

**APRIL 2016**

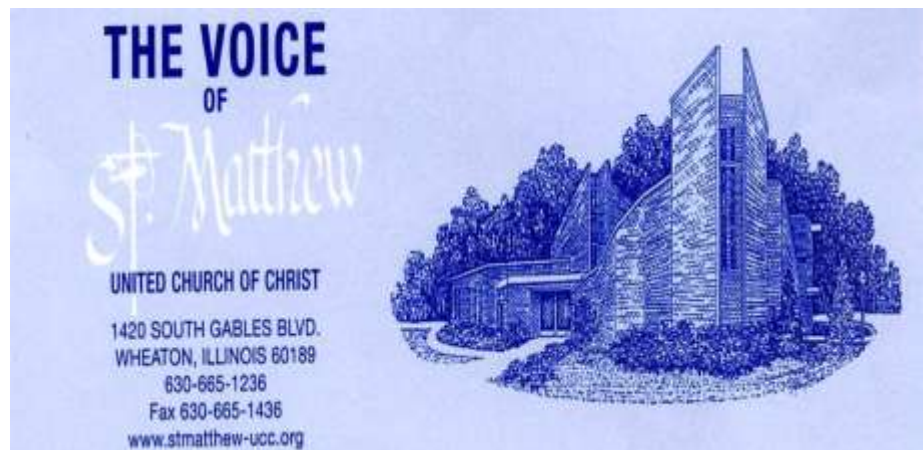
**Pastoral Message  
Rev. Allen Mothershed**

Several months ago we began a process to explore becoming an Open and Affirming church in the United Church of Christ. We will be voting on a proposed statement of being open and affirming at a congregational meeting April 10.

I have learned much from you in this process as we have talked openly about our hopes, concerns, questions, and fears. As a church that experiences ourselves as a family who values each of its members, there has been understandable anxiety about bringing up a controversial issue for discussion. This has especially been the case for a congregation that has good momentum after one of the most challenging times in its history. “Why now? Are we not already open and affirming?” many have asked. Others have said, “Why should we specifically focus on one group or another to offer a welcoming and accepting statement? Is our general statement of welcome not enough?”

As your pastor, it is my hope that I can simply share my heart with you on this matter. I am not one who enjoys opening up difficult questions that might cause family stress or misunderstandings, though I am rather pleased with the spirit I have witnessed in this process with members who see this issue differently from one another. It pains me when a few feel that our passing a statement might be against their own personal beliefs. I value each one of you. The only reason for taking this process on is love. There is no other good reason to do this. Every family knows there comes a time to talk about more difficult issues, and healthy families do not shy away even when there may be struggle.

The loving reason for bringing up this issue is that many people are hurting. Some are close to us and others are outside our church. Some are children of people in our church or a sister, a brother, even a mother or a father. Some might sit next to you in church. These are people who have experienced shame and at times exclusion from the larger church. This includes the many groups of people we will men-



tion in our statement, such as the disabled and those who are economically disadvantaged. Most controversial, in the larger church community, are gays, lesbians and transgender persons. We have focused a lot in our discussion on these last groups because that is where there is presently greater disagreement. I believe we must remember that this can be a matter of life or death for such persons. Suicide rates are very high for gay, lesbian, and transgender people, especially young people. How can we not speak and take a stand? Unfortunately, the larger church has often excluded and caused great harm to these groups. Many have walked away from their faith or the church because of their experience. When deeply hurt, it is a natural impulse to leave and protect ourselves. I cannot tell you all the stories of people I know who have experienced this.

The question is: “How does a loving church that follows the way of Jesus respond?” We do something counter to our culture and many other churches – we dare to let these people know that we will stand with them, open our arms to receive them, and commit to accept them as they are rather than shame them. They need to hear this loud and clear if they are to feel safe and welcomed; a general statement about being welcoming is not enough. This is the heart of what Jesus did in his ministry. He put compassion before rules and religious laws. He sided with the outcasts, and became misunderstood and rejected as they were.

