



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

July 23, 2024

From the desk of the Executive Pastor

I have just returned from several weeks of time away which was needed and greatly appreciated. I'm always thankful that our United Methodist Church and this wonderful community of faith allows us to have regular time away for rest and replenishment. However, I'm usually ready to get back to church and my routine which provides for me a sense of accomplishment and purpose.

There is much to celebrate at Matthews UMC during these languid summer days. By the way, I think the old adage that, "It's not the heat it's the humidity" is not true! It's *both* the heat **and** the humidity, and it always feels a little worse when our local meteorologists remind us what the day "feels like" on our skin. There is only one word for this season, and it's **tropical!**

Even in the tropics, certain things must go on: Music & Arts Camp and Rainbow Express Camp were incredible, and now Vacation Bible School this week. Add to that some new staff members, adjustments/upgrades to the facility and grounds, and notable rising worship attendance in person, online and at monthly Family Worship! Mission trips are also returning with great stories of creating community and helping others. 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 continued stewardship makes all this possible. Typically, summer is a busy time and it's easy to overlook our regular pattern of giving. As of the end of June we have achieved 46% of our tithing goal. Fortunately, our expenses are also below our projections, but the impact of summer activities, camp expenses and mission trips will affect our budget over the coming months. Given the impact of inflation and rising prices we always closely monitor the church's financial position. To continue offering meaningful worship, programs, and community outreach events, we ask that you 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul".

Pastor Paul Craig