

January
2020



of



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Pastoral Message

Pastor Allen Mothershed

A Ministry of Reconciliation

As I begin writing this devotional article, I am in the airport in Memphis on my way home to Chicago after a visit to my family and hometown in Mississippi. This place that once was so familiar now feels strangely foreign. I am a Chicagoan now with urban ideas, a generally more progressive perspective, and different theological and social convictions than I once had. And yet, I do not wish to abandon the place from which I came.

What becomes clear is that many Americans, especially in rural areas like my hometown, are experiencing the rapid changes of our time with grief and fear. There is a concern that what has long been valued is being lost and needs to be protected. The enormous towering 3-D aluminum cross (a statue) that was erected near the Batesville exit on I-55 by the citizens of the town is an expression of this desire to take a stand for a faith under threat. Some in the cultural wars of our time want to fight to protect what they have at any and all costs and blame anyone they see as a threat to their way of life, such as people of color or immigrants. The ferocity of their anger reflects the level of fear and loss.

Change is inevitable and, in our time, approaching the speed of light. Most people I know are in some way struggling with rapid changes. But how much more difficult it is when you do not see benefits to those changes, and they come at a cost to values believed sacred. How painful it is when your towns are slowly dying, small farms are being sold off, and factories have moved overseas and are not returning. It is scary that your children may not have the same faith values and are living alternative lifestyles that are against long-held moral convictions.

For others of us, these changes are long past due. It's great that men who once felt they had the privilege to touch women as they wished are being held accountable. There is progress that a black man can be president and marriage equality and inclusion is now accepted and legal. We can celebrate that freedom of religion means freedom of all religions and not just our own faith.

(continued)

We rightfully wonder: "What will continue to hold us together as a nation when we find little room to agree and are separated into our tribes?" The rhetoric of hatred and suspicion is on all sides. I think it begins, as all reconciliation does, with a willingness to hear each other below the rhetoric. That means being able to respect each other's experiences and hear one another's fears and grief. You may be happy that the mean and threatening dog on your block, that ferociously growled at black folk walking through the neighborhood, has died. Good riddance! But we can respect that its owner now grieves the loss of his pet, who wagged its tail every day when he came home. It helps to remember our common humanity even if the favor is not immediately returned. This is the only way we will create the space to maintain a connection in what will likely be a year of political division.

"We are ambassadors of reconciliation," the Apostle Paul taught. As we stand for God's justice in the world, we might remember this commission as well.

Peace, Pastor Allen



In honor of St. Matthew's 60th anniversary, Pastor Allen had the idea to donate either \$60 or 60 minutes to help another person who is in need.

We hope that this kindness will bring some light to someone who needs it.

Check out the postcards that we have already gotten back. They are hanging on the bulletin board in the narthex, and are sure to brighten your day!

Remembrance Sunday

On Sunday, January 12th, in worship we will read the names of those from our church who have died in the past year's time. We will also give the members an opportunity to light a candle on behalf of their own loved ones and friends who have died in the past year.



We hope this will be a healing service for those who have suffered a loss and a time once again to give God thanks for the lives of those who have touched our own.

Notes from the Music Room.....



The New Year. Time to take stock of the past, look forward to the future, perhaps make a resolution or two. I'm sure we all know some of the popular ones: lose weight, eat better, exercise more, etc. And we also know how long they usually last. I have a "weigh" to help. You don't have to work up a sweat. You don't have to eat kale unless you like it. You don't have to go to a

gym surrounded by people you don't know. How, you ask? Exercise your voice! Come join the choir. Be surrounded by people you know. And have fun at the same time! Wednesday evening. 7:30pm. Resolve to be there!



A big "Thank You" to everyone who participated music-wise in the month of December. From children, bell choirs, praise band, and Sanctuary Choir, to all those who joined in for the Christmas Cantata. The entire month had wonderful music to grace our services.

Open Choir will continue. The dates are as follows:

January 26th

February 23rd

March 22nd

April 26th

May 10th

Please mark your calendars now so as not to forget these dates. We meet at 8:30 on Sunday mornings.