What if you feel differently and believe you must follow your own convictions? You too are welcome and accepted. We are in covenant with one another.  
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We will never all agree with every decision our church makes, but we continue to break bread at Christ's table in our disagreements as a family. Many of you may not be quite sure how you feel or are conflicted. If in doubt, let me ask you to err on the side of compassion. There is no law against love and Jesus summarized the whole of the Jewish law as being about love.

I invite each of you to vote, and regardless of outcome to remember that we are brothers and sisters in Christ. We will continue to be in ministry and love with one another.

Grace and Peace,  
Pastor Allen

## MISSION NEWS

### FOOD ON THE FIRST

Thanks to all who donated in the month of March.

Here is what is needed for April:

- Diapers - sizes 4, 5, & 6
- Baby wipes
- Feminine pads
- Boxes of band-aids
- Disposable razors
- Cans of pineapple slices
- Cans of chicken
- Cold cereal
- White rice
- Clean, empty egg cartons

As always, please make sure items are not opened or expired.

If you have any questions, please call Betty Greer at 630.682.4084.

Blessings to all.



### MICAH DAY CENTER DONATIONS

Thank you for all your donations of backpacks, purses, and belts. Donations have been continuing since January and we collected over 200 items! They have all been sent to Biloxi, MS.

The next donation opportunity will be in August and September so that we can deliver them when we go in October.



On May 1st members of St. Matthew and 15 other churches from Glen Ellyn and Wheaton will walk to raise awareness and funds to fight

against poverty and hunger across the U.S. and more than 80 other countries. Nationally, CROP Hunger Walk raised over \$11 million dollars in 2015, with \$25,000 coming from our local walk; 25% of all funds raised in our walk will go to support local food banks and resources. To sign up as a walker or donate to the St. Matthew team, please go to [bit.ly/stmatthewcropwalk](http://bit.ly/stmatthewcropwalk) or write a check payable to "CWS/CROP Walk". For questions please contact Janine Orrico at [jdorrico@gmail.com](mailto:jdorrico@gmail.com) or 630.532.8927.

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This year, St. Matthew is hosting the CROP walk for the first time ever. Registration starts at 1pm and the walk begins at 2pm. Families are especially encouraged to walk and there will be games and face painting at the church. We need volunteers for a variety of tasks. Please sign up in the narthex **or contact Alex Alavi at alex.alavi@sbcglobal.net or 630.772.4449** if you have any questions. We hope to have a large member turn-out. Thank you!



**ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING** is the refugee, relief and development offering of the United Church of Christ. This important program transforms lives through health, education, agricultural and emergency relief initiatives in 138 coun-

tries. From supporting impoverished countries in Africa, tsunami relief in Japan and recovery from natural disasters here in the U.S., money from this offering supports those in need in our community and around the world. St. Matthew will be taking up this collection on **Sunday, April 17th.**

## NOTES FROM THE MUSIC ROOM

Happy Spring! The weather is warmer, flowers are growing, grass is greening, and the birds are singing.

Please join me in saying a big "Thank You" to those who provided music for Holy Week, starting with Palm Sunday, then Maundy Thursday, and finally Easter Sunday. Your dedication of time and talent added greatly to our worship experience of the Crucifixion and Resurrection.

At the end of February, we tried our first Open Choir Sunday. Unfortunately, no one was able to participate, but several came to me asking if we would try it again. So on Sunday, April 17th we will try again. There will be a rehearsal starting at 8:15, at which anyone who likes to sing can come, rehearse, and present the anthem that morning. Please watch the Sunday bulletins and the Happenings for reminders. We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible. Of course, you are always welcome on Wednesday evenings too, for song and fellowship.

