



Grace Church of West Feliciana Parish

"A loving congregation seeking unity with God and each other in Christ"

Newsletter for
December 4 & 11, 2016

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Matthew for the 21st Century

The Gospel of Matthew speaks to 21st century America in a powerful way. Matthew is often seen as no more than the Gospel of Mark with some additional material thrown in for good measure. Matthew incorporates 90% of the gospel of Mark into his narrative, almost in a verbatim fashion. This corresponds to about 50% of the entire Gospel of Matthew. Matthew is more than an expanded version of Mark, however. "The structure of Matthew is not determined by the narrative, but by the succession of great discourses, and the Mark narrative is only one of several elements which Matthew has built into his own highly original presentation of Jesus, the gospel of the kingdom, and the church" (Beare, "The Gospel According to Matthew", preface).

Matthew is the most Jewish of all the gospels. His intent is to create a pattern for the Christian way of life, which resembles the life of Christ himself. Matthew sees Christ as the fulfillment of the prophesies given to Israel by God, which were preserved in the Jewish Scriptures. Jesus Christ has inaugurated by his words and actions the kingdom of God on earth. "In his life and death, all has come to pass in accordance with the prophetic scriptures... (Mt 1:22)" (Beare, 5). Christ is the fulfillment of Israel's scripture but Israel's rejection of the Messiah, has opened the promises made to them to all peoples of the world. His message for the Jewish people is simple: Saying that you are a descendant of Abraham or Moses will no longer ensure your salvation, if you have rejected God's Messiah (Mt. 8:11). It is likewise for us Christians: Saying that we believe in Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah, when our faith in him is void of the fruit expected of his disciples, will not be sufficient (Mt. 7:21).

This emphasis on a Christian Ethic has made the gospel of Matthew a favorite of many Christians. The key to understand Matthew lies in the five speeches that he enters into the Gospel of Mark at five different points. The first speech is found in Matthew 5:1-7:29. This is the sermon that has the "Beatitudes" (5:1-16). The sermon ends with the formula, "When Jesus had finished these sayings" (7:28-29.) The second speech is found in 9:36-11:1. It ends with the closing rubric, "After Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples..." (11:1.) The third discourse, 13:1-52, is a collection of parables, four of which are only found in the gospel of Matthew (the wheat and the tares, the buried treasure, the priceless pearl, and the fishnet). The section ends with "When Jesus had finished these parables, he moved on from there" (13:53.) The fourth discourse is found in chapter 18:1-35. This is a combination of materials, which include the answer to the question, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" (18:1-9). This section ends with the formula, "When Jesus had finished saying these things..." (19:1.) The last speech is found in 23:1-25:46. The theme of this last speech is judgment. It also ends with the traditional, "When Jesus had finished saying all these things..." (26:1)

I invite you all to read these five "speeches" of Matthew and become familiar

with the message of this beloved evangelist. Matthew wants to convince us that Jesus of Nazareth is the fulfillment of the Jewish Scripture. Perhaps this is the reason why he divides his book into five sections, giving us the message that Christ's New Law is the new Pentateuch. For Matthew, to belong to Christ requires a way of being, a life style, which produces the fruits of a true disciple. Jesus fulfilled the old law and it is now the new law, as fulfilled and interpreted by Jesus, that requires our obedience. The whole law and the teaching of the prophets now hang on the commandments to love God above all things and your neighbor as yourself (22:34-40). This is the particularly helpful message for our current times. At a time of division and polarization, when many seek to divide us with a rhetoric of hate and exclusion, we Christians must remember we are called to be obedient to a new law. This new law, given to us by Christ himself, is to be one as he and the Father are one, and to love our neighbor as much as God himself has loved us. This is a sacrificial love that cares for the least and the lost among us.

Matthew reminds us that God's promises to his people are now open to all those who do the will of God. We are all each other's neighbors. May God bless us this new Church year, as we listen to Matthew and reflect on Christ's loving sacrifice for us on the Cross.

Blessings, Fr. Roldan.

Baton Rouge Symphony Organization: Elegantly decorated Hemingbough is the venue this Friday, December 2nd for the annual Christmas concert, sponsored by the St. Francisville Symphony Association. Louisiana Youth Orchestra violinists Mathilde Fox-Smith and Adler Buras will warm the crowd up at 6:30 pm, followed by a jazzy take on the holidays from Willis Delony and Friends at 7 pm. The group includes Willis on piano with vocalist Phillip Manuel, Bill Grimes on bass, and Troy Davis on drums. A reception will follow. Tickets are \$25 at the door or Bank of St. Francisville.

Grace Choir Advent program: Our choir will have their Advent concert this Sunday, December 4th beginning at 9:30am before our regular service starts at 10am. Please mark your calendar.

