

November

2020



of



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Pastoral Message

Pastor Allen Mothershed

What Is Truly Impressive

In New York, I once approached one of the city's great cathedrals and was impressed by the enormity and beauty of the structure. I wondered how long it must have taken and the amount of money it would have required to construct such a cathedral of massive stones, carved statues, and beautiful stained-glass. As I was standing there, I noticed an older woman sitting on the steps as people walked by her. She was dressed in tattered clothes. Her hair was combed but looked as if it had been years since she was able to have someone cut and care for it. She was not begging but seemed to have found a resting place, and maybe even a place to feel close to God. I was disturbed by this contrast-- such a magnificent place of worship, open to the public for people to gather and worship God, and then this poor woman who no one noticed, except to find a path around her.

This scene brings to mind another scene we find in Mark 12:41-44. Jesus is sitting with His disciples outside the enormous great cathedral of His faith, the Temple, when He notices a poor woman placing money in the donation box. He says to his disciples, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on." (NIV)

I always heard this taught as a lesson in generosity, which led to an admonition by the pastor to give more generously, just as this poor woman gave. But now I am not so sure that it the lesson of this story. I find myself wondering about the tone in which Jesus said those words. Did He say these words gently? Or did Jesus say the words with an edge of anger and, perhaps, even disgust? Were people so wrapped up in their wealth and pride in donating what they deem as generous, while they pass by this woman, this child of God, without recognizing her needs and her value? She may be leaving and going off to die, and what do they care?

I suspect it is more the latter. Jesus was not just commending this woman and her generosity; He was observing the greed and disregard of a religious institution that has failed to clearly see the worth and value of people who it regards as insignificant. Jesus noticed this woman when others gave her no thought.

(continued)

What a blessing we receive when we wake up and notice, as Jesus did, those who seem to have so little to contribute and to give, but who God knows and deeply values. What makes a church truly a church of Jesus is our ability to recognize the worth and value of those the world deems a nuisance and unimportant, and not the impressive things we build or achieve. Imagine how impressive a church is when it lives and breathes that way of thinking. How might we go deeper into being that church?

Blessings~

Pastor Allen



Stewardship 2021—Rooted in Love

Thank you to everyone who has already made their 2021 stewardship pledge. Between now and Commitment Sunday (November 8th), we are asking all the individuals and families who have not yet responded to make an estimate of their giving for 2021. Pledging now allows us to make an accurate 2021 budget.

This year, we are offering an online option to make your pledge to support St. Matthew. As in past years, we will mail the traditional pledge packet, including the pledge card to those who have not returned an electronic pledge form. Completing the online form will help us save trees and postage.

[Click here to access the 2021 Stewardship and Volunteer form.](#)

The link is also available in the Friday Happenings. A letter and pledge card was mailed to those who don't access email. The form also offers several volunteer opportunities for you to choose.

The scriptures for the first two weeks of November explore how we are "Rooted in Love."

November 1st	Matthew 7:15-21	Bearing Good Fruit
November 8th Commitment Sunday	Acts 2:42-47	Celebrating the Beloved Community

While watching the Sunday service, you may have noticed the Family Tree painting on the altar. Marge Hall created this beautiful painting and each week she is adding leaves as we add pledges. Thank you for helping our tree grow! We truly cannot do this without you.

God's Peace Abide with You!

~Pastor Allen



Notes from the Music Room....

As we enter November, we should be finalizing upcoming holiday plans: decorating, planning menus, guest lists, travel plans, gift lists. But wait! This is 2020, where everything is in limbo due to COVID. So we continue to evolve our plans, have contingencies, planning for meaningful worship but mindful of the health and safety of all our members.

The choir has completed its next Virtual Choir anthem, and it is in the final stages of editing. And while we are not having a cantata this year, not even a virtual one, we will start working on Advent and Christmas music, again virtually. KC has arranged for small groups of ringers to rehearse socially distanced, and we are recording two selections once a month. To be prepared for whatever happens, the praise band has met a couple of times to record several selections, also socially distanced. It was mentioned to me that it doesn't appear that the band is that far apart from each other; what the camera doesn't show is the depth that people are apart.