Peace

Jamie Craig  
630-202-6788

[music.director@stmatthewucc.org](mailto:music.director@stmatthewucc.org)



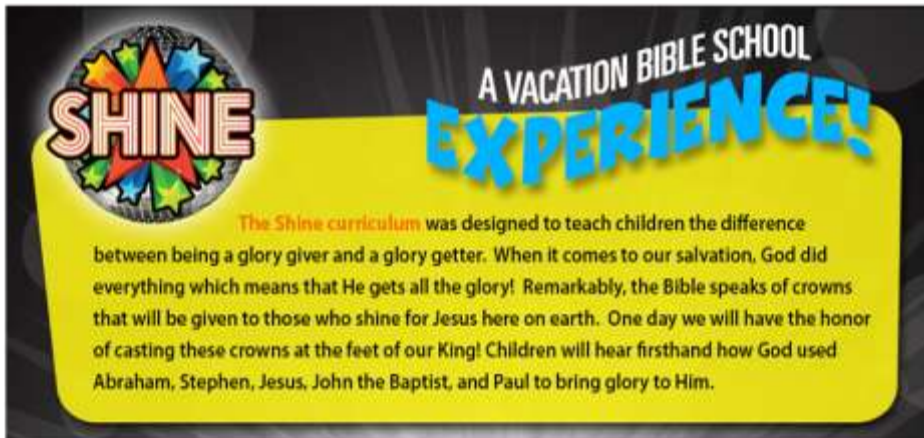


# CHILDREN & YOUTH

From June 2015 to February 2016, St. Matthew has been blessed with the birth of eight babies. We did a photo shoot with them and look forward to recreating it throughout the years.

Angels, from top left: Fiona Chapple (parents: Kelly and Steve) and Fiona Walsh (parents: Erin and Peter)

Shepherds, from left: Gunnar Erickson (parents: Hope and Blake), Michael Henderson (parents: Mary and Greg), Greyson Scalora (parents: Summer and Giovanni), Reid Holshouser (parents: Janella and Rob), Jack Legatzke (parents: Aimee and David), Emanuel Padilla (parents: Diana and Jose.)



Vacation Bible School 2016  
June 20 - 24

Mark your calendar for another great VBS experience for your children, grandchildren, neighbors and friends. Spread the word and we will do the rest, showing God's love for five days of stories, music, games, snacks and crafts. Registration forms are now available in the Church office. If

you would like to volunteer or need more information regarding the program, please feel free to email Susan at [swold45@hotmail.com](mailto:swold45@hotmail.com)



In Sunday School the children are taking a **Road Trip** via Jerusalem Tours. Each Sunday they travel to the Holy Land with their tour guides. Media production, video, art and games will bring them on a journey from Resurrection to Pentecost.

**April Birthdays:**

**Kennedy Scalora 4/1, Molly Hutchison 4/3, Olivia Henderson 4/5**



**Red: Adult/Parent Meetings** | **Black: crazies Special Events** | **Green: crazies Regular Events**

crazies Fellowship and Study	Sunday, April 3 <sup>rd</sup>	6-8pm
crazies Fellowship and Study	Sunday, April 10 <sup>th</sup>	6-8pm
<b>Mission Trip Info Meeting</b>	<b>Sunday, April 17<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>5:30-6pm</b>
crazies Fellowship and Study	Sunday, April 17 <sup>th</sup>	6-8pm
30 Hour Famine Rescheduled	Fri., April 22 - Sat., April 23	6pm Fri - 1pm Sat
NO crazies	Sunday, April 24 <sup>th</sup>	OFF
crazies Fellowship and Study	Sunday, May 1 <sup>st</sup>	6-8pm
NO crazies (Mother's Day)	Sunday, May 8 <sup>th</sup>	OFF
crazies Fellowship and Study	Sunday, May 15 <sup>th</sup>	6-8pm
crazies End of Year Party	Sunday, May 22 <sup>nd</sup>	TBD



### **RESCHEDULED - 30 Hour Famine**

Please support the crazies Youth Ministry again this year as they support Heifer International by participating in a 30-hour fast to raise their awareness about hunger across the globe. **Our fast will begin Friday morning, April 22 and continue until lunch time on Saturday, April 23.** If you would like to make a pledge (all proceeds given to Heifer Int'l), please contact Emmy Davis or write a check to St. Matthew UCC and place "crazies 30 Hour Famine" in the memo.