May the New Year bring you happiness and peace.

Jamie

630-202-6788

jamie.craig@stmatthewucc.org

WEEKLY REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

Tuesday

IntergeneRingers

6pm

Chancel Ringers

7:30pm

Wednesday

Praise Band

6:30pm

Sanctuary Choir

8:30pm

Pennies From Heaven (SCRIP)

All the holiday activity is out of the way, but "this little piggy" still needs to go to the market. We all still need to shop for groceries and gas, even in the snow, so buying Scrip cards for the places you shop brings extra money to St. Matthew.

SCRIP – it's not just for gift cards any more.

Check out the Scrip table in Dobstaff Hall on Sunday.



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

2	Rose Pankratz
4	Darcy Holland
6	Ruth Copeland
9	Bill Matthei
13	Leah Kulczewski
17	Dan Achammer
	Jim Fanning
18	Bob Cooper
20	Rachel Schubert
22	Mark Hutchison
28	Brian Nessel
	Pam Leimberer



Pastor Allen's schedule varies from week to week. He is in and out of the office during the day for meetings, visits, and study.

Please call ahead to check his schedule or to set up an appointment. His cell phone number is 630.441.5962. He is available by phone when not in the office.

OFFICE HOURS

office@st.matthewucc.org
Monday-Thursday: 10am-2pm
Friday: 9-11am

Mission News

PADS CHAIR AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS NEEDED

After more than 12 years of heading up St. Matthew's PADS Committee, Tracey Blake is retiring at the end of this PADS season (May 2020). Other committee members, Wendy Fanning and Lynn Thornton, who have also served for more than 12 years are also retiring. **The Mission committee would like to thank these ladies for their years of dedicated service.**



This long-term ministry occurs on the second Wednesday/Thursday of the month from September through May, where approximately 20 volunteers serve PADS clients at Peace Lutheran Church in Lombard. Our group sets up the dining room, cooks and serves dinner to approximately 55 guests, assembles "beds", makes sandwiches and prepares brown bag lunches for the clients to take with them the next morning. We also cook and serve breakfast to the guests, and thoroughly clean and break down the space used at Peace Lutheran.

The Mission Committee is tasked with finding a new PADS Coordinator and committee members for St. Matthew. Job responsibilities are typically shared among a group of 3 or 4 people who fill this role for 2 or 3 years. Tracey has detailed, organized information (menus, quantities of food, recipes, duties of volunteers...) which she will gladly share. Our hope is to find replacements by the beginning of February so the new PADS Coordinator(s) can work with the current PADS Committee for the remainder of the PADS season to ensure next season runs smoothly.

If you are interested in becoming the PADS Coordinator or a PADS Committee member, please contact Mission Committee chair John Adams (jadams@dspins.com) or Mission Committee member Stu Blake (stutra@hotmail.com). Also, if you have questions or would like additional information, Tracey Blake would be happy to talk to you.



MARIAN PARK CHRISTMAS STORE

Thank you to all who contributed to the Marian Park Christmas Store. The people of St. Matthew contributed 531 everyday items, from body wash to underwear. We supplied 41 senior apartment residents and 28 families with four requested basic necessity items. There were even some extras to give away, such as chocolate and Christmas cards!

The residents were all very grateful. Thank you also to the ten elves who counted, packed up, lugged, unloaded, and gave of your time. Working together for the good of others is such a nice way to spend time during the Christmas season!

-Liz Westergaard

Food on the First

To all who donated in 2019, a very BIG thank you from me and those who work in the food pantries. We are most grateful!

Here is what is needed in January:

- Canned pasta
- Canned fruit
- Canned vegetables
- Hamburger, chicken, and tuna helper
- Soup
- Rice
- Soap
- Baby wipes
- Feminine pads (no tampons)
- Pull-Ups
- Diapers—any size
- Disposable razors



Please make sure items have not expired and are unopened. If you have any questions, please call Betty Greer at 630.682.4084.

Blessings to all.

