

THE VOICE OF

St. Matthew

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

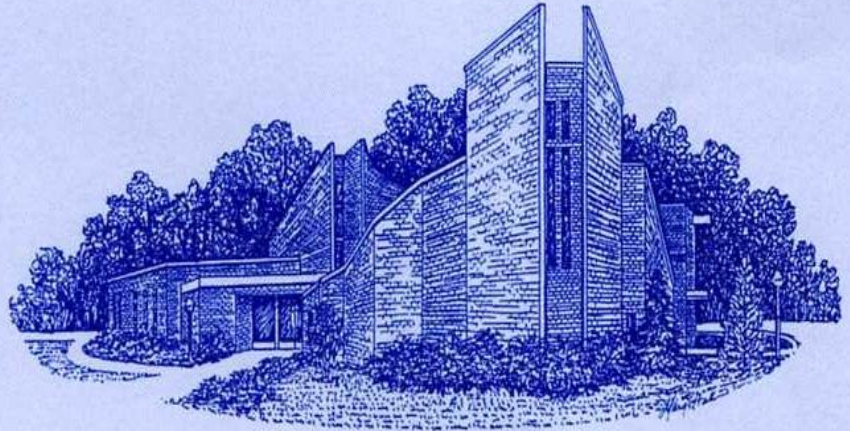
1420 SOUTH GABLES BLVD.

WHEATON, ILLINOIS 60189

630-665-1236

Fax 630-665-1436

www.stmatthew-ucc.org



November 2014

Prayer For Children

The way a nation treats its most vulnerable is a sign of that nation's spiritual health. Who is more vulnerable than our children, especially children in desperate situations?

The repetitive shootings of children and youth in our nation's schools is appalling and deeply painful. We can only imagine the pain of parents and their children who have experienced this act of terror. We are busy fighting the enemies outside our nation's walls in the war on terror, but the enemy is also inside our gates, even the gates of our schools. When will we insist that every means available to us be used to stop this madness? May our anger at such events be used in a way that leads us to action.

But as a people of faith, I invite you first to be in prayer. Let us keep in our consciousness the struggles of parents and children and offer these beloved ones to God in prayer:

O God, who knows what it means to be both parent and child, we pray for parents who have seen their children destroyed by violence. We are especially mindful now of those in Marysville, Washington, who were shot, killed, or wounded, and terrified by another act of senseless violence. We pray that they may be comforted in their deep grief. We pray for-giveness for this world in which such grief is possible.

We pray that our nation's leaders do whatever is necessary to prevent such a deep wounding to our nation and its children.

We pray for the families in our own country who are homeless and separated. We pray as well for all children who live in unhealthy, degrading, brutalizing conditions. We pray that mercy will be shown before the children of such families find themselves wounded, embittered, and against the law. Where moral breakdown has already occurred, let mercy, deep wisdom, and understanding restore hope.

We pray for those who have lost their children. We are mindful of those parents who face the loss of a child's life, and the potential and dreams for that child. Bring comfort in the dark moments and hope in all things.

Almighty God, what is impossible with us, will You accomplish in us, the Body of Christ? In our weakness, enable us to be Your healing presence in the world, even in those dark places where our children are suffering.

We pray this in Christ's name, Amen.

Food on the First

Thanks to all who donated in the month of October.

For the month of November, the food pantries have asked for help with making donations for Thanksgiving dinner, as well as the regular items.

Thanksgiving items:

- Canned pumpkin
- Canned corn
- Canned cranberry sauce
- Stuffing

Non-food items:

- Diapers and pull-ups sizes 5 and 6
- Toothpaste and toothbrushes
- Shampoo
- Deodorant
- Shaving cream
- Soap

Food items:

- Canned fruit
- Cake mixes and frosting
- Jelly
- Baby formula



As always, please make sure the food is not expired and the packages are unopened. Please contact Betty Greer at 630.682.4084 if you have any questions. Thank you for your generosity!



Proverbs 19:17
"He who is kind to
the poor, lends to the
LORD, and He will
reward him for what
he has done."

