

April
2021



of



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Pastoral Message
Pastor Allen Mothershed

The Hidden Jesus Revealed

This past Lenten season, I have been enjoying rereading Jesus: A Gospel, by the classical Catholic writer Henri Nouwen. In talking about the resurrection, Nouwen points out the mysterious quality of hiddenness when it comes to the life and even the resurrection of Jesus. In so many ways, the event of Jesus remains remarkably hidden from full view to the people who you might have expected to see and understand that in Him God was at work and play to redeem creation.

From the very beginning of Jesus' life, God works quietly and subversively to bring about the salvation of creation. The story of Jesus begins with a poor teenage mother, not married, and an older man. His birth is in a tiny village, outside the walls of those with power in the city of Jerusalem. Angels sing heavenly choruses that can only be heard by shepherds. Our first account of the life of Jesus, in the gospel of Mark, has Jesus silencing demonic forces who wish to reveal His identity. In all four gospels, Jesus speaks in parables that have a quality of hiddenness. At one point, His disciples even ask Jesus to be more straightforward in what He means. Jesus dies on a cross in no special way, between two insurrectionists, and joins a rather long list of often nameless martyrs who died at the hands of the ruling Roman government. He is in no contemporaneous historic account, other than a brief mention in Josephus' account of the Jewish wars, where we are told of a man who was crucified and that James was the brother of "a man named Jesus, who was called the Christ."

Remarkably, this quality of "hiddenness" is present in the resurrection stories. Jesus is mistaken as a gardener by Mary Magdalene. Two disciples walk to Emmaus and talk to a stranger, who in the breaking of bread, reveals Himself to them ever so briefly. Jesus does not make a spectacle of His resurrection. He does not appear to Pilate, who crucified Him, and get the last laugh. He appears on a remote lakeshore with fish cooking on an early morning fire for His disciples, who are the few who had fellowship with Him after His resurrection.

The most decisive event in the history of the creation is a deeply hidden event, Nouwen says. Those who have glimpses of this One, who has transformed their lives, do so only through the eyes of faith.

(continued)

This past week, I decided to do a meditation out on my deck where I sat in silence and listened to the sounds that were around me and named the first five sounds I heard. It is a way of slowing me down, letting go of the dramas that run out of control in my head. I named the sound of cars on Roosevelt Road, a cardinal, the wind in the trees, an ambulance siren in the distance, and the faint sound of an airplane high above. Then I realized something I was missing, the loudest sound and the closest sound, of the lovely outdoor chimes we have hanging on a tree next to our deck. How strange not to have heard that first. But that is how we live life, caught up in the drama, the fears and concerns that preoccupy us and take us away from being present to what life is really about, and what is most blessed and closest to us. Faith is a practice of being present to God in the hiddenness of daily lives and receiving the daily bread, the grace being offered each day.

Blessings,

Pastor Allen



OUTDOOR EASTER SUNDAY SERVICE

We are delighted to invite you to worship with us at an in-person, outdoor Easter service on Sunday, April 4th at 9:30am.

Pre-registration is NOT required. Communion is a part of the service and we will provide the elements, but please bring your own if you prefer.

Please bring your own chairs. We will have some chairs available.

Masks are required and we will be social distancing. Hand sanitizer stations will be available for use.

We will also be streaming a recorded service for those who prefer to view from home or in case of inclement weather.

Lenten Sermon Series: The Light in the Darkness

April 1st

Maundy
Thursday

Lenten Lessons and Carols

John 13:2-17

Washing the Feet

John 18:1-14

In the Garden

John 18:19-23

Peter on Trial

John 18: 28-40

Pilate on Trial

John 19:16-27

The World on Trial

April 4th

Easter Sunday

John 20:1-18

The Light that Cannot Be Extinguished



Notes from the Music Room....

Spring is here! As I write this, we have completed our first weekend of spring 2021. What a glorious two days it has been. I hope you were able to get outside and enjoy the warmer weather, sunshine, birds chirping, blue sky and gentle breezes. A wonderful gift we were given after this past winter.

This year, April begins with Maundy Thursday. Again this year, we will celebrate with a virtual service of communion and service of Tenebrae, ending in darkness. The Sanctuary Choir will be present, albeit via a video of a past Maundy Thursday service. We pray that the meaning and feeling of Tenebrae, as we recall the crucifixion of our Lord, come across close to what it would be in person.



Easter Sunday will find two service options. First will be our streaming service, which will include handbells, praise band, and a virtual choir. This is as close to a "normal" Easter Sunday service as we can get by streaming. Also, weather permitting, there will be an outdoor Easter Service. We won't be able to have the recorded videos from the bells and the virtual choir, but the praise band will be there, possibly some of the handbells, and we will be together. It is something to look forward to.