While we ride this roller coaster called 2020 and move toward Thanksgiving and the Advent/Christmas season, let us not forget that in the midst of this, God IS with us, and we have many things to be thankful for.

*Come, Ye Thankful People! Come, raise the song of harvest home,
All is safely gathered in, ere the winter storms begin
God, our Maker, does provide for our wants to be supplied;
Come to God's own temple, come, raise the song of harvest home.*

May God bless St. Matthew UCC, may God bless all of you, and keep a joyful song in your heart.

Peace to all,

Jamie

Jamie.craig@stmatthewucc.org 630.202.6788



Pennies From Heaven (SCRIP)



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



NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Karen Rudnik
- 3 Betty Luessenhop
- 8 Pastor Allen Mothershed
- 11 Joe Hall
- 14 Dianne Hutchison
Rick Jungk
- 23 Kristine Schroer
- 28 Lindsay Christensen
Ryan Christensen
Betty Greer



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.

Reopening Update

Thank you to all who responded to our survey about your likelihood to attend indoor worship service. Your responses provided great insight into how people are feeling at this time.

We received 69 responses. Some of those were answering for individuals, and many were answering for their household. So it actually represents far more than 69 people.

Likelihood of attending in November:

12 Definitely Will
27 Maybe
30 Definitely Will Not

Likelihood of attending in December:

16 Definitely Will
29 Maybe
24 Definitely Will Not

In addition, people added some very interesting and heartfelt comments.

From those who are likely to attend:

"I believe that the service should be held in the church for any member who wishes to attend. The service should be about who attends, be it 5 or 50, not about who doesn't attend. If the service touches the heart and soul of only one person, it was worth everything put into it for that one person."

"The longer we stay out, the more people we will lose."

"It's been difficult for our family to stay engaged remotely with church."

"We've been missing our church family so much."

From those who are not likely to attend:

"Since there are bad predictions re: Illinois and the virus, I'm very hesitant to meet in church, even with masks, etc."

"Group gatherings, especially inside, aren't recommended yet."

"I believe it's still too risky to attend, especially with the spike of cases this week."

"Even if CDC/IDPH guidelines are being offered, indoor viral spread is more likely with any size group, especially if not of one's immediate family where one does not know what the other person's association/interaction with others has been."

NEXT STEPS

We will be meeting to decide what is the best path to take at this time, and promise to keep you informed as those difficult decisions are made.

Thank you all for your patience and understanding!

Dorothy Peterson, Council President



"The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged."

Deuteronomy 31: 8

We're entering November and are praying for this year to end very quickly. But in reality, we are all a part of history and we should never forget it.

This month's schedule for crazies has us meeting every other week, starting November 1st, from 5-6pm in Dobstaff. Safety measures will be taken. Please bring your own blanket to sit on. Masks are required, social distancing will be in effect, and temperatures will be taken. Please do not send your children if they, or someone in the household, are not feeling well.

Since we won't be doing our annual Target shopping next month, Dawn and I have come up with a plan! Each of the kids will pick 2 items from a gift registry, which we will pick up and deliver. This will take place during our November 15th meeting in Dobstaff. We hope to see everyone soon.

Join us for Sleep Out Saturday 2020, Virtually Together: One Night, One Community!

For the past several years, the youth of St. Matthew (and some brave adult chaperones) have participated in this county-wide event and raised necessary funds for Bridge Communities' Transitional Housing Program. Due to the pandemic, this year's event (the 17th Annual SOS) will look very different. **We have registered St. Matthew as a participant once again (it is listed as St. Matthew UCC crazies youth group- <https://www.bridgecommunities.org/group116>), and we encourage donations to our page. The fundraising goal set is \$500.** We also have a NEW idea!