November Birthdays

- 3 Betty Luessenhop
- 5 Jon Chumas
- 8 Pastor Allen
Mothershed
- 11 Joe Hall
- 13 Phil Felsenthal
- 14 Dianne Hutchison
Rick Jungk
- 15 Diana Padilla
- 23 Jessica Guerrieri
Kristine Schroer
- 24 Jim Keuck
- 26 Aimee Phillips
- 28 Lindsay Christensen
Ryan Christensen
Betty Greer
- 29 Colin Kirincich

Pennies From Heaven

With Thanksgiving approaching, I invite you to use Manna cards to do your shopping for groceries for your holiday meals, holiday baking, and Christmas gifts. Manna cards also make great gifts themselves – everyone likes cash and you don't have to worry about sizes.

Our October Manna participation averaged 12 families per week. This is up from the average of 7 that we had been seeing. To date we have raised about \$2,500, but if we could increase our participation, we could earn a lot more.

Continue to think about the stores where you do your weekly shopping and don't forget to bring a check for Manna on Sundays! Thank you for your continued support of St. Matthew.





Name Tags at St. Matthew: Becoming (EVEN) More Welcoming!

It is often said that the ten minutes after the service ends are the most important for a visitor. This is when a visitor judges the friendliness of the church. Have you had the opportunity to be a visitor at a church lately? Experiencing a new church can be exciting but also uncomfortable. Most folks are looking for a friendly hello and a welcoming smile. Visitors are subconsciously assessing how they might fit into this new community.

Our names are precious to us, and we respond to hearing our name spoken. In the Gospel of John, we are told that “The Shepherd knows His sheep by name” (John 10:3b). Because our congregation is growing (and we have many visitors and newer members), we believe it is vitally important to invest in name tags and ask that everyone wear one each Sunday.

As our children have learned recently in Sunday School, showing warm hospitality is another way to demonstrate Christ’s love here at St. Matthew.

We look forward to enhancing our worship and fellowship time with this gift in memory of John Roberts, who was “always ready with a warm hand and heart.” The name tags have been ordered and will be available later this month.

Stewardship Corner

The Stewardship campaign recently kicked off with Pastor Allen’s letter to the congregation introducing our 2015 theme *Growing Stronger Together*. These three words are reflective of our current state – we are indeed *Growing* with several new member classes completed this year and another in the wings.



Though we are already strong, we are becoming *Stronger* as more people invest in St. Matthew and themselves. And as is always the case at St. Matthew, we do all of this *Together* as a family. While we can do good things and have a positive impact individually in our community, we are far more powerful and perhaps effective when we allow St. Matthew to become our force multiplier. So, with that in mind, we are asking everyone to consider how they can invest themselves in St. Matthew. Our goal is to increase participation in all of our ministries, to interject new people and new ideas, and to increase the number of financial pledges we receive this year by 10%. During this campaign season we ask members and frequent guests of our family to prayerfully consider their investments in St. Matthew. In return, we promise to provide spiritual support, many opportunities to give back, and a loving and caring church family.

Pledge cards and time and talent sheets will be sent out on November 3rd; our campaign will conclude on November 16th on Commitment Sunday. In the two weeks leading up to Commitment Sunday, you’ll have the opportunity to hear from fellow church members as they reflect upon their participation at St. Matthew and what it has meant to them personally. Let’s make this a very successful Stewardship Campaign and commit to Growing Stronger Together!

Rob Neufelder – Stewardship Chair

Children's Ministry

November 2014

At our Christian Education meeting Kenna Anderson read this sweet story to our committee.