As more people can get vaccinated and as long as positivity rates stay low, we will be in discussions about how to safely open up for some type of live, in-person worship. The how, when, restrictions, etc. all have to be discussed, with the safety of all foremost. Please watch for communications from Council and the Reopening team.

In the meantime, enjoy the warmer weather and the resurrection of life that occurs every year at this time as we move from winter to spring, a wonderful reminder of the resurrection that Jesus promises us.

Stay Safe!

Jamie Craig

music.director@stmatthewucc.org



Pennies From Heaven (SCRIP)



SCRIP orders are suspended until we resume in-person activities.



APRIL BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|----|-------------------------------------|
| 3 | Drew Luessenhop
Kendall Thornton |
| 4 | Bill Staton |
| 6 | Wes Curda |
| 7 | Uriel Ambrosia |
| 8 | Leo Mittman
Julie Price |
| 11 | Joe Leinweber |
| 16 | Hiram Baird
Ann Marie Matthei |
| 18 | Nancy Franz |
| 21 | Elise Luby |
| 22 | Dawn Schubert |
| 23 | Craig Schlenker
Byron Miller |
| 24 | Gwen Johnson |



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

Office hours are suspended until further notice.

Food on the First

Thank you to all who have generously donated. It is very appreciated!

Here is what is needed in April:

- Canned fruit and vegetables
- Rice
- Beans (cans or bags)
- Hamburger Helper
- Cake mix and frosting
- Birthday candles
- Band aids
- Baby wipes
- Feminine pads (no tampons)
- Adult diapers
- Diapers—any size
- Disposable razors
- Shaving cream
- Toilet paper

Since we are not meeting in-person right now, Betty will be at church on Saturday, April 17th and 24th from 1-2:30pm to collect donations.



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



PRAIRIE PATH CLEAN-UP 2021

Our Prairie Path Clean-up ministry resumes
SOON!

As we have done for the past four years, we are once again committing to clean a 1-mile section of the Main Branch of the Illinois Prairie Path in an effort to be good stewards of our community and our planet. This section begins in downtown Wheaton at West Street and extends east to President Street. We have committed to the following dates in 2021 (but can reschedule with advance notice or if the weather isn't cooperative):

Sunday, April 18th

Sunday, June 13th

Sunday, August 15th

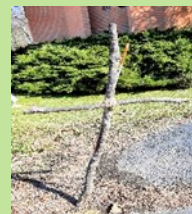
Sunday, October 17th

If you want to participate, you will need to complete a waiver (once a year). Please call Dawn Schubert, 630.542.0160, if you have any questions. The exact start times may vary; but in general, we will meet around 2pm and are usually done in an hour.

Watch the Happenings for updates as the date approaches.



Children's Ministry April 2021



We delivered 20 **Sunday School Easter lesson boxes** to our Sunday School families. The Holy Week lesson walks the children through the week leading to Easter Sunday. They will learn about Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday by making palm branch crosses, planting an Easter garden, stringing beaded crosses. The boxes included a lesson, a story book, and Easter story treats, etc. I hope the families come together to dig deeper into the story of Holy Week and draw closer to Jesus through the process. **Thank you, Kenna and Dawn,** for help preparing and delivering boxes.

We asked the Sunday School parents to record their **children waving palms for the Palm Sunday online service**. It was wonderful for our church family to see the smiling faces of some of our Sunday School children that they have missed so much.

Twelve Care Package boxes were sent to St. Matthew college and military men and women and to the Henderson family, who are in Florida for Evelyn's surgery and recovery. Thanks to the generous donations from our church members, we were able to fill the boxes and pay for postage. A special treat went in the boxes of students and military, as I have been saving artwork and pictures from all the years that they attended Sunday School. I included those artwork pieces and pictures in their care packages. Please continue to pray for all those who have received a care package. Thank you, Kenna and Dawn, for your help!

Congratulations to Luke Jerome and his parents, Mel and Blessy, on the birth of Luke's baby sister, Amelia Raj, born March 6th!



Top row: Sunday School Easter lesson to-go, Holshouser boys with Easter lesson delivery, Sunday School lesson contents. **Bottom row:** Henderson family in Florida waving palms for Palm Sunday, Luke's new sister Amelia, Care packages ready to be sent.

Thank you to our St. Matthew family

I am incredibly grateful for the Care Package Mission Project donations given by our St. Matthew church family. You have overwhelmed me with your generosity. I not only was able to pay for the postage and all the items in the care packages, but we also collected enough money to buy the students gift cards to Starbucks that I will send during finals week and a gift card to military for when they return home for a visit (something I could only do occasionally if there was enough donated.) On behalf of myself, the Christian Education committee, Sunday School families, Henderson family, and all the college and military men and women, we thank you for your loving kindness.

