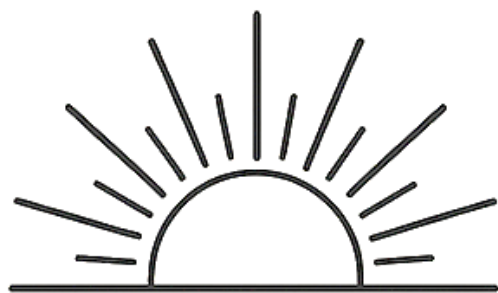


MIDSUMMER WITH MATTHEW



SUMMER 2025

WEEK 1

May 25 - May 31

Matthew 1:1 - Matthew 2:15

#1

Sunday, May 25, 2025

Matthew 1:1-6a

There are 100 days from Memorial Day Sunday through Labor Day Monday. These daily readings split the Gospel of Matthew into 100 parts. Each day, pastors Nathan Abrahamson, Aaron Hamilton, Tony Pittenger, or Luke Ulrich will provide you with a brief introduction for each day's reading.

If you open your Bible and follow along, by Labor Day Monday you will have read the entire book of Matthew. And because St Paul says that faith comes from hearing the Gospel, and because the Prophet Isaiah says that God's Word works just like rain waters plants, our hope and prayer is that you'll join us this summer in reading through each section each day, trusting God to keep His promise and to feed our faith through these little morsels of Matthew.

And the first section, our first morsel, is Matthew chapter 1:1-6. After Jesus rose from the dead and ascended into Heaven, the apostle Matthew stayed around Jerusalem to share the good news with his Jewish brothers and sisters. And to establish that Jesus really is the promised descendent of the great King David, Matthew begins with Jesus' family tree.

While you may know some of the names in these first six verses, do you know some of the skeletons on this family tree? Abraham was unfaithful to his wife. So was Jacob. Judah's descendent is born to him and his daughter-in-law. Before she married into the family the woman named Rahab worked as a prostitute. Another woman mentioned, Ruth, came from an enemy country.

As read Matthew 1:1-6 for yourself, be comforted. As Matthew begins to tell us about our Savior we see right off the bat that this Savior is for all; the good, the bad, and the infamous.

No sin, or sinner, is outside of God's love in Jesus. Not these people and not even you or me.

God bless your time in His Word today and God-willing we will meet again soon.

#2

Monday, May 26, 2025

Matthew 1:6b-11

We're picking up today in the middle of the genealogy from Matthew chapter one. Today, we're going to read together verses 6 - 11. And, in these verses, we hear especially about some kings of Judah that were ancestors of Christ, and it's really a mixed bag. Good guys, bad guys, good guys like David and Hezekiah, but also some real some real evil characters like Manasseh and, and Jehoram and others.

Anyways, it's a reminder to us that that God is at work through our world, and in our world through good and bad, for the good of His kingdom.

And even as we deal with difficult people and enemies of the Gospel and of the Church, God is still, bringing about His plan, His good and gracious plan. Something to remember as we consider these names.

I would encourage you to, maybe look up online or search in scripture for some of these names and learn their context and history a little bit, appreciating how Jesus came to save and rescue, good and bad.

Ultimately, we are all evil. We need His help. And, thankfully, the Savior has come for us. God's plan of salvation has been worked, and that's where we find our joy.

Just another practical tip: As you read through something as daunting as a bunch of names from another language, don't worry if you mispronounce them. Pretty much everyone does anyways. It's, open to interpretation. Don't feel like anyone's judging you. Just do your best and motor through some of them.

May God bless, your walk through the book of Matthew with us this summer.

#3

Tuesday, May 27, 2025

Matthew 1:12-17

When you read through today's verses, you're going to see some names that probably don't mean a lot to you.

It's part of the genealogy of Jesus, but these are not overly familiar Bible names, and that's partly because we're at the point in the genealogy where we are seeing the descendants of Jesus after the people of Judah, the southern kingdom of Judah had been taken and deported to captivity in exile in Babylon.

So these aren't your famous Bible characters here so much. They're kind of the unknown ones. Today I can relate to that quite a bit because as I filmed the video version of this devotional introduction, I was actually walking down a street in a town that I was just visiting for the morning. I didn't know anyone there. There are probably actually people driving by who are probably like, "Who is this stranger just walking down the road talking to his phone?"

Maybe you have felt that way before too, where you, you're somewhere and people don't really know you. Maybe you actually feel that on an everyday basis, feel like people don't really know you and get who you are. But here's the really amazing thing about these verses and about this list, is that even though we may not know these names very well, God is very intentional with each of these generations. Each generation is step by step, leading towards the birth of Jesus, leading towards the family of Jesus. God knows exactly who they are and exactly how they fit into his plan, and it's the same thing for you today as well. God knows you. God knows where you're at.

That also means he knows your sin, but he also knows every step he took to provide a savior for you. So today, when you look at these verses, you look at these people, see that these are people that you may not know, but God knows each generation, he knows each step, how it all plays into his big plan to bring his Son into this world, to be born, to live, to die, to rise again, to set you right with him.