### **It's time for the annual PLANT SALE!**

Help support the crazies by ordering your spring flowers through us this year. From petunias to portulaca, salvia to snapdragons, we've got everything your garden needs! Plant orders are due to the church office by **Sunday, May 1st** and **pick-up will be Friday, May 20th**. Stop by the crazies bulletin board area or the church office for an order form any time. Contact Emmy Davis or Judi Gonzalez if you have any questions. Thank you in advance to all of our gardeners for your annual support!

### **Mission Trip Interest**

If you are interested in being a part of this year's mission trip, please contact Emmy Davis.



# CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

We welcome Jonathan Sturm to the Congregational Life Committee. We are still open to adding another member to the committee, perhaps someone else with school-age children.

Thanks to the English family for hosting a discussion of the movie *Risen*. Nearly 20 people attended and enjoyed good conversation, tasty treats and drinks. Thanks also to Pastor Allen for leading the discussion.

Our partnership with Christian Education produced another memorable Easter Egg Hunt event. We estimated approximately 100 children attended along with several adults. We have several events coming soon – please watch for sign-up sheets for the following events:

- The next Euchre Night is **Friday, April 15th**. Sign up or contact Roseanne King at [kingz@me.com](mailto:kingz@me.com)
- The All-Church Picnic will be held on **June 5th** immediately after the service. Please save the date and think of a side dish or dessert you'd like to bring. A sign-up sheet will be posted in May.
- We have a date for our return to a Kane County Cougars game, **Thursday, June 30th, 7pm**. Tickets for the game are \$15 each. That evening is Thirsty Thursday night at the ballpark, with \$1 hot dogs and drinks available, as well as fireworks.

Watch for more information on this event.

As always, if you have other ideas on how we can come together as a church family, we'd be happy to hear from you. Please contact Rob Neufelder at 630.355.9684.

## APRIL BIRTHDAYS

3	Ed Domal
	Drew Luessenhop
	Kendall Thornton
6	Wes Curda
7	Uriel Ambrosia
8	Leo Mittman
	Julie Price
11	Joe Leinweber
12	Leslie Ortman
13	Francine Alavi
	Carol Justice
16	Hiram Baird
	Ann Marie Matthei
18	Nancy Franz
19	Sarah Madsen
21	Elise Anderson
22	Dawn Schubert
23	Craig Schlenker
24	Gwen Johnson





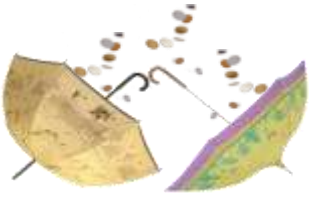
## EASTER EGG HUNT

You are amazing! Thank you to everyone who brought in filled eggs! We had approximately 100 kids take part in a fun morning filled with collecting the 2,761 eggs that were hidden! Everyone enjoyed crafts, food and drink as well as a visit with the Easter bunny.



# ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPCOMING EVENTS

## MANNA -Pennies From Heaven



Let's turn our umbrellas upside down!

**God provided manna for the Israelites wandering in the wilderness.**

**They didn't have to do anything for it, just gather up what they needed for the day.** Our MANNA program is just as easy. Simply order cards for the places you know you are going to shop anyway – grocery, drug stores, gas, etc. It costs you nothing and the retailers donate to St. Matthew.

Here's an example: I buy a \$100 Jewel card from Manna and Jewel gives St. Matthew \$4. If I did this 50 weeks a year, the church would receive \$200. If 40 people did this, St. Matthew would receive \$8,000. Last year we had 70 families who participated in Manna at one time or another, although our average is only 9 families per week. If all 70 families could participate regularly (weekly or even bi-weekly) we could easily make our fundraising goal for this year.