Since sleeping out together (either inside or outside) may not be a good idea this year, Bridge Communities is encouraging families, kids, and youth groups to participate but in a safe and socially-distanced way. What they are still stressing is that families right in our community are still experiencing homelessness and food and shelter insecurity, so we really need to support the transitional housing program and the 100+ families served by Bridge.

So...we are hoping all or many of our families will participate in this virtual event (sleeping in their car in their driveway, or in their basement or family room in a box or a tent or a homemade fort). Bridge is choosing **Saturday, November 7th** as the county-wide date, but they are urging groups to pick **ANY** day between October 9th and December 5th. Bridge has all sorts of learning materials that they will make available, and the youth will be doing some of these activities during their Zoom. Since so many of us are missing our church family, this event could bring us together and allow for sharing of pictures and ideas. Let's connect virtually, help those in our community in need, and create an empathy-building experience!

If you have any questions or suggestions for this event, please call Dawn Schubert (630.665.9860) or email (rural_rococo@msn.com). I am happy to get learning materials to you, also.

Mel Jerome, Director of Youth Ministry



Children's Ministry November 2020



Rally Day this year was not the same as past years, yet it was incredibly special. At our outdoor worship, the children, youth, and adult educators received a blessing for the upcoming school year. All the children and youth received a backpack tag which I hope will be put on their school bags. The educators also received a tag, which has a picture of St. Matthew, proudly showing that as Christians, we rely on God's blessings and grace in our lives, through prayer, worship, and His son, Jesus Christ. If you were unable to attend and would like to receive the blessed tag, please send me an email and I will mail one to you. The children received a Rally Day bag to take home. It included a study buddy, games, prizes, school supplies, yummy treats, and their backpack tag. **Thank you Kenna Anderson and Dawn Schubert for your help preparing and delivering the Rally Day bags.**

The Lord's Prayer and Praying at Home

In November, we will begin a **4-week, at-home Sunday School lesson on the Lord's Prayer**. Most of the supplies needed for the lesson are ones that families have in their homes. It will include movie (YouTube), cooking, science, and game lessons. Families will receive an email later this month with information regarding the upcoming lesson. The Lord's Prayer is not just an important passage in the Bible. Variations of it based on Matthew's version have become an important part of Christian worship and tradition across the centuries and in denominations and in the personal memories and prayer lives of countless believers. Its use in worship across the denominations and centuries is one of the enduring signs of Christian unity and the centrality of prayer in our faith. This is a good "starter" lesson to the Sunday School year to explore why and how people pray.



November Birthdays:

Parker Holshouser

November 1st

Fiona Chapple

November 20th

Avery Scalora

November 12th

Kyle Bresingham

November 25th

Kaela Leimberer

November 18th

Kayla Lindberg

November 27th

Fun with Rally Day bags!



Susan Wold
Director of Children's Ministry

Announcements



Prairie Path Clean-Up #4

We are planning to meet on Sunday, November 15th, at 2 pm for our 4th (and FINAL) clean-up of the year. YAY!

Please email Dawn Schubert (rural_rococo@msn.com) if you want to help-- first come, first served!

Watch the Happenings for updates.

Many thanks to our faithful volunteers for your commitment to the environment and for your service. Thanks to Lee Anderson, Rod Irely, Hi and Nancy Baird, Dave Johnson, and John Kouns for joining me for our third clean-up on October 11th.

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>



In November, we will meet on Thursday mornings at 10am. No class on Thanksgiving, November 26th.

We have moved Yoga into the Sanctuary (masks as we enter and exit, generous space between us).

Beginners are welcome!

Donations accepted and will be given to Missions.

Contact Marla Mothershed, mmothershed63@gmail.com or 630.441.5963 to sign up.



The Men's Group continues to meet via Zoom at 8am every Tuesday morning.

We typically have eight men on the call and discussion is vigorous and usually uplifting. All men are welcome!

To get a Zoom invitation, please contact

byronmiller@ameritech.net

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.