I would like to share it with all who read this, especially those volunteers who share their precious gifts of faith and love by serving Children's ministry:

A wise woman who was traveling in the mountains found a precious stone in a stream. The next day she met another traveler who was hungry, and the wise woman opened her bag to share her food. The traveler saw the precious stone and asked the woman to give it to him. She did so without hesitation. The traveler left, rejoicing in his good fortune. He knew the stone was worth enough to give him security for a lifetime. But a few days later he came back to return the stone to the wise woman. "I've been thinking" he said. "I know how valuable the stone is, but I give it back in the hope that you can give me something far more precious. Give me what you have within you that enabled you to give me the stone." -Author unknown

Thank you to the teachers from our Rebekah unit: Susie Mitchell, Robyn Beres, Deb Felsenthal, Jan Beaton, and Annette English. Thank you to our Preschool teachers: Summer Scalora and Abby Jung. Your planning and loving care is a blessing to the St. Matthew children. **Thank you also to the Sunday School shepherds who get to know the children and shepherd them throughout the year: Diana Padilla, Miegan Bresingham, Emily Ciner, and Julie Barnshaw.**

The **Rebekah** unit teaches about a young woman's strong faith in God. The workshops: cooking, story, science, games, and art will show how, with faith, we can be kind to others and go where God leads us. The Preschool Pals will learn about the wonderful way God is with them: God Protects Me, God Blesses Me, God Gives us Friends, God Gives us the Bible, God Gives us Jesus.

On **November 30th** the children will gather together during the Sunday School hour to **make animal friendly ornaments** to hang on the evergreen tree outside our church entrance. This tree was planted in memory of Mary Jane Schnack: a long time member who loved the St. Matthew children, served many years as a shepherd, and started our successful M&M program. Over the Christmas holiday the tree will come alive with Christmas lights and birds feeding from the ornaments made by the children.



Making mint candies in the Cooking Workshop

November Birthdays : Parker Holshouser 11/1
Avery Scalora 11/12 - Kyle Bresingham 11/25 - Logan



Preschool Pals' "Rise and Shine" Pillow cases



Cook 11/30 *Acting out the lesson in the Story Workshop*

crazies SHOUT OUT

crazies

St. Matthew UCC

A big thank-you to everyone who has helped with a Crazies event in the past month. We have been a busy group, and so much of it was made possible by YOU. Thank you, thank you for the meals, the adult leadership, and the prayers of support. We are a lucky bunch with you behind us.



October was a month of overnights, trunk-or-treating, pumpkin carving, and Sleep Out Saturday fundraising. (As I type this, our group has raised nearly \$1,500 for the Bridge Communities of DuPage County. Yahoo!) And in October we began our latest series of lessons: Ancestors. Each week, we're learning about a different ancestor from our faith tradition. From Adam and Eve to Jonah, from the twelve disciples to Mary and Martha, we're learning about some of the greatest characters

in our biblical history (and we're having a little fun along the way). If you're free on a Sunday evening, feel free to stop by. We'd love to share a meal and a lesson with you; all are welcome here!



crazies Pumpkin Carving and Jack-O-Lanterns



Trunk-or-Treat

Thank you to everyone who decorated their cars and volunteered during Trunk-or-Treat. You made it another successful and fun community event!





“I Believe Even When...”

Worship and Sermon Series: Advent and Christmas Eve 2014



The stories of the Advent season which lead us into the glorious birth of the Christ Child are like the early morning hours of the day, that darkness that preceded the rising of the sun. That time of waiting for the dawn by the characters of the Christmas story was filled with doubt, disgrace, fear, oppression, anticipation, and hope.

On the four Sundays of Advent we experience in worship this journey of the characters of Christmas to the birth of our Messiah. By looking at the first chapters of each of the Gospels, we will reflect on how these experiences relate to our own common human experience. Someone once said, “I believe in the sun, even when it is not shining.” Our Advent journey will support us to have faith, hope, peace, and love *even as* we wait for the light to shine in our darkness.

Theme Song: *Peace Child* - Shirley Erena Murray (*Shirley wrote this song the day before the start of the Gulf war in 1990.*)

Peace Child,
in the sleep of the night
in the dark before light
you come,
in the silence of stars
in the violence of wars --
Savior, your name.

Peace Child,
to our dark and our sleep
to the conflict we reap
now come --
be your dream born alive,
held in hope, wrapped in love:
God's true shalom.

Peace Child,
to the road and the storm
to the gun and the bomb
you come,
through the hate and the hurt,
through the hunger and dirt --
bearing a dream.