College Students: Kaitlyn Bresingham, Nicole Bute, Jimmy Muff, Justin Kirincich, Chris Achammer, Lily Felsenthal, Natalie Brandy, Evelyn Hutchison, Mikaela de Leon

Military: Phillip Felsenthal, Will Matthei

The Henderson Family while in Florida for Evelyn's surgery and recovery.

**College students from left to right:
Lily Felsenthal, Justin Kirincich,
and Mikaela de Leon**



crozies

April 4th No crazies. Easter Sunday (and the end of Spring Break).

April 11th Friendships, including Jesus and His friendships -- how Jesus chose His friends, and how He dealt with them when they let Him down. What can we learn from Jesus about our friendships? (Dawn leading)

Mel and Blessy Jerome are delighted to share the announcement of the birth of their baby GIRL!

Amelia was born March 16th. She was 8lb., 5oz.



God Bless,

Mel Jerome, Director of Youth Ministry

Announcements

Proud to Support



givingdupageday.org

April 26 - April 30, 2021

Give DuPage \$ For DuPage ❤️

Giving DuPage Days

For 5 days, our entire county will come together to send a resounding message of HOPE to our local nonprofit community. Community organizations have stepped up to serve our residents during the many challenges of the past year. Now, it's our honor to support their work!

We're inviting everyone to join us for Giving DuPage Days, an online fundraiser, with a goal to raise over \$300,000 for 100+ local nonprofit organizations serving DuPage County.

From **April 26th-30th**, we will connect individuals, families, businesses, schools, community and faith groups to celebrate and create awareness for participating charities. Everyone is welcome and donors of all ages can participate! Your generous contributions will go even further with our 'Share The Care' Bonus Pool and award incentives.

ESSE is once again participating in this wonderful fundraiser (2nd year). Giving DuPage Days will be ESSE's main fundraiser as we are unable to hold our Annual Pancake Breakfast again this year, so please help ESSE again this year. Last year we raised over \$25,000 and earned top honors! Go to <https://www.givingdupageday.org/> and choose ESSE.

Prayer Requests



Please send prayer requests via the following links and we can share them (or keep them private, if you prefer). You can also email them to the office.

You can make a public prayer request here:

<https://www.stmatthewucc.org/joys-and-concerns>

Private prayer requests can be made here:

<https://www.stmatthewucc.org/prayer-chain>



The Men's Group continues to meet on Tuesday mornings at 8am on Zoom. On alternate Tuesdays in April, we will be discussing the Seven Virtues and Seven Vices based on the book *The Cardinal and the Deadly* by Karl Clifton-Soderstrom. We hope to exhibit more of the former and less of the latter! On the other Tuesdays, we pick up a variety of topics.

All men are welcome! Contact Byron Miller at byronmiller@ameritech.net for a Zoom invitation.



April Yoga—Yoga as Worship

If you are looking to show your body and mind some compassion, please join me in the sanctuary or on Zoom on Thursdays at 10am.

It is a gentle way to energize your body and calm your soul.

Masks required and generous social distancing will be practiced.

Any questions, contact Marla Mothershed at mmothershed63@gmail.com or 630.441.5963.

Donations accepted and will be given to Missions.

Simple Communion Bread

Ingredients:

1 cup all-purpose flour

1/3 cup vegetable oil

1/8 teaspoon salt

1/3 cup water

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

Mix flour, oil, and salt together in a bowl; add water and mix using a pastry cutter until dough is soft. Form dough into 6 balls and press into disks onto the prepared baking sheet using your hands.

Bake in the preheated oven until bread is cooked, 8 to 10 minutes.

While any bread or juice will do for Communion, if you like to do something creative, then try this simple communion bread recipe.

2021 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.

2021 VOICE deadlines: Typically the second to last Sunday of the month, with exception of November and December.

April 18th, May 23rd, July 18th, August 22nd, September 19th, October 24th, November 14th, December 12th.

The Voice is not published in July.



Online Sunday Worship

While we are unable to share Sunday worship as a group, please join us on Sunday morning at 9:30 online for Pastor Allen's weekly message and worship service.

There are three ways to access Sunday worship:

Through YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/StMatthewUCC>

****Once you are on YouTube, you have the option to turn on closed captioning and resize the font. Once the video is playing, click on the setting wheel in the lower-right of your screen, choose Subtitles/CC, then choose English.****

Through the St. Matthew Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/stmatthewucc/>
Select YouTube on the left side.

Through our homepage: <https://www.stmatthewucc.org/>



Online Giving

During this time when we cannot worship together in-person, please make an effort, if able, to continue your offerings. We are so grateful for your continued support of St. Matthew.

