

December
2019



of



**WHAT'S
INSIDE**

*Pastor's
Message
Pages 1-2*

*Advent Series
Page 2*

*Music Ministry
Page 3*

*Birthdays
Page 4*

*Mission News
Page 5*

*Green Team
Page 6*

*Congo Life/
crazies
Page 7*

*Children's
Ministry
Pages 8-9*

*Announcements
Pages 10-11*

*60th Photos
Pages 12-13*

*Calendar
Page 14*

*Financial
Page 15*



Pastoral Message

Pastor Allen Mothershed

Touched - Luke 2

Below is from a sermon I once preached,
with credit to Barbara Brown Taylor's insights and words.

The scene that cold winter evening is anything but touching unless you count the pressing of strangers against you in a town that is overflowing with people. None of the people that night in Bethlehem really wanted to be there. They are there because the emperor told them they had no choice but to be there to register themselves so that his henchmen could tax them with oppressive taxes few poor people could afford. There would have been a sea of people all clamoring for food to eat and a warm place out of the winter chill. Of all the people that night who needed to be touched, it would have been Joseph and Mary, with Mary full with child after a long day of travel. For some reason, the innkeeper was touched, touched at least enough to provide them a place to stay in the stables where the sheep are sheltered, off the busy streets and out of the cold winter wind.

"While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn Son and wrapped Him in bands of cloth, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn."

And this is the story of the birth of our Savior. This is not a story like any other. This story does not match the ancient story of how savior kings make their entry into the world. Savior kings come into the world with great pomp and celebration, their birth announced loudly to royals and nobles. Savior kings are born into palaces, surrounded by the most important people. They are born with armies that they one day will lead with the promise that all their wealth and strength will put them in a position to somehow lead and force the changes to the world.

When we are honest, this is what we often want from God. We want the great God Almighty, Lord of the Universe, in all His power to reach down into our lives and into this world and touch us. We want to find a way in our lives to transport ourselves into a place of heavenly bliss. Our dreams of heaven are an ethereal place of escape, off in the sky above life's troubles and concerns.

(continued)

We imagine a place where there simply are no jobs to do, no bills to pay, no troublesome relationships to negotiate. We imagine a space where the body does not have its aches and pains, where sickness can no longer touch us and those we love. Salvation is an escape from our problems, and we imagine it happening by a mighty act from Almighty God above.

But this is not the vision of our Christmas story of Joseph and Mary and the baby Jesus lying in a manger. This child has made His way from heaven to earth, not in power and might, but in a way that is to open our hearts in love and joy. As Barbara Brown Taylor says, "None of heaven's escalators are going up tonight. Everybody up there is coming down tonight, right here, right into our own Bethlehem, bringing us the God who has decided to make His home in our arms." And this is love.

Blessings to all this Holiday Season.

Peace, Pastor Allen

Advent Series - God's Surprises



Everything about the stories of Advent and Christmas tells us that God has an odd sense of timing. Apparently, God's calendar has not been synced with ours. Like a guest who comes a day early, God comes to us. We are told that Jesus will come as unexpected as a thief in the night. John, a

strange character, announces Good News, not in a sanctuary but in the wilderness. Both Elizabeth and Mary have unexpected pregnancies. A baby is born in an inopportune time in a stable, and angels sing the news to shepherds. In the wisdom of Forrest Gump, "Life is like a box of chocolates, you never know what you are going to get." Join us to discover the joy in the surprises God has for us.

December 1st

Matthew 24:37-44

"Jesus the Thief"

Jesus comes as a thief in the night, catching us off guard. Will we welcome Him?

December 8th

Mark 1:1-8

"From Somewhere Else But Here"

In a way we would never expect, John the Baptist breaks on to the scene to prepare us for God's reordering of our world. Can we discover the Good News in the midst of the bad?

December 15th

Luke 1:39-56

"God's Musical Drama"

News of pregnancies come to two women who least expected it, and like a Broadway musical break out in magnificent songs. Shall we join their song?

