUNTEERS WILL PLACE A HAND-  
CRAFTED, PERSONALIZED  
MEMORIAL CROSS  
AT GREENWOOD AND RESTLAWN  
CEMETERIES TO  
HONOR YOUR LOVED ONES.

Thank you to everyone that donated towards the memorial crosses to be left at the cemeteries on Memorial Day. We were honored to be able to remember loved ones in this way. Here are just a few of the sites we left the memorial crosses.