Congregational Life/Membership News



Pickleball is a fun sport created for all ages and skill levels that combines many elements of tennis, badminton and ping pong.

Adults are invited to come play pickleball on **Saturday, January 4th from 2-4pm** at the indoor pickleball courts at the Warren Ave. Warrenville Park District facility. You do not need any pickleball experience to participate in this event. The cost for participants will be approximately \$12/person, which includes instruction for beginners as well as a little something extra for the instructor. Grabbing dinner afterward will also be an option.

This Congregational Life event is limited to 30 participants and sign-up is required. The sign-up sheet is in the narthex. You may also contact Linda Raymond at 630.702.1212 (lindaraymond2002@yahoo.com) or Tracey Blake at 630.946.4884 (stutra@hotmail.com) with questions or to reserve a spot. Come join us for a fun-filled afternoon!

Movie Night at St. Matthew – We are planning a movie night movie. It will be appropriate for all ages and we will provide snacks. Watch the bulletin and Happenings for the date.



Additional Events – We will plan a breakfast / lunch meet-up after church in January or February and our annual Wafflepalooza will be planned for March. Watch for more information.

FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN

Save the date for our annual Feed My Starving Children trip! Mark your calendars for Monday, January 20th, Martin Luther King Jr. Day. ***Please note, we will NOT be meeting at St. Matthew to carpool this year. Instead, meet at the FMSC location (555 Exchange Court in Aurora) at 2:15pm.*** We will pack food for starving children in countries all over the world from 2:30-4:30pm.

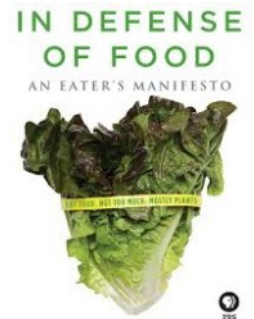


If you haven't packed before, it is a great experience and we always love to have new people join us. There are 50 spots reserved, and the sign-up board is in the narthex. Contact Alex Johnson with questions at 630.665.7577.



The Green Team

The Green Team is planning a series of Friday night movies leading up to Earth Day on Wednesday, April 22nd.



Our first movie is **In Defense of Food**, a 2015 documentary by journalist and activist Michael Pollan. It attempts to answer the question, "What should I eat to be healthy?"

We're planning on meeting at 6pm on Friday, January 17th and enjoying a Potluck salad bar before the film. The Green Team will supply the lettuce; you bring your favorite salad topping, veggie, or dressing.

crazies



After a wonderful Christmas and New Year break, the kids are back to their regular schedule. As for us in crazies, this month we will be going through a 9-week series on the Fruit of the Spirit. We will teach them all about love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.



On January 20th, St. Matthew and the crazies will be participating in their annual outreach program. We are going to Feed My Starving Children. For more information, please contact Alex Johnson. See above for further details.

2020 is going to be a great year for these kids and I can't wait to see what God has in store for them.

God Bless,

-Mel Jerome, Youth Director

Children's Ministry

Birthday Party for Jesus, through the years!
Happy New Year from Children's Ministry
January 2020

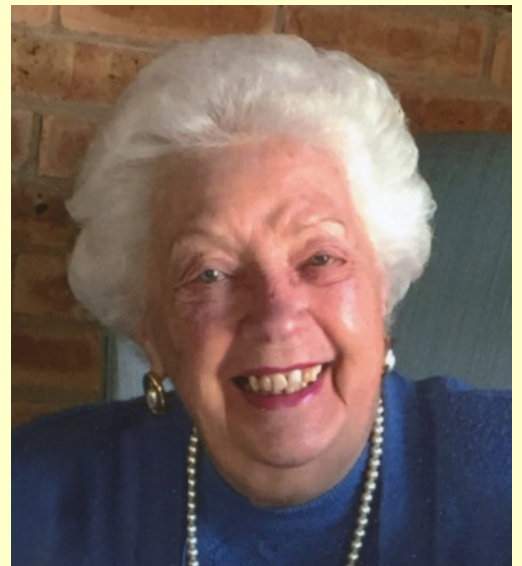


Thank you notes...