Christmas Pageant practice: All kids, ages Pre-K and older are invited to participate in the Christmas pageant on Christmas Eve at the 4:00pm service. Practice starts Dec. 5, 6:30-7:15pm.

Pledge cards are available in the narthex and at the end of this newsletter. Please fill out one and place in the offering plate if you haven't already turned yours in.

2017 Liturgical calendars are for sale in the Church office for \$3.

Congratulations to Lauri Benton and Brian Dooley who were married October 22 at St. John's.

Men's Prayer Breakfast: Kelly Ward has volunteered to cook for the group on Wednesday, December 7th. Invite a friend to join you for breakfast and the Bible Study beginning at 7:00am.

The Christmas Angel Tree will be put up, Thursday, December 1st, on the table in front of the Church office. The names (little angels) will be put on later. Please choose the angel (s) you want and sign them out with your signature on the provided list. After your gifts are wrapped, please put your angel on the gift. If you buy more than one gift per angel, please make a tag for the others (with just their names). The last day we can receive the wrapped gifts will be Sunday, December 18, so we can make the deliveries to the families. Thank you for your generosity, Maria Gerry

Church Directory: Please send in to the Church Office any corrections or updates so we can upload the Church Directory to our mobile phone app by December 15.

Intercessory prayers are asked for Grace Church members who are ill:

David Barnes, Tom Morris, Sara Nelson, Sarah Rhody, Margie Sheets, Wendell Wade, David Walker, Pam Willson, Jake Wray, Madeline Wright.

Birthdays

Julia DeJean-Nov. 29; Helen Williams, Brianna Reinhardt-Dec. 1; Emily Adams, Mary Jane Walker-Dec. 2; Dare Didier, Mary Morse, Evelyn Tregle, - Dec. 4; Caleb Norton, Jessica McVea -Dec. 5; Landon Anderson, Austin Roldan, Edward Daniel IV, Gloria Fontenot-Dec. 6; Andrew David, Joseph Wilson-Dec. 7; Savanna Clevenger-Dec. 8; Caroline Sparks, Kell Farmer-Dec. 9; Louise Jenkins, Barbara Mitchell, Zane and Caleb Smith-Dec. 10; Joey Penno-Dec.11; Frank Farmer-Dec. 12; Lea Williams-Dec. 13; Chase P. Cunningham, C. Claude Barron-Dec 16; Jeff Ford-Dec. 17.

Wedding

Anniversaries

Al and Patsy Hardouin-Dec. 14; Stewart & Megbe Hughes- Dec. 17.

Other persons prayers are asked for:

Charles Barham, Walker Bell, Micaela Kell Bennett, Jolie Berry, Phillip Bowen, Leo Brown, Ben Brown, Steve Brown, Willie Bryant, Randy Bryant, Mac Bullock, John Caruthers, Jenny Clark, Kitty Claus, Scott Dardenne, Kathleen Davis, Debbie Desmar, Helen Desselles, Molly Douglas, Mark Ellison, Jennifer Erickson, Mark Feltner, Dennis Flynn, Matthew Gill, Roy Hardin, Parke Henderson, Wayne Hudnall, Joel James, Michelle Jean-sonne, Jill Joffrion, Mary Jo Kaly, Cecil Kelly, Jody Lemoine, Bob Lewis, Jessica Liddle, Max, Paul McGuff, Ralph McKenzie, Laine Martrain, Mary Anne McCrory, Ruby McKee, Robin Michel, Dorothy Anne Millikin, Jim Mire, Jimmy Mitchell, Rusty Melton, Randall Nachman, Barton Platte, Susanna Prescott, Peter Purpera, Carol Ratchiff, Tammy Riggs, Cole Rourke, Joseph Savell Sr, Stephen Seale, Gwin Shanks, Kaizlyn Shockley, Cade Stapleton, Roland Touts, Denham Turner, Darold Whitmer, Zane Woodward.

Those serving in the armed forces: Parker Blanche, Amanda Browning, James Boucher, Jay Christopher, Ryan Coacher, Ben Colia, John Davis, Joseph Dooley, Bryan Geltz, Edward Jenkins, Laura Latson, Shawn Lemons, Terry Palmer, James Powers, Jeff Ragusa, Christopher Willis, Matthew Young, 745th & 746th Exped Squads, 379th & 926th Exped. Support Squads.

Christmas Flower Memorials may be mailed to the Church office or placed in the offering plate on Sundays through December 20th.

Grace Church Develops Mobil App: Our new app looks great. To download, go to your Android store or iTunes on your phone, look for Grace Episcopal Church, St. Francisville. The app contains up to the minute information about our programs, sermons, newsletters, etc. Please check us out at gracechurchwfp.org and let us know if you have any problems downloading the app. Blessings, Fr. Roldan+

West Feliciana Food Bank: Please put donations of canned tuna fish and hearty soups in the wagon in the church or in the orange barrel in Jackson Hall for our Food Bank.