November 30- Luke 1- “I Believe in God Who Comes in Surprising Ways.”

The “dark night of the soul” is a phrase often used to describe moments in our lives when light, understanding, and hope elude us. A young woman barely out of childhood receives the news that she will bear a son out of wedlock. How can we learn to be open to God who acts in surprising ways through us?

December 7- Matthew 1: “I Believe in God Who Gives Wisdom in Difficulty.” “Not what I expected.” That must be, to put it mildly, what Joseph thought when he discovered Mary was pregnant. How often do we have to adjust our expectations when life does not go as planned? Joseph had the wisdom of God to act in love and to do the right thing. How do we listen for God’s wisdom in difficult times?



December 14- Mark 1: “I Believe in God Who Speaks the Truth in Love.”

God sends Jesus, but first God sends John. We all need people in our lives who are willing to talk boldly to us when we are headed in the wrong direction. John invites us to journey into the wilderness to hear the truth about what is broken in this world and our lives. Are we open to hearing God’s truth?

December 21- John 1: “I Believe Even When...”

In this last week of Advent, we are ever hopeful that the same God who creates life in the beginning comes to bring life once again. The Word Becomes Flesh and dwells among us...filled with grace and truth. Are we open to receive both God’s grace and God’s truth that we may be made whole?

December 24 - Christmas Eve

“Unto you a child is born and he will be the Prince of Peace.”

The night of mystery and awe has arrived. And Jesus is born into a world fully human and finite in its pain and beauty. God breaks in upon our lives. Can we accept that God can come to us in our imperfections and limitations?

Advent and Christmas Services and Celebrations

*Worship and Sermon Series beginning on November 30th
“I Believe Even When...”*

Christmas Cantata - December 7th

Communion and Handbell Choir Performances - December 14th

Birthday Party for Jesus - December 21st

Christmas Eve Family Service - December 24th at 6 pm

Christmas Eve Candle Light Service - December 24th at 10 pm

New Member and Visitor Class: Have you been visiting and want to learn more about us or consider membership? On Sunday, November 2nd after the fellowship time, we will have a luncheon and a discussion about the ministries of St. Matthew, information about the United Church of Christ, and what is involved in being a member. This will be from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Childcare will be provided upon request. Please email or call the office to let us know so we can prepare the meal accordingly. On Sunday, November 9th, those who would like to join will have that opportunity. We have quite a few expressing this interest and will also be having a congregational meeting after worship that day. Please let us know if you have any questions or if you are unavailable on those dates, and we can find other ways to connect with you.



And now, for something completely different...from Linda Leinweber in transit from Kazakhstan to Wheaton

The Darkling Thrush, By Thomas Hardy (1900)

I leant upon a coppice gate
 When Frost was spectre-grey,
 And Winter's dregs made desolate
 The weakening eye of day.
 The tangled bine-stems scored the sky
 Like strings of broken lyres,
 And all mankind that haunted nigh
 Had sought their household fires.

The land's sharp features seemed to be
 The Century's corpse outleant,
 His crypt the cloudy canopy,
 The wind his death-lament.
 The ancient pulse of germ and birth
 Was shrunken hard and dry,
 And every spirit upon earth
 Seemed fervourless as I.

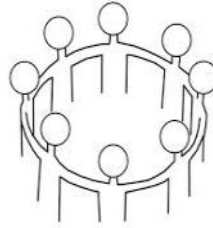
At once a voice arose among
 The bleak twigs overhead
 In a full-hearted evensong
 Of joy illimited;
 An aged thrush, frail, gaunt, and small,
 In blast-beruffled plume,
 Had chosen thus to fling his soul
 Upon the growing gloom.

So little cause for carolings
 Of such ecstatic sound
 Was written on terrestrial things
 Afar or nigh around,
 That I could think there trembled through
 His happy good-night air
 Some blessed Hope, whereof he knew
 And I was unaware.