## family **G A M E** night

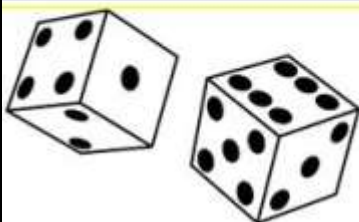
**Saturday, April 9th from 5- 7 pm**

Come and enjoy **fun games**, **fellowship**, **pizza** and **drinks**!  
Please bring your family, friends, and a table snack to share.

This event will be hosted by the Christian Education Committee  
and **Moore Toys and Gadgets** in Wheaton will provide our games for the night!

**all are welcome!**

Please sign up on the sheet in the narthex or contact the office at  
[office@stmatthewucc.org](mailto:office@stmatthewucc.org) to sign up for this event.





## **Open & Affirming**

**April 10** in the sanctuary after worship will be the formal vote by paper ballot, open to all who hold official membership in our congregation.

If you have general questions or feedback prior to the vote, please contact Pastor Allen or any member of the Open and Affirming committee – Lee Staton (chair), Alex Alavi, Jennifer Buhmann, Carol Honeywell, Diane Mook, Leslie Ortman, and Dorothy Peterson.

## **FAITH, FRIENDSHIP, & SISTERHOOD: WOMEN'S WALK FOR PEACE - Sunday, April 10th, 2:30-5pm**

The women of St. Matthew cordially invite all women to come join in an afternoon of interfaith unity and fellowship at the church. Featured will be a presentation by Nadia Qazi of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community addressing women of all faiths on how we can unite as sisters and work for peace in our respective communities. We will advocate that we change the hateful rhetoric in the current political climate.



The event will also feature a labyrinth walk coordinated by the Global Healing Response, which organizes community labyrinth walks as a way to promote unity, peace and compassion in society. The event will conclude with an interfaith prayer.

RSVP via email: [UCCInterfaith@gmail.com](mailto:UCCInterfaith@gmail.com) or by phone to Tina Ciner, 630.384.9684. An RSVP is encouraged, but not required.

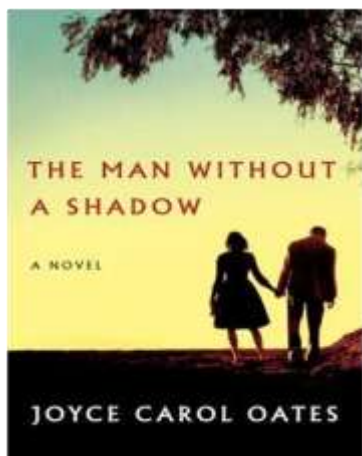
## **Euchre Club Night - April 15th, 7pm**

Dobstaff Hall

Euchre lovers of St. Matthew are welcome to attend the newly formed Euchre Club! Come join us for our next tournament and attempt to de-throne the current champs, Edie DeBoard and Hi Baird. Do not wait to complete your taxes at the deadline, be at St. Matthew! We will also set a schedule for future games, likely every two or three months. Feel free to bring friends who may want to get to know St. Matthew better. Come at 6:30pm if you need a refresher. Bring a snack or drink to share.



**Sign up at church or email Roseanne King at [kingz@me.com](mailto:kingz@me.com) to aid in planning.**



## NOVEL APPROACHES

The novel to be approached in April is “The Man Without a Shadow” by Joyce Carol Oates.

According to Harper Collins Publishers...”In this taut and fascinating novel, the author examines the mysteries of memory, personality, and identity and pierces the enigmatic force that drives human lives - love”.

**The date:** Friday, April 22, 7:30pm

**The place:** the Boyds, 510 South Aurora Way, Wheaton

**All are welcome!** Please join us for lively discussion, food and fellowship.

**LOOKING AHEAD:** “The High Mountains of Portugal” by Yann Martel

## BIKE BLESSING, SAFETY & RIDE

**Sunday, April 24th**

Bring out the bikes! Time to ride and welcome Spring with a Blessing of the Bikes. We celebrate and give thanks for the creation and the pleasure we have in cycling. A short safety course will be offered to children just before the blessing. After the blessing there will be an obstacle course for younger children and optional group rides on the Prairie Path. The event starts at 12pm (blessing around 12:30pm) in the parking lot. The event is for all ages.



