



MATTHEWS UNITED METHODIST

July 26, 2022

From the desk of the Executive Pastor

I have just returned from Annual Conference, 2022 and it's surreal to realize we have had "remote" conference for almost three years! Since we were last together at Lake Junaluska, some of my friends and acquaintances entered the Church Triumphant and others received what Bishop Carter referred to as "the gift of retirement." All of this was a reminder that time carries us along its course whether we are ready or not.

I was able to enjoy several weeks of time away after conference which I needed and greatly enjoyed. I'm always appreciative that our denomination and this wonderful community of faith allows us to have regular time away for rest and replenishment. I'm always ready for my time away to begin and I'm equally ready to get back to church and my routine. Perhaps like some of you, I crave a sense of routine in my day and like to feel a sense of accomplishment when it ends.

There is much to celebrate at Matthews UMC during these languid summer days: Music & Arts Camp, Rainbow Express Camp, Vacation Bible School, staff additions and transitions, rising in-person attendance in worship, weddings, baptisms, upgrades to the facility and grounds, mission trips, and so much more. These wonderful programs and ministries are possible because God is faithful, and you have walked with us on this journey. Your love and encouragement have blessed us, and we will continue holding one another in prayer and fellowship.

Your continuing stewardship makes all of this possible. One of the things we did years ago was to switch to paperless giving online. It's one less thing to remember when life gets busy. So many of you have moved to online giving through our [Realm platform](#) and texting; others continue using the US mail system and now, giving as a part of sanctuary worship. Thank you, thank you, thank you!

Typically, summer is a time when we're busy and often overlook our regular pattern of giving. As of the end of June we are lagging behind our income goal for the first six months of 2022. Fortunately, our expenses are also a bit below our projections, but the impact of summer activities, camp expenses and mission trips will affect our budget over the coming months. Given the state of the economy and the impact of inflation and rising prices we are closely monitoring the church's financial position. We want to continue offering meaningful worship, programs, and community outreach events. Please consider praying and reviewing your financial situation to see if you might be able to help us keep moving forward in faith, hope and love!

Blessings,

Pastor Paul