MOP: Have you ever noticed the decorated jar in the narthex that says "MOP" on it? That is a container for "Miles of Pennies" a program sponsored by the ECW for the Church Periodical Club. A mile of pennies is worth \$844.80. The fund is set up so grants can be written for up to that amount to purchase books, workbooks, manuals, videos, CD or audio-visual materials, by religious or secular organizations, but must be for children preschool thru high school age. Programs such as Christian Education, Camps, VBS, Youth Ministry, libraries that are affiliated with the Anglican Communion may apply for a grant. So when you see the container, drop some change in it to support grants for buying these educational materials.

Christmas Services

December 24: Fifth Annual Christmas Service at Saint John's at 3:30PM. Join Bishop Jenkins for another great afternoon of music, Communion, and fellowship. This service features great instrumentalists, a sermon by Bishop Jenkins and plenty of carols.

December 24: Services at Grace will include our annual Christmas Pageant at 4:00PM at Grace (No sermon, lots of carols, and Communion) and our Principal Service at 7:00PM at Grace (Incense, great instrumentalists, augmented choir, sermon and Communion).

December 25: 7:30AM (Fr. Kang) and 10:00AM (Bp. Jenkins)

January 01: First Sunday after Christmas (Holy Name) at Grace Church. Fr. Kang will preach and celebrate both services as the Rector will be on vacation until January 06.

2017 Pledge Card

In Thanksgiving for God's goodness, and support of the ministry of our Church,

I / we will give \$ _____ per week / month / year in 2017. (circle one)

Signed _____ Print name: _____

I / we would like offering envelopes ____ Yes ____ No

Address _____

This is an expression of faith and intent, and not a legal obligation. Contact the Church Treasurer to make any adjustment. Please return your pledge card as soon as possible by mailing to Box 28, St. Francisville, by dropping it off at the church office or put it in the offering plate on any Sunday.

Grace Church
of West Feliciana Parish
P.O. Box 28
St. Francisville LA 70775

Address Service Requested

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit No. 14
St. Francisville LA 70775

Sunday Ministry Assistants & Calendar

Sunday, December 4, 2016

Acolytes: Hayden Howle, Madison Pollet,
Charles Fox-Smith, Logan Reinhardt
Chalice bearers: 7:30am: Sharon Gauthier
10am: Brandie Olsen, Richard Kendrick
Ushers: Carl Fontenot, Tony Horn
Lectors: Bill McClendon, Drew Nordgren
Vestry Rep: Adam Whatley
Altar Guild Team 4
Altar greenery: volunteer needed
Sanctuary Candle: Robert and Cheryl Singer
Coffee Hour: Richard and Meg Kendrick
Babysitters: Shelby Griffin, Landry Higgins

Sunday, December 11, 2016

Acolytes: Mary Elizabeth Barrow, Mathilde Fox-
Smith, Ella Corinne Howle, Lilly Higgins
Chalice bearers: 7:30am: Bryan McClendon
10:00am: Rucker Leake, Mark Mulkey
Ushers: Zed Howell, Rob Howle
Lectors: David Opperman, Justin Peno
Vestry Rep: Christian DeJean
Altar Guild Team 1
Altar Greenery: volunteer needed
Sanctuary candle: Tom and Jeanne Morris
Coffee Hour: Bishop's Reception
Babysitters: Madie Kane, Lorna Klein

December 4, 2016

7:30am - Eucharist
8:45-9:45 - Bible Study
10:00am - Eucharist
Coffee Hour
4-6 Youth Group

December 11, 2016

7:30am - Eucharist
8:45-9:45 - Bible Study
10:00am - Eucharist
Coffee Hour
4-6pm Youth Group

Wednesday, December 7

7:00am - Men's Prayer Breakfast
5:15pm - Holy Eucharist

Thursday, December 8

9:15am - Morning Prayer
10:00am - Worship at SF Country Manor

Friday, December 9

7:00am - Eucharist
8:30am - Lectionary Bible Study

Sunday, December 11

7:30am - Eucharist
8:45-9:45 - Bible Study
10:00am - Confirmations & Receptions
Lunch in Jackson Hall
4-6pm Youth Group

Wednesday, December 14

5:15pm - Holy Eucharist

Thursday, December 15

9:15am - Morning Prayer
10:00am - Worship at SF Country Manor

Friday, December 16

7:00am - Eucharist
8:30am - Lectionary Bible Study

Sunday, December 18

7:30am - Eucharist
8:45-9:45 - Bible Study
10:00am - Eucharist
4-6pm Youth Group