## COME TO FAMILY CAMP 2016!

Sign-up is underway for Family Camp, which will be Sunday, July 24th to Saturday, July 30th at Watson Homestead in Painted Post, NY. Located in the picturesque Finger Lakes region in western New York, Watson Homestead is an old favorite that we've visited more than once in the more than 30-year history of Family Camp. Join us for a "Week of Wine and Waterfalls" where possible group activities include hiking among the region's gorges and waterfalls, visiting some of the wineries and breweries in the area, and exploring the many museums in and around town - including the world-renowned Corning Glass Works. In addition, there are plenty of activities on-site at Watson Homestead, including an indoor pool, archery range, hayrides, and a climbing wall. Sign up forms are due by May 1st and can be found in the narthex, or you can contact Mark Hutchison ([markah22@gmail.com](mailto:markah22@gmail.com) or 630.639.1448) with any questions. Check out this great St. Matthew tradition!





## You Are Invited to a “Ladies Tea Party!”

Put on your fancy hat and enjoy afternoon tea with your favorite ladies.

Open House - Saturday, April 30th

Time: 1-3pm

Hostess: Marla Mothershed

1011 Arbor Ave., Wheaton

Harp music provided by Karen Banaszewski

For questions contact, [office@stmatthewucc.org](mailto:office@stmatthewucc.org) or call  
630.441.5963 or 630.665.1236

## YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Please support ESSE in this community fundraising event that benefits more than 65 non-profit organizations serving DuPage County.

Register today for the 5th Annual DuPage Human Race® -

<https://runsignup.com?Race/IL/DownersGrove/DuPageHumanRace>.



**When? Saturday, April 30th, starting at 9am**

**Where? The Esplanade at Locust Point, 1901 W. Butterfield Road, Downers Grove**

Choose ESSE as your charity in the Run/Walk, and we will receive 50% of your registration fee! Or click on the donate tab and choose us as your charity and we will receive 100% of your donation! Contact Dawn Schubert with any questions.

### Green Team Update

Strides have been made, and we are happy to report that we are close to earning our Earth Flag. A group from St. Matthew met with Kay McKeen and Erin Kennedy from SCARCE on 3/10, and they provided feedback on our continued efforts to make our church more **GREEN**. We will be providing additional collection bins (location TBD) and will be continuing to make changes with our cleaning products and our lighting. Also, please look for the return of an “Environmental Tip of the Week” in the Happenings. You may direct any questions to Carol Honeywell, Rick Jungk, Dawn Schubert, Patti Woods, or intern Tyler Spellious.