So, I got lazy and copied this from the Poetry Foundation website, but it is a perfect poem, I think, for the end of the year, and the beginning of the holiday season looking toward a new year. Hardy was not only contemplating the end of the year, but he was also thinking about the beginning of a new century as he leaned against that gate. See you on the 9th of November!

Congregational Life News: Congregational Life participated in the annual Trunk-or-Treat event, providing food and drinks and helping to deliver lots of smiles to children and adults from within our congregation, to residents of Marian Park, neighbors and visitors. We are gearing up to pilot the Eight to Dine dinner gatherings in the homes of various members. Ellen Ribe is heading this new event with the first event to be held on November 8th. As we look to 2015 we invite anyone who has an interest in serving on our committee or helping to plan and conduct one of our events to let Rob Neufelder or Tracey Blake know. We always welcome the help!! Congregational Life can be a good avenue for newer members to integrate into the congregation.



PADS: A big thank- you to everyone who stepped up to fill ALL of the food and time slots for PADS in October. It was the first time in about 3 years that we haven't had to send out a last-minute emergency request for workers...YAY! With the holiday season coming up, we know everyone will be even busier than usual. However, our homeless neighbors will continue to need our help, so.....LET'S KEEP THE MOMENTUM GOING!!!!

Appreciatively, Your St. Matthew PADS Committee



ESSE: ESSE's 18th Annual Pancake Breakfast will be held on Sat 11/8 from 7:30 -11:00 am at St. Paul Lutheran Church (515 S. Wheaton Ave). Tickets are only \$5 each, and Dawn Schubert has them available for sale. PLEASE support this important

fundraiser. Come for delicious food, raffle baskets, and a Silent Auction with some great donated items.



Pastor Allen's Office Hours

Pastor Allen is normally in the church office during the following days and times:

Monday afternoon from 1-4pm

Tuesday morning from 9:30am- 12pm

He is usually working on sermons and other church presentations from home or the library on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday mornings.

It is always best to set up a time to meet with Pastor Allen or call Diana in the church office to be sure that he is available and in the office when you would like to meet since Pastoral emergencies and meetings do arise. Thank you.



Muldoon's Fundraiser: THANK YOU to all of those that came out to Muldoon's on October 19th and supported the fundraiser for St. Matthew. We don't know the amount that was raised yet, but we will include it the Happenings and Voice once we find out.

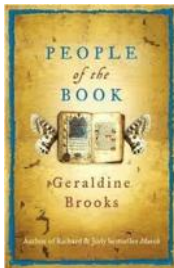


Upcoming Events



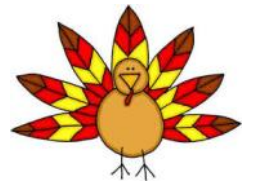
EIGHT TO DINE Have dinner with a group of eight folks from the congregation in someone's home. Enjoy the company, laugh together, and get to know each other a little bit better. Help build a Christian community from the ground up! Our first Eight to Dine date is coming up on **November 8th**. Here's how it works: the Host provides a main dish, others provide sides and dessert. Sign up in the narthex to be part of it. If you can host, mark that as well. We'll put together the groups and the Host makes a few phone calls to establish what time; then the fun begins!

DOCUMENTARY FILM VIEWING You are invited to watch a documentary film about the war on drugs in our country over snacks at John and Jeannine Adams' house on Sunday, **November 16th**. The movie will start at 2:30 PM, so please plan to arrive earlier. We will have a follow-up discussion about the impact of drugs on our inner city community and country. The Adams' residence is located at: 27 W 678 Brookside Drive in Winfield. Please sign up in the narthex if you can join us and call Alex Alavi at (630) 772-4449 if you have any questions.



NOVEL APPROACHES The novel to be approached in November is "People of the Book" by Geraldine Brooks. An intricate, ambitious novel that traces the journey of a rare illuminated Hebrew manuscript from Spain to Sarajevo, from Venice to Australia. Inspired by the true story of a mysterious codex known as the Sarajevo Haggadah, People of the Book is a sweeping adventure through five centuries of history. The date: Friday, **November 21st** at 7:30 p.m. The place: The home of Dave & Joyce Boyd, 510 South Aurora Way, Wheaton. Join us for lively discussion, food, and fellowship. Looking Ahead: "Necessary Lies" by Diane Chamberlin.

