



REACH. TEACH. **PRAISE.** SERVE.  
MATTHEWS UNITED METHODIST

July 17, 2023

From the desk of the Executive Pastor

I have just returned from several weeks of time away which I greatly enjoyed. I'm always appreciative that our denomination and this wonderful church allow clergy to have regular time away for rest and renewal. I'm always ready for my time away to begin, but I also miss my friends and my routine.

Before returning to church, I enjoy reflecting on what I accomplished while I was away. Now, thanks to our Administrative Council Chair, Suzanne Pugh, I am reassessing why mornings are my favorite time of day. Suzanne's question to us was, "What is your best time of the day and why?" I said I was a morning person because that's my most productive time of the day. Suzanne challenged us not to equate our favorite part of the day by what we accomplish, but by how we experience the quality of the time. It is making a difference in how I spend my favorite time of day.

There is much to celebrate at Matthews UMC during these summer days of record-breaking high temperatures: Music & Arts Camp, Vacation Bible School, staff additions and transitions, baptisms, technology upgrades in the Gym and Commons, mission trips, and so much more. These wonderful programs and ministries are possible because God is faithful, and you always rise to the occasion. So many of you have volunteered, attended camp celebrations, and you continue showing up at worship. Your love and encouragement have blessed our whole community.

Your faithful generosity makes all this possible. Typically, summer is a time when we're busy and often overlook our regular giving. As of the end of June our income goal is lagging behind our estimates for the first six months of 2023. Fortunately, our expenses are also a bit below projections, but the impact of summer activities, camp expenses and mission trips will affect our budget over the coming months. We will continue offering meaningful worship, fellowship-building activities, and community outreach events. Please consider praying and reviewing your financial position to see if you could help us finish the summer season in good financial order.

Grateful to be one of your pastors,

Pastor Paul Craig