If you would like to give to St. Matthew UCC, you can donate in the following ways:

- **Mail a check to the church (1420 S. Gables Blvd., Wheaton, IL 60189)**
- **Online with PayPal**
 1. Simply click here to be directed to PayPal (or copy and paste): <https://www.stmatthewucc.org/donate> and click the yellow DONATE button.
 2. You will then be directed to PayPal where you can use your own personal PayPal account or a credit card to make your donation.
 3. Click on either [+Write a note \(Optional\)](#) on the first page or [+Add special instructions to recipient](#) on the "Review your donation" page. Please indicate Sunday Offering so the money gets credited to the correct account.
 4. Please include your phone number so that we may contact you if we have any questions, and your address if you would like to receive a giving statement.
- *NOTE: You will be credited for the full amount of your gift on your giving statement; however, PayPal charges a \$.30 + 2.2% fee on each transaction. St. Matthew will receive the net amount. **The minimum amount for this online contribution method is \$25.***
- **Monthly electronic donations from your checking account**

If you would like to set up monthly electronic donations, please download this form: **Electronic Donation Authorization**, fill it out, and mail it to the church. You can also scan this form, along with a voided check, and email it to financial.secretary@stmatthewucc.org.

These options are also listed on the St. Matthew website: www.stmatthewucc.org

Questions can be directed to Edie DeBoard at financial.secretary@stmatthewucc.org.

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

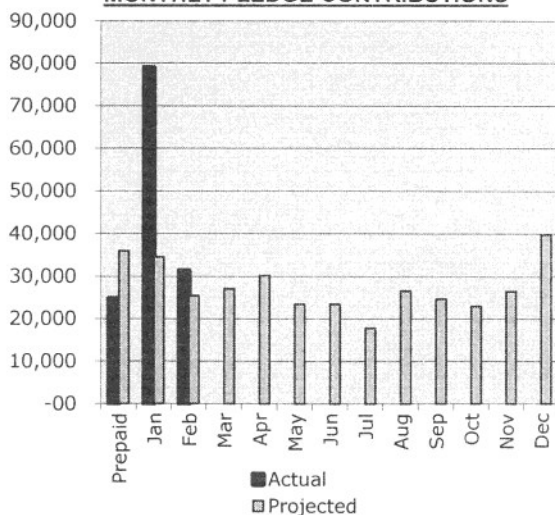
For the Period Ending February 28, 2021

	ACTUAL CURRENT MONTH	ACTUAL YEAR-TO- DATE	ANNUAL BUDGET
RECEIPTS:			
Pledge Contributions (incl.Prepaid)	31,340	135,013	358,320
Loose Offerings	978	1,278	400
Rental Income	-00	-00	3,200
Fund Raising	68	96	400
Interest Income	4	8	120
Investment Income	-00	4,347	-00
More Property	-00	-00	39,000
Miscellaneous Income	5,400	5,400	5,000
TOTAL RECEIPTS	37,789	146,142	406,440
EXPENDITURES:			
Salaries & Staff Expenses	22,570	45,609	283,863
Building & Admin	6,540	12,451	86,545
Loans & Notes	-00	-00	26,750
Mission / OCWM	-00	200	27,250
Committees:			
Christian Education	189	295	8,000
Membership Life	-00	-00	3,000
Memorial/Endowment	-00	-00	-00
Misc. & Contingency	-00	-00	1,000
Music	176	684	5,568
Stewardship	-00	-00	-00
Worship	137	297	1,200
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	29,613	59,536	443,176
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	\$8,176	\$86,606	\$(36,736)

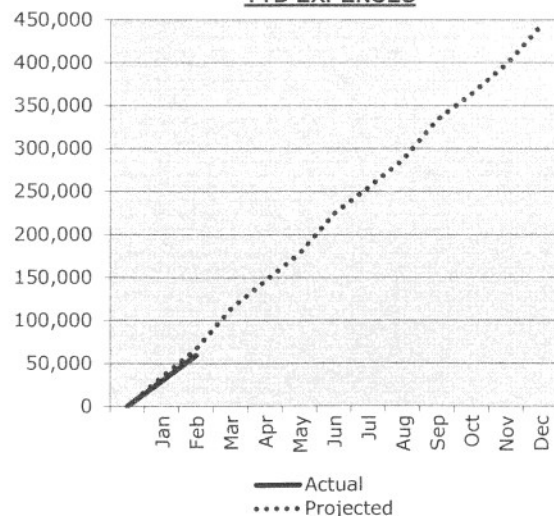
2021 Activity - Actual vs. Projected

Pledge YTD incl. Prepaid:	Actual	\$135,013	Projected	\$95,890
	(Actual Prepaid)	(\$24,673)	(Projected Prepaid)	(\$35,935)

MONTHLY PLEDGE CONTRIBUTIONS



YTD EXPENSES



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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