THANKSGIVING DINNER AT MARIAN PARK St. Matthew is planning a Thanksgiving dinner for 45-50 Marian Park senior citizens on **November 25th**. The dinner will be served at 6:30PM at the Marian Park facility in the Senior Citizen community room. We need 4-5 people to help serve. Please sign up on the opportunity table if you can serve, and contact Alex Alavi at (630) 772-4449 if you have any questions.



5TH SUNDAY AT DPCC The Sunday of Thanksgiving weekend, **November 30th**, is the 5th Sunday again! Come join others from St. Matthew to help transport nursing home residents from their rooms to Sunday Worship. We gather at 9:30am to collect folks for a 10:30am communion service, then help them back afterwards. We should be done by 11:45am. Enjoy getting to meet and worship with a wide variety of characters. Questions? Contact Glenn Sapa or Ellen Ribe (ellen.ribe@dupageco.org or 630-784-4262) Due to the holiday, some of our regulars aren't able to be there. Do con-

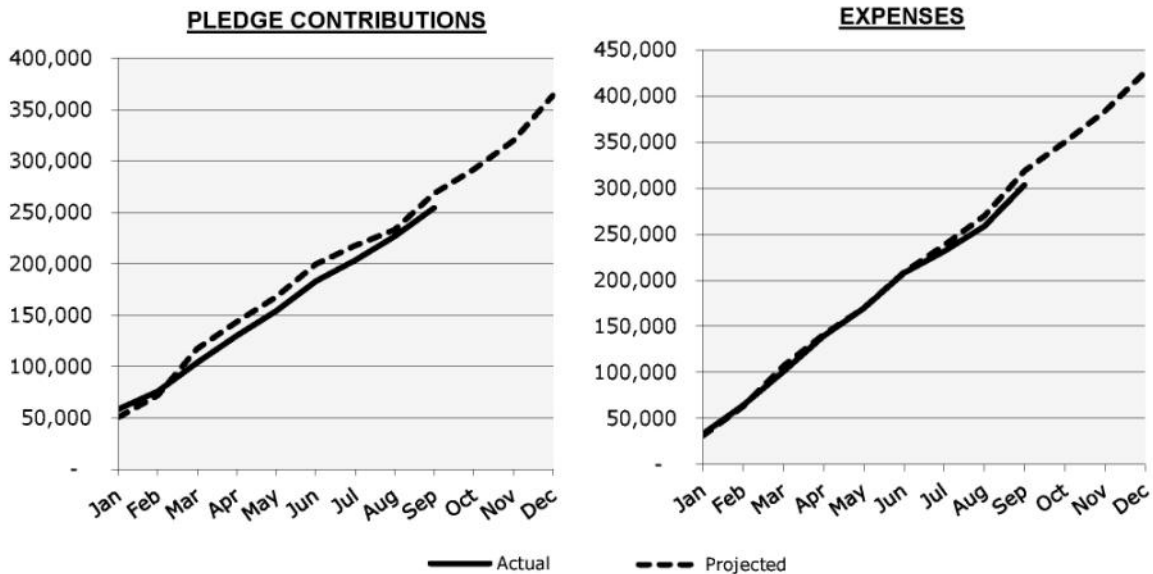
Congregational Meeting Reminder: We will be having a congregational meeting on Sunday, November 9th after worship service.