November 15th and December 13th.

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.



Check out the St. Matthew website

For the most up-to-date St. Matthew information, please check the St. Matthew website! You will find instructions on accessing the Sunday online service, make a prayer request, sign up for the newsletter, learn about online giving, and so much more!

<https://www.stmatthewucc.org/>



Online Sunday Worship

While we are unable to share Sunday worship as a group, please join us online for Pastor Allen's weekly message and worship service. The service will be posted by Saturday evening.

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 the St. Matthew website: <https://www.stmatthewucc.org/>
Click on Full Service under the banner.



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

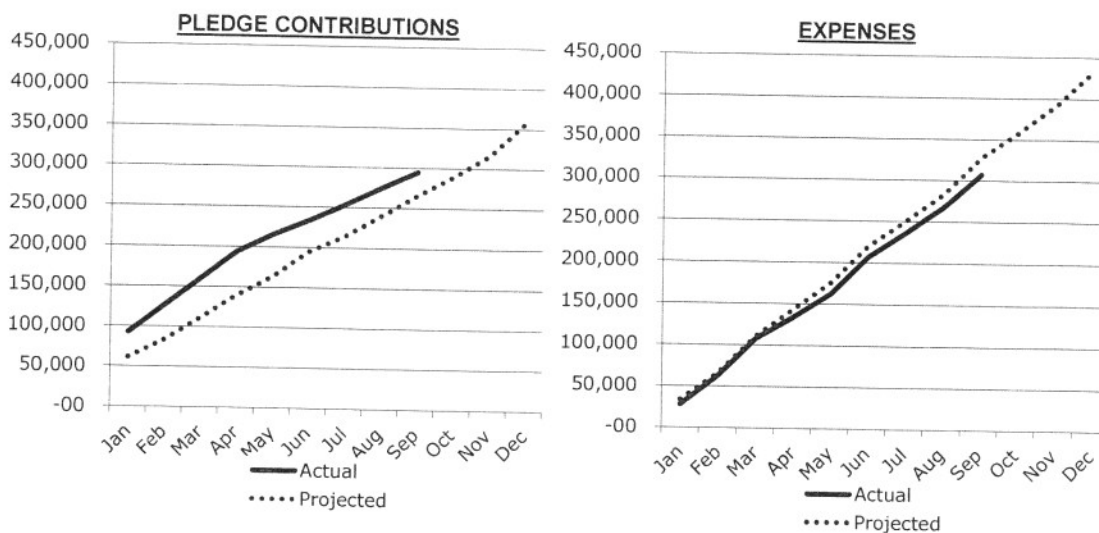
Questions can be directed to Edie DeBoard at financial.secretary@stmatthewucc.org.

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

For the Period Ending September 30, 2020

	ACTUAL CURRENT MONTH	ACTUAL YEAR-TO- DATE	ANNUAL BUDGET
RECEIPTS:			
Pledge Contributions	20,022	294,661	358,364
Loose Offerings	100	872	5,000
Rental Income	-00	4,000	9,600
Fund Raising	-00	407	2,200
Interest Income=Bk accts	12	147	120
Investment Income	0	1,115	-00
More Property	-00	-00	37,000
Miscellaneous Income	(44,638)	2,544	5,000
TOTAL RECEIPTS	(24,504)	303,747	417,284
EXPENDITURES:			
Ministry	19,488	183,147	245,572
Building & Admin	9,772	79,347	116,678
Loans & Notes	6,688	20,063	26,750
Mission / OCWM	4,000	19,050	27,250
Committees:			
Christian Education	442	3,955	8,000
Membership/Congregational Life	-00	26	3,000
Music	-00	1,120	4,895
Worship	80	537	1,500
Memorial/Endowment	-00	-00	-00
Stewardship	-00	-00	-00
Misc. & Contingency	-00	-00	1,000
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	40,471	307,245	434,645
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	\$(64,974)	\$(3,498)	\$(17,361)

2020 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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