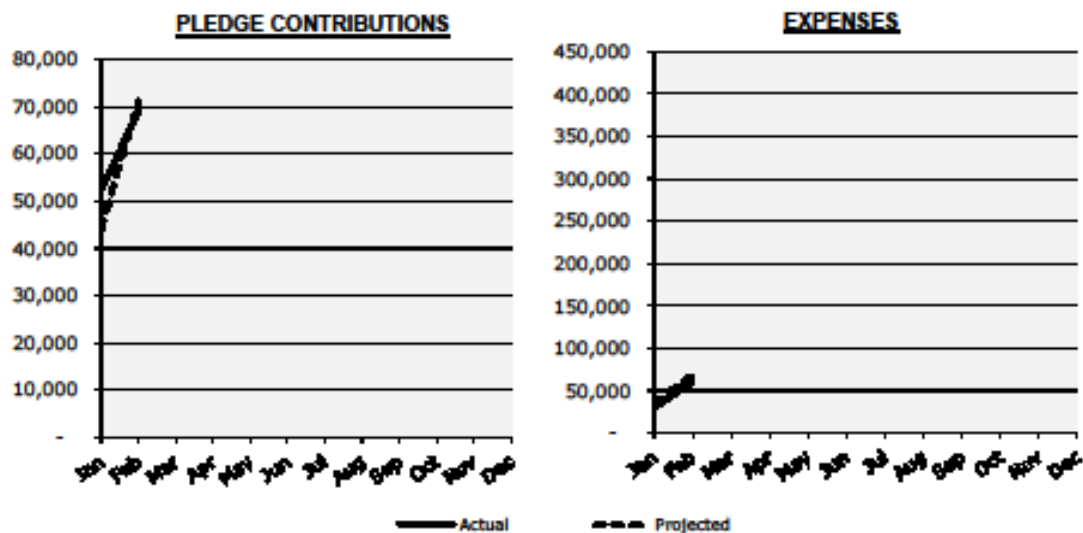


**ST. MATTHEW UCC GENERAL OPERATING FUND  
STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURES**

For the Period Ended February 29, 2016

	ACTUAL CURRENT MONTH	ACTUAL YEAR-TO- DATE	ANNUAL BUDGET
<b>RECEIPTS:</b>			
Pledge Contributions	16,481	68,937	353,000
Loose Offerings	95	508	10,000
Rental Income	200	400	5,000
Fund Raising	279	594	8,000
Investment Income	2	5	-
More Property	-	-	-
Miscellaneous Income	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	<b>17,056</b>	<b>70,443</b>	<b>376,000</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES:</b>			
Ministry	17,579	38,115	234,195
Building	9,503	16,742	118,253
Mortgages & Notes	2,229	4,458	26,750
Mission / OCWM	200	200	29,200
Committees:			
Christian Education	741	1,568	9,970
Membership	82	82	2,750
Music	160	487	4,700
Worship	85	374	1,500
Congregational Life	100	100	800
Memorial	-	45	100
Stewardship	-	-	500
Misc. & Contingency	-	100	1,000
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>30,679</b>	<b>60,271</b>	<b>429,718</b>
<b>SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)</b>	<b>\$ (13,623)</b>	<b>\$ 10,172</b>	<b>\$ (53,718)</b>

**2016 Activity - Actual vs. Projected**



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

# April 2016

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		<b>Tuesday Nights</b> 6pm IntergeneRing-ers 7:30pm Chancel Ringers	<b>Wednesday Nights</b> 6:30pm Praise Band 7:30pm Sanctuary Choir		1	2
3 -9:30am Worship service -Open & Affirming Forum -6pm crazies	4 -7pm Christian Education	5	6 -1:30 pm-Women's Prayer Group	7	8	9 -5-7pm Family Game Night
10 -9:30am Worship Service -O&A vote -2:30pm Women's Peace Walk -6pm crazies	11	12	13 -1:30pm Women's Prayer Group	14 -7pm Finance Committee	15 -7pm Euchre Night	16
17 -9:30am Worship Service <b>VOICE ARTICLES DUE</b> -5:30pm crazies Mission trip Info. Mtg. -6pm crazies	18	19	20 -1:30pm Women's Prayer Group	21 -6pm SRC -7pm Council	22 -7:30pm Novel Approaches -crazies 30 Hour Famine <i>EARTH DAY</i>	23
24 -9:30am Worship Service -Blessing of the Bikes, Safety session & Bike Ride -no crazies	25	26 -2pm Digital Committee Mtg.	27 -1:30pm Women's Prayer Group	28	29	30 -11am Carol Mittman Memorial Service -1pm - Ladies Tea Party Open House



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We're on the web:  
[www.stmatthewucc.org](http://www.stmatthewucc.org)

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**St. Matthew United Church of Christ**  
630. 665.1236 (Office)  
630.665.1436 (Fax)  
**Office Email:** [office@stmatthewucc.org](mailto:office@stmatthewucc.org)

**Office Hours:**  
Monday-Thursday: 9am-4pm  
Friday: 9am-1pm

**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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