ST. MATTHEW UCC GENERAL OPERATING FUND
STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURES

For the Period Ended September 30, 2014

	ACTUAL CURRENT MONTH	ACTUAL YEAR-TO- DATE	ANNUAL BUDGET
<u>RECEIPTS:</u>			
Pledge Contributions	22,507	254,175	363,658
Loose Offerings	857	4,895	6,000
Rental Income	350	2,455	5,000
Fund Raising	1,316	3,184	10,000
Investment Income	(12)	(157)	-
More Property	-	20,750	41,500
Miscellaneous Income	-	-	-
TOTAL RECEIPTS	25,018	285,302	426,158
<u>EXPENDITURES:</u>			
Ministry	23,121	158,654	224,348
Building	10,426	89,617	122,810
Mortgages & Notes	2,230	20,063	26,750
Mission / OCWM	6,650	15,530	29,000
Committees:			
Christian Education	1,498	6,340	9,600
Membership	262	1,502	2,750
Music	597	2,317	4,500
Worship	-	766	2,500
Endowment	-	-	1,000
Congregational Life	134	269	800
Memorial	-	-	100
Misc. & Contingency	-	7,931	2,000
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	44,918	302,989	426,158
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	\$ (19,900)	\$ (17,687)	\$ -

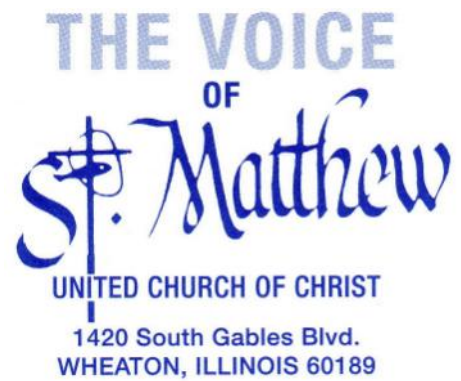
2014 Activity - Actual vs. Projected



Please contact John Adams if you have questions or need additional information.

November 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Every Tuesday: 6p IntergeneR-ingers 7p Bells Potluck 7:30p Chancel Ringers	Every Wednesday: 1:30p Women's Prayer Group 6:30p Praise Band 7:30p Choir					1 <i>Sleep Out Saturday</i>
2 -9:30a Worship Service: Holy Communion and Bells Sunday -New Member Class -no crazies	3 7p Christian Ed Committee	4 -1p Digital Ministry -7:30p Mission Committee	5	6	7	8 -7:30a-11a ESSE Pancake Breakfast -Eight to Dine
9 -9:30a Worship Service: New Member Sunday -Congregational Meeting after worship -6p crazies	10 7p Worship Committee	11	12 <i>PADS</i>	13 -6:30p Confirmation -7p Finance Committee	14	15
16 -9:30a Worship Service -2:30p Documentary Viewing -5:30p Youth Mission Meeting	17 7p Combined Ministries Meeting	18	19	20 -6p Staff Relations Committee -7p Council	21 7:30 Novel Approaches	22
23 -9:30a Worship Service -crazies Christmas Shopping	24	25 6:30p Marian Park Thanksgiving dinner	26	27 Happy Thanksgiving <i>Office Closed</i>	28 <i>Office Closed</i>	29
30 -9:30a Worship Service -5th Sunday at DPCC -no crazies						



St. Matthew United Church of Christ

630.665.1236 (Office)

630.665.1436 (Fax)

Office Email: office@stmatthewucc.org

Web Site: www.stmatthewucc.org

Office Hours:

Monday-Thursday, 9a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Friday, 9a.m.-1p.m.

Sunday Worship: 9:30 a.m.

Sunday Church School: 10 a.m.

Our Purpose:

Become, Live, and Serve as Disciples of Jesus Christ.

Our Identity:

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome and accepted here at St. Matthew United Church of Christ.

Our Staff

Rev. Milton Allen Mothershed, Senior Pastor

allen.mothershed@stmatthewucc.org

Susan Wold, Director of Children's Ministry

susan.wold@stmatthewucc.org

Emily Davis, Director of Youth Ministry

emily.davis@stmatthewucc.org

Jamie Craig, Director of Music/Choir Director

jamie.craig@stmatthewucc.org

Brian Dobbelaere, Organist/Pianist

brian.dobbelaere@stmatthewucc.org

Kim Congdon, Handbell Director

kim.congdon@stmatthewucc.org

Karen Lindquist, Business Manager

karen.lindquist@stmatthewucc.org

Diana Padilla, Administrative Assistant

diana.padilla@stmatthewucc.org