December 22nd

Luke 2:1-20, Galatians 4:4

"In the Right Time"

When the world was fast asleep in an unexpected place and time, God comes and is born to us in a child. Can we dare to believe what seems too good to be true?

December 24th

Luke 2:1-20, John 1:1-4, 13-18

"Where God Is Found"

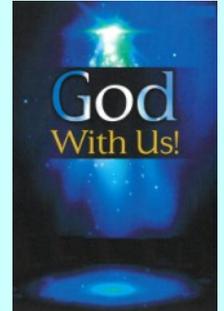
As children we wonder where God resides, in the sky? As adults we look for spiritual truth to find God and imagine heaven is God's eternal home we one day will travel. In John's gospel we are told something unique: God is found in human flesh and in our own time and place.

Notes from the Music Room.....



It's December and the start of Advent, the time of anticipation of our Savior's birth. The Music Ministry of St Matthew, Praise Band, Sanctuary Choir, IntergeneRingers, and Chancel Ringers have been preparing for their part of the seasonal celebration. **Included in that preparation is the Christmas cantata, which will be presented during worship on December 8th.** It is titled

"God With Us!" and is a compilation of several Advent and Christmas anthems by composers whose music we have sung many times. **The Praise Band presents their Advent selection on December 15th, and the handbells play on December 22nd. All of Advent leads up to Christmas Eve when handbells and choir will be at the 10pm service to celebrate the birth of Jesus.**



On November 17th, we celebrated the 60th Anniversary of St Matthew UCC. Many memories were brought to mind as we went through the years. I hope you enjoyed the music presented in honor of the occasion. From "Surely the Presence" which was commissioned for our 50th anniversary to the special postlude by Brian, all those involved worked hard and even put in some extra time that was required.

Thank You!

On a personal note, I thank everyone for their thoughts, prayers, notes, and support I received as I recuperated from my illnesses over these past many months. A special thank you to Joe Hall, who, without blinking, stepped up to cover directing the choir from August through November. As was stated by many in the video, St. Matthew is family, and I am grateful to be part of that family!

May the true wonders and anticipation of the season be with all.

Jamie

630-202-6788

jamie.craig@stmatthewucc.org

WEEKLY REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

Tuesday

IntergeneRingers

6pm

Chancel Ringers

7:30pm

Wednesday

Praise Band

6:30pm

Cantata Rehearsal

7:30pm

Sanctuary Choir

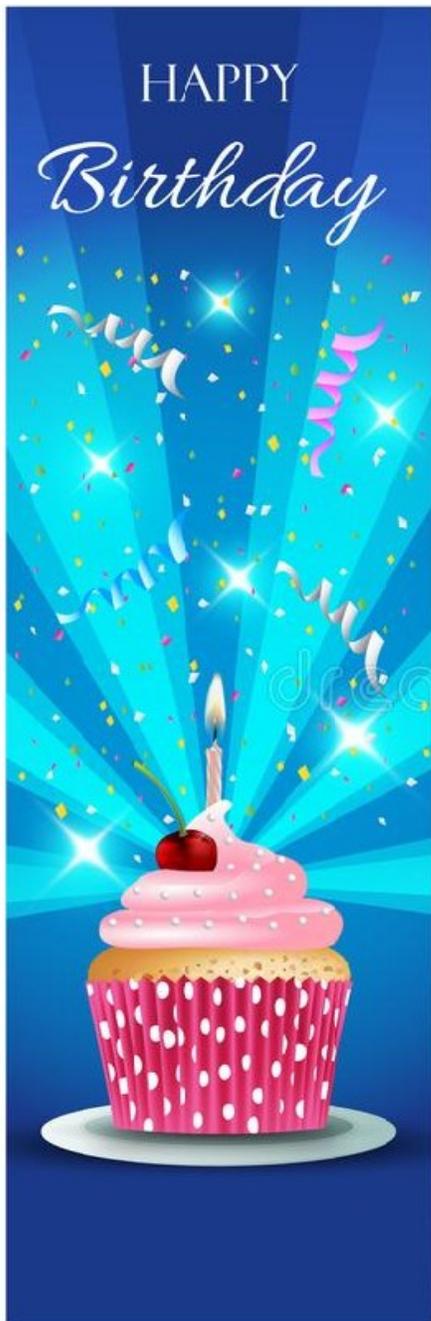
8:30pm

Pennies From Heaven

Scrip cards are always a great gift for Christmas - one size fits all, without the hassle of returns. Not only are you giving gifts to your family and friends, but the retailers also donate to St. Matthew. Wow - two gifts in one!