Alright, we'll talk about more Matthew again soon.

Wednesday, May 28, 2025

Matthew 1:18-25

Can you remember a time when you reacted "poorly?" Maybe you jumped to a conclusion about something and after it was all sorted out you wished you would have done things differently.

Maybe you didn't jump to a conclusion, you were correct about the situation and circumstances, but you still embarrassed yourself.

Well, today, while our calendars say that Christmas is almost seven months away, the Matthew reading records the Christmas event from Joseph's perspective and what a perspective THAT was!

About six months ago, Joseph's fiancé left town, claiming she had to go help her relative, a childless senior citizen, because somehow she knew that this woman was pregnant.

In today's reading, she has returned from that trip and is six months pregnant.

Perhaps he jumped to a conclusion about how she became pregnant because her version of the events was impossible, but I admire Joseph for what he didn't do. He didn't publicly humiliate her. Today's reading says that he resolved to divorce her quietly, without a big dust-up, taking the burden on himself.

When you read about how God resolved Joseph's confusion, think for yourself about the times you've jumped to conclusions, times when you've reacted poorly, and times you wish you could have back and do over.

And as you think about those times, give thanks to God because that Child Mary was carrying was conceived, was born, lived, died, and rose again to pay for every single one of your sins.

#5

Thursday, May 29, 2025

Matthew 2:1-6

Today's reading begins with the words "After Jesus was born..."

And then we hear something that each and every one of us can take to heart and can copy in our own lives...

We hear about people looking for Jesus. They ask "Where is He?"

"Where is He?"

And as you read these 6 verses for yourselves, pay special attention to how they end up finding who they are looking for...

As people answer the question about where Jesus is, they go back to the Bible, back to what it says about Him and about where He is and about how He can be found.

God's Word. The Bible. That's where the people who answered the question looked and that's how those who were looking for Him found Him.

The Bible. God's Word.

Now maybe you figured it out, maybe you didn't, it's OK either way but today's reading is about the Magi—the Wise Men—coming to Jerusalem and looking for Jesus.

As you read Matthew 2:1-6 and you will be doing exactly what those Magi did: you will be finding Jesus in God's Word, in His Word.

Faith comes from hearing. God's Word works in-and-for us just like rain and snow make plants to grow. As you read today, think of yourselves as those magi and think of myself—and the other people you'll see here all summer—as those people in Jerusalem pointing the Magi—pointing you—back to the Bible.

#6

Friday, May 30, 2025

Matthew 2:7-11

Hi there – I'm Aaron Hamilton, pastor at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Scottsdale, Arizona, and when I show up at the church, I have to be very careful. It's rattlesnake season right now. It goes between April and October.

I've been told I can't just walk in, but I have to look first to make sure there's no snakes, resting in the shade. If I startle them, they might strike!

When the Magi, those wise men from far away came to Jerusalem, led by the star that God provided, Herod was close to God's house too.

He was supposed to be king but he was full of poison: jealousy and pride, and he was dangerous. He was startled at the news about a newborn King.

If we're honest with ourselves, we have that problem too—jealousy and pride.

Thank God for His love and protection for His Son, and for those who come to worship Him!

The coast was clear for me the other day at the front door at Redeemer—but you never know, especially early in the morning or late at night. Thankfully God is there, with us every step of the way, to watch over us and bless and help us.

God with His Word, and by the star, was guiding the wise men to His Son. He accepts them and receives their gifts. Much like He deals with you!

God was protecting His Son, and in Him God was protecting and blessing all of us—who will be saved by Him, through His cross, later on.

God bless you as you read your Bible story for today – Matthew 2:7-11.

#7

Saturday, May 31, 2025

Matthew 2:12-15

Scary stuff in today's reading. In just four verses there will be warnings to avoid and warnings to flee.

Someone wants to destroy Jesus, rid the world of Him...

Now if that isn't a tale as old as time...

Remember when the devil tempted Cain to kill Abel? I wonder if the devil might have thought that Abel was the promised Savior? Given the working relationship he had with Cain, the devil had to know that Cain was not the promised Son but I wonder if he thought that Abel was?

Just a thought but can't you see the devil working behind the scenes in so many Bible stories? From Pharaoh's order to kill all the baby boys to Haaman's attempt to kill every Jew in the Persian kingdom. Can't you see the devil working behind the scenes to get rid of the promised Savior?

When he used Pharaoh to try it God used Moses to save His people. When the devil used Haaman to try it, God used Queen Esther.

And in today's verses, now that the Savior finally has been born, God uses an angel.

As you read these verses remember that while the devil was not successful in getting rid of the Savior, his other point of attack is to separate you from the Savior.

He tempts us with pleasure. He lulls us into apathy. He frightens us with sickness and despair.

Well, whatever it is the devil does to you, I pray today's reading reminds you of his failure and assures you of your Savior's love.

God preserved His people from Pharaoh, from Haaman, and from Herod out of love for you. You're the focal point of these verses: God preserving Jesus' life so that He would live and die and rise for you.

God bless you as you see your Savior in His Word.