We include our
love and our hearts
along with 30
years of memories
with this check to
St. Matthew U.C.C.
Thank you for your
many gifts to us
throughout those years.
May God bless and
richly provide for your
ministries. Love,
Al and Kathy Skovra

We would like to thank our St. Matthew family for your sympathy, love, and support shared with our family after our mother's death. We were touched by your willingness to share not only our loss, but our celebration of mom's life. Thank you also for the many unseen hands and hearts that contributed. We have all been blessed to experience the love that abounds in St. Matthew.



~The entire Adams family



Note from Marilyn Giese

November 17, 2019

Dear friends & members of the "60th anniversary celebration at St. Matthew" committee:

It is Monday morning and I am blessed remembering the wonderful St. Matthew UCC 60th year celebration on Sunday. It was beautiful from the start of bells to the last bite from the colorful brunch table. And the thoughtful gifts are appreciated. The special St. Matthew silver cross and chain, the altar bouquet and delicate wrist corsage, the blue St. Matthew coffee mug, the notepad and the amazing chocolate "60". I can't decide whether to eat it or just enjoy viewing the treat. :)

My thanks to one and all. I am always grateful for the creativity and selfless efforts members of our St. Matthew family put forth to provide memorable moments and special occasions of joy during the year. It is a true blessing.

Peace and love
Marilyn Giese

Announcements and Events

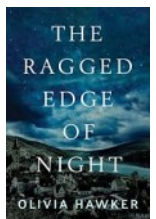
NOVEL APPROACHES

The novel to be approached in January is "The Ragged Edge of Night" by Olivia Hawker. Set in Nazi Germany, this is a powerful story of a priest turned husband turned resistance leader. Hateful forces had grown so powerful that they destroyed a nation and were marching to threaten the world.

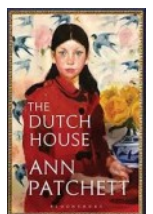
The Date: Friday, January 10th at 7:30pm

The Place: The Boyds', 510 S. Aurora Way, Wheaton

All are welcome. Join us for lively discussion, food, and fellowship.



LOOKING AHEAD: "The Dutch House" by Ann Patchett





ANNUAL MEETING

The St. Matthew UCC Annual Meeting will be held after church on Sunday, January 26th.

Year-end committee reports are due to the office no later than Monday, January 6th.

Reports should be submitted to Dani in the office at office@stmatthewucc.org. If you would like to see last year's report as a guide for this year's report, please contact Dani.

YOGA CLASSES



Thursday, January 9th, 16th, 23rd, and 30th

*\$10 donation per class with all proceeds going to the Missions Fund.
This is a gentle class, appropriate for all.*

*Contact Marla Mothershed, mmothershed63@gmail.com
630.441.5963.*



2020 Voice, Happenings, and Bulletin Due Dates

All submissions for the weekly Happenings and bulletin should be submitted to the office no later than 9am Tuesday for the week it runs.

2020 VOICE deadlines: Typically the second to last Sunday of the month, with exception of November and December.

January 19th, February 16th, March 22nd, April 19th, May 24th, July 19th, August 23rd, September 20th, October 18th, November 15th, December 13th.

The Voice is not published in July.