Stop by the Scrip table in Dobstaff for a list of ideas for men, women, and stocking stuffers. Are you hosting celebrations this season or making dozens of yummy cookies? Get your cooking and baking supplies with grocery cards from Scrip.

Orders will be taken as late as December 15th. They will be available for early pickup at church by December 18th (call the office first) or after the morning service on December 22nd. No orders will be taken on December 22nd because the Scrip office will be closed the following week.



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 3 Joe Chumas
- Elizabeth Hambrick-Stowe
- 5 Judi Gonzalez
- 6 John Adams
- 7 Jerry Stoller
- 8 Jan Beaton
- Mike Thornton
- 10 Laura Christensen
- 13 Anna Neufelder
- 16 Dave Boyd
- 20 Lisa Stubbee
- 23 Rachel Cole
- Cathy SooHoo
- 27 Dave Mook
- 28 Jeannine Adams
- Blake Erickson
- 29 Tyler Faith
- Sharon Schlenker
- 30 Bob Barnshaw



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

The office will be closed the weeks of December 23rd and 30th. Regular hours will resume January 6th.

Mission News

MARIAN PARK CHRISTMAS STORE



Bless a family in need this Christmas!

St. Matthew will continue our ongoing support for Marian Park's residents by holding our annual Christmas Store in early December. Like last year, we will be asking St. Matthew members to purchase items that many of the Marian Park residents rely on to care for their families/households.

A Christmas tree in the narthex has glittery ornaments hanging from it. Please take one (or more!) and buy the item as a donation to the Marian Park Christmas Store. Return it to the box by the tree next time you come to church (latest by December 8th, please!).

You will find that most of the items listed are things that we find common in everyday life, such as household supplies, grooming items (lotion, shampoo, soaps, etc.), diapers, wipes, adult undergarments, and paper products (toilet paper/towels). Unfortunately, such necessities are not eligible for purchase by the Marian Park residents with their SNAP benefits, so our supply of such products is truly helpful.

We will also need 10-15 volunteer elves to help residents shop our (free) store on Tuesday, December 10th from 4pm-7:30pm. A sign-up sheet is hanging on the bulletin board in the narthex.

If you have any questions please contact Liz Westergaard at lizzzz742@yahoo.com.

Food on the First

Thanks to those who donated in November!

Here is what is needed in December:

- Canned pineapple slices
- Canned peaches
- Canned vegetables
- Boxed potatoes
- Boxed stuffing
- Rice
- Cake mixes and frosting
- Cookie mixes
- Brownie mixes
- Soap
- Baby wipes
- Feminine pads (no tampons)
- Pull-Ups
- Diapers—any size
- Disposable razors
- Shampoo
- Toothbrushes
- Toothpaste



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.



December is a fifth Sunday month at the DuPage Convalescent Center!

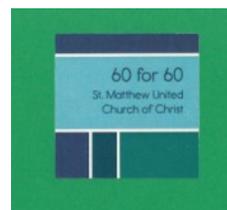
Sunday, December 29th is a 5th Sunday at the DuPage Convalescent Center. Can you volunteer some time to help residents get to worship and also enjoy their company? Arrive about 9:45am and be done before noon. If you can help, please contact John Adams at jadams1958@gmail.com.

60 for 60

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. Packets were distributed at church. In addition to the letter explaining the new mission, a postcard was also included. It is the wish that whoever receives your gift will send the postcard back to St. Matthew to let us know how it impacted their current situation.

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

Extra 60 for 60 packets can be found on the bulletin board in the narthex.



