

April
2020



of



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***All in-person
activities
and worship
services are
suspended
until further
notice.***

***We look
forward to
seeing you
again soon!***

Stay well!

Pastoral Message

Pastor Allen Mothershed

Stop Holding Your Breath and Breathe

In the past few weeks, I have caught myself many times holding my breath. A close friend said she found herself light-headed until she realized she was taking only short breaths. Maybe some of you have found your stomach tightening and your muscles constricting. This is a time of uncertainty and anxiety, and each of these reactions are normal fight-or-flight responses. Our minds turn to worry and fear. Repetitive fearful thoughts run through our minds and may keep us awake at night. In such times, it is important to face fear and anxiety directly. If you are going to fight a monster, you have to turn around and face it.

Anxiety and fear are not exactly the same. Anxiety is unfocused, vague and undefined. Fears are more specific. In anxiety, we remain uneasy but are not exactly sure what we are facing. Like Jesus, who named the demons before He cast them out, we need to be clear about what is causing us stress. A general sense of fear is not enough. We understand what specifically we are afraid of and then we let our rational minds do the work of seeing what we need to do to take care of ourselves. What are the specific thoughts that keep me in my fear? What is it exactly that I fear will happen? How realistic is that thought? What can I do about addressing that fear and what can I not do? To paraphrase Reinhold Niebuhr's prayer, we can learn to change the things we can change, accept what we cannot change, and have the wisdom to know the difference.

It is also important to remember to breathe and to get into our bodies by exercising as we are able. So, in changing thought or exercising and remembering to breathe deeply, we can let go of the excess fears that are not helpful to us. I find it helpful to keep a phrase of scripture in my mind. Better to let healing words dominate my thoughts than blind anxiety or excessive fear. Try this on for size, "The Lord is my strength and my salvation, the Lord is my strength and my salvation, whom shall I fear?"

(continued)

There is one other way to shift ourselves away from our fears and anxiety. We have a choice to either constrict into ourselves or to expand outward in scary times. We can isolate ourselves and close ourselves off, preoccupied with our own well-being, or we can get outside ourselves and be generous. We can make the shift from what we can keep to what we can give.

Jesus said something so practical. He said, "Do not be afraid about tomorrow's worries, today has enough worries." Take a deep breath and know God's grace surrounds you and will be enough to supply what you need.

Blessings,

Pastor Allen

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 will have the option to turn on closed captioning and to resize the font.

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.

In addition to our online Sunday services, please join us for Maundy Thursday worship at 7pm on April 9th. **Virtual communion will be served, so please have bread and juice available as you watch the Palm Sunday (April 5th) and Maundy Thursday services.**

Special thanks to Jamie Craig, Lisa Curda, Brian Dobbelaere, Gwen Johnson, and Rick Jungk for their efforts. You are appreciated!



Online Giving

During this time when we cannot worship together in-person, please make an effort to continue your offerings. If you and/or your family can afford to continue (or even increase) your offering to the church at this time, please find a way to continue that online. Despite being "closed," St. Matthew operating costs do not change at this time. Your continued offerings will help keep our building running and our employees paid.

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.paypal.com/donate/?token=pAqK6HaBU8A7CkJLZF6yOI-KLFH07jqr_7a3U0XqRC72Ikw2yMI0rbj62QpR-pHEIE5q0W&country.x=US&locale.x=
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: stmatthewucc.org

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

Thank you for your support!

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 |
| 12 | Leslie Ortman |
| 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.



PADS Update

Due to the Coronavirus outbreak and concern for the health and safety of PADS volunteers and congregations, all overnight shelter sites are closed. Our next PADS date is scheduled for April 8th-9th. We don't know if sites will be reopened by then.

Please pray for our homeless neighbors as PADS navigates its current clients to alternative housing options. If the situation changes, I will communicate PADS needs immediately.