January

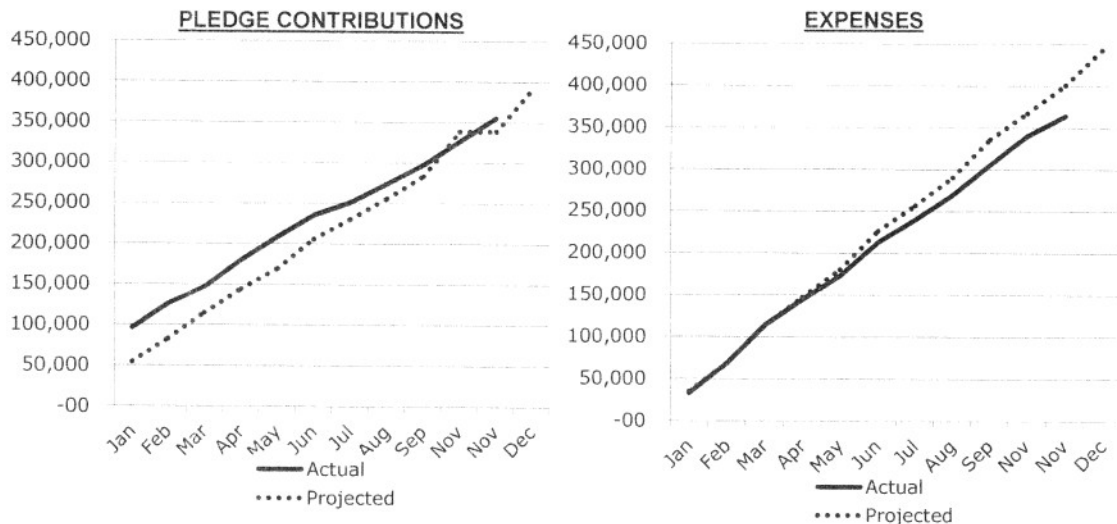
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
TUESDAY NIGHTS 6pm Intergene-Ringers 7:30pm Chancel Ringers	WEDNESDAY NIGHTS 6:30pm Praise Band 7:30pm Sanctuary Choir		1 New Year's Day 	2	3	4 2pm Pickleball
5 9:30am Worship Communion 6pm crazies	6 Annual reports due to office	7 8am Men's Group	8 1pm Women's Prayer Group PADS	9 10am Yoga	10 7:30pm Novel Approaches	11
12 9:30am Worship Remembrance Sunday 6pm crazies	13	14 8am Men's Group 7:30pm Missions meeting	15 1pm Women's Prayer Group	16 10am Yoga	17 6pm Green Team Movie Night	18
19 9:30am Worship Bells Voice articles due 6pm crazies	20 2:15pm FMSC MLK, Jr. Day	21 8am Men's Group	22 1pm Women's Prayer Group	23 10am Yoga	24	25
26 9:30am Worship Open Choir Annual meeting 6pm crazies	27	28 8am Men's Group	29 12:30pm Digital Ministry meeting 1pm Women's Prayer Group	30 10am Yoga	31	

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

For the Period Ending November 30, 2019

	ACTUAL CURRENT MONTH	ACTUAL YEAR-TO- DATE	ANNUAL BUDGET
RECEIPTS:			
Pledge Contributions	28,373	355,114	391,001
Loose Offerings	424	6,864	5,000
Rental Income	750	8,700	10,500
Fund Raising	168	2,077	2,001
Investment Income	(805)	725	300
More Property	34,000	34,000	34,364
Miscellaneous Income	77	5,577	1,000
TOTAL RECEIPTS	62,987	413,058	444,166
EXPENDITURES:			
Ministry	17,931	216,264	248,522
Building	5,267	94,895	123,050
Loans & Notes	-00	20,063	26,750
Mission / OCWM	-00	20,200	27,250
Committees:			
Christian Education	278	6,777	8,000
Membership/Congregational Life	248	2,061	3,000
Music	301	3,302	4,895
Worship	33	407	1,500
Memorial/Endowment	-00	-00	100
Stewardship	-00	-00	100
Misc. & Contingency	-00	-00	1,000
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	24,057	363,968	444,166
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	\$38,931	\$49,089	\$(0)

2019 Activity - Actual vs. Projected



Please contact Howard Peterson if you have questions or need additional information.

THE VOICE
OF
St. Matthew
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
1420 South Gables Blvd.
WHEATON, ILLINOIS 60189



St. Matthew United Church of Christ
630.665.1236 (Office)

Office Email: office@stmatthewucc.org

Web Site: www.stmatthewucc.org

Office Hours:

Monday-Thursday: 10am-2pm

Friday: 9am-11am

Sunday Worship: 9:30am

Sunday Church School: 10am

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.

STAFF

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