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.

The sign-up sheet is in the narthex.

We hope to see you there!

IN DEFENSE
OF FOOD
AN EATER'S MANIFESTO



Congregational Life/Membership News

Movie Night at St. Matthew – We are planning a movie night movie after the new year. 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 as we near the date.



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!

crozies

Fa la la la la !



It's Christmas time!



The crazies annual Christmas shopping is on **Sunday, December 1st**. The crazies will meet at church for **dinner at 5:30pm** and will **shop at Target from 6-7pm**. The items bought will be given to the Christmas store at Outreach Community Center.

On **Sunday, December 8th at 6pm**, the crazies will BELIEVE while watching "The Polar Express" and making crafts.

On **Sunday, December 15th at 6pm**, the crazies will have Christmas party.

The crazies will not meet on the 22nd or the 29th. See you next year!

-Mel Jerome, Youth Director

Children's Ministry

Thank you to the teachers from our Noah Unit: **Janella Holshouser, Sarah Muntz, Deb Felsenthal and all our awesome youth helpers!!!**

The Christmas season is quickly approaching and we have a busy month planned for the children.

Sunday, December 1st:

- ♦ **The children will each paint a ceramic Nativity piece, which will become our Sunday School Nativity set.** The set will be displayed in Dobstaff Hall on December 15th during the Birthday Party for Jesus.



Sunday, December 8th:

- ♦ **Cantata, no Sunday School.** The nursery will be open to children infant - 4 year-old pre-school. All older children should remain in the service to enjoy the Cantata as we don't want the nursery to become overcrowded.
- ♦ **M&M gathering** after Sunday School at 11am in the Temple of Truth.

Sunday, December 15th:

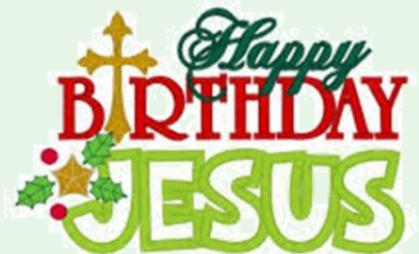
- ♦ **Children sing, and video presentation during worship service.** During worship the children will sing **"I'd Sing you a Song" - new children's Christmas song by Shawna Belt Edwards.** If you type in the words highlighted in green, you will be able to bring the song up on Youtube.com. If possible, have your children practice the song.



- ♦ **Creating a Sunday School family video: When putting out your nativity set, please take a picture or video of your children holding or arranging the pieces. In addition, I'd like pictures or clips of things like putting ornaments on the tree, reading a Christmas story, hanging Christmas lights, etc. I am hopeful that all our families will participate as I think this presentation will be a beautiful Christmas gift to our congregation.** *Please have your picture or video clips sent to my email, swold45@hotmail.com no later than December 11th (earlier than that would be even better). This request is for all families with children and youth: Nursery, Sunday School, middle and high school age.*



- ♦ **Birthday Party for Jesus:** During Sunday School the children will play games and make a small canvas nativity scene using their fingerprints. At the close of worship we will go downstairs to be with our church family in Dobstaff Hall. We will eat birthday cake and sing "Happy Birthday" to Jesus.



Sunday, December 22nd:

- ♦ **The children will dress in various costumes to recreate the Christmas story** and they will learn the important role that each had in the Christmas story. We will photograph the children as they pose in the role of: Mary, Joseph, Shepherd, Angel, or Kings. These photographs will be printed and hung to update the photos at the bottom of the stairs.



December 24th, Christmas Eve 6pm family service:

- ♦ **Please let me know if your children will be able to participate in the Christmas Eve service.** The children will sing songs that coincide with the skit that Pastor Allen wrote about the ***Gifts of Christmas***. We are practicing the songs in Sunday School but we do not have a lot of Sundays to learn them. The more Sundays your children can attend between now and then the better. It would be helpful if you had them sing along with the YouTube video of each song: ***"Mary, Did You Know" kids lyrics; "He is the Gift" - new Christmas song by Shawna Belt Edwards; "I'd Sing You a Song" - new children's Christmas song by Shawna Belt Edwards.***

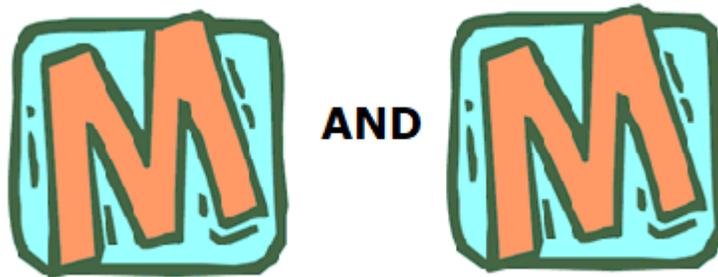


December Birthdays:

Greyson Scalora
Fiona Walsh
Eve Henderson
Mary Ortman

December 11th
December 17th
December 25th
December 26th

**Have a very Merry Christmas,
-Susan Wold, Children's Ministry Director**



MOMENTS TOGETHER & MEMORIES FOREVER (M&M)

The M&M group will have their holiday gathering on Sunday, December 8th from 11am-noon. We will meet upstairs in the Temple of Truth.

There will be games, crafts, and treats.

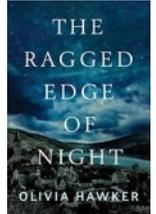
Please contact Miegan Bresingham (630.865.5196 or msbres@yahoo.com) with questions.

Announcements and Events

NOVEL APPROACHES

Novel Approaches will not meet in December.

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

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

LOOKING AHEAD: "The Dutch House" by Ann Patchett



YOGA CLASSES



Thursday, December 5th, 12th, and 19th from 10-11am.

\$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.

A CELTIC CHRISTMAS WITH GAVIN COYLE

Gavin Coyle, along with musicians Paul Burgess, Karen Fernandez, and Joanne Diebold, will be presenting a Christmas concert featuring seasonal classics to get you in the holiday spirit.

The concert is on Friday, December 6th at 8pm at COD's McAninch Theatre and will benefit People's Resource Center. Tickets are \$35 and can be purchased online at themac.org or at the box office.

Friday, December 6

"A Celtic Christmas with
Gavin Coyle & Friends"

McAninch Arts Center at
College of DuPage
8:00PM





Year-end committee reports

As the year comes to an end it is time to start thinking about the Annual Report. The Annual Meeting will be on Sunday, January 26th after church.

Year-end committee reports are due to the office no later than Monday, January 6th. If you like to get a jump on things, please feel free to submit it earlier!

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.



6pm Family-friendly service
10pm Candlelight service

Holiday Office Hours

The office will be closed for the weeks of December 23rd and December 30th.

Regular office hours resume January 6th.



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.

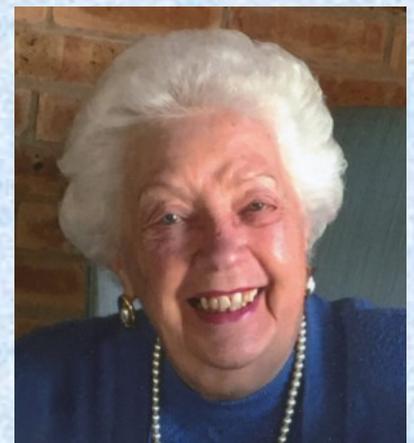
The Voice is not published in July.

November 17th, 2019





In memory of June Adams



***June 18th, 1925 -
November 3rd, 2019***





DECEMBER



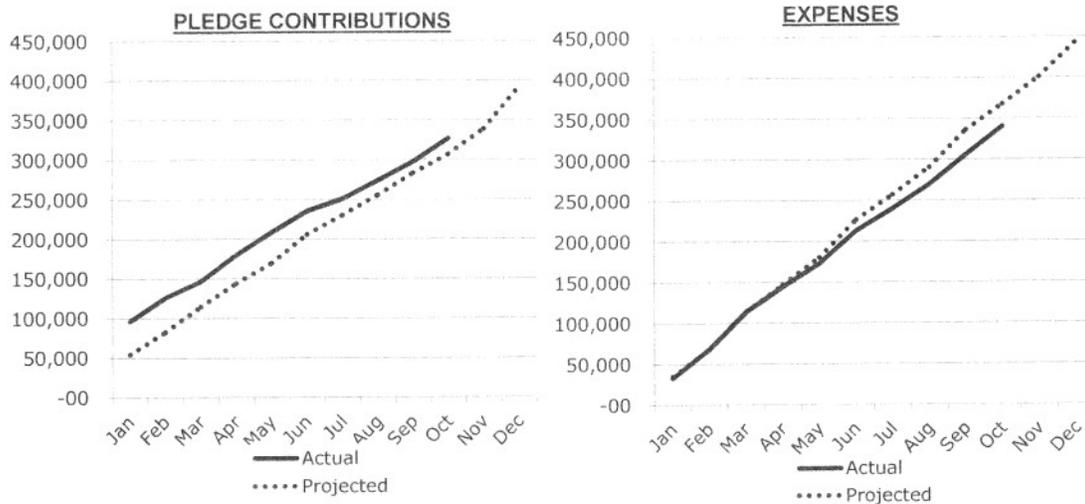
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9:30am Worship Communion 5:30pm crazies	2	3 8am Men's Group 7:30 Mission meeting	4 1pm Women's Prayer Group	5 10am Yoga	6	7 Cantata rehearsal
8 9:30am Worship Cantata 11am M&M 6pm crazies	9	10 8am Men's Group 4pm Marian Park store	11 1pm Women's Prayer Group PADS	12 10am Yoga	13	14 7am Church of the Savior Retreat 1pm CTC
15 9:30am Worship Birthday Party for Jesus 6pm crazies Voice articles due	16	17 8am Men's Group 6pm SRC	18 1pm Women's Prayer Group	19 10am Yoga	20	21
22 9:30am Worship Bells 11am Council meeting NO crazies	23 Office closed	24 <i>Christmas Eve</i> 6pm Family service 10pm Candlelight service	25 	26	27	28
29 9:30am Worship 9:30 DuPage Convalescent Center NO crazies	30 Office closed	31 	TUESDAY NIGHTS 6pm IntergeneRing-ers 7:30pm Chancel Ringers	WEDNESDAY NIGHTS 6:45pm Praise Band 7:30pm Cantata 8:30pm Sanctuary Choir		

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

For the Period Ending October 31, 2019

	ACTUAL CURRENT MONTH	ACTUAL YEAR-TO- DATE	ANNUAL BUDGET
RECEIPTS:			
Pledge Contributions	29,529	326,741	391,001
Loose Offerings	333	6,440	5,000
Rental Income	800	7,950	10,500
Fund Raising	442	1,909	2,001
Investment Income	11	1,530	300
More Property	-00	-00	34,364
Miscellaneous Income	125	5,500	1,000
TOTAL RECEIPTS	31,240	350,071	444,166
EXPENDITURES:			
Ministry	23,336	198,333	248,522
Building	7,968	89,629	123,050
Loans & Notes	-00	20,063	26,750
Mission / OCWM	1,000	20,200	27,250
Committees:			
Christian Education	1,260	6,499	8,000
Membership/Congregational Life	68	1,813	3,000
Music	921	3,001	4,895
Worship	132	374	1,500
Memorial/Endowment	-00	-00	100
Stewardship	-00	-00	100
Misc. & Contingency	-00	-00	1,000
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	34,686	339,912	444,166
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	\$(3,445)	\$10,159	\$(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

Rev. Milton Allen Mothershed, Senior Pastor

allen.mothershed@stmatthewucc.org

Susan Wold, Director of Children's Ministry

susan.wold@stmatthewucc.org

Mel Jerome, Director of Youth Ministry

mel.jerome@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

Dani de Leon, Administrative Assistant

office@stmatthewucc.org

Jean Wescher, Business Manager

business.manager@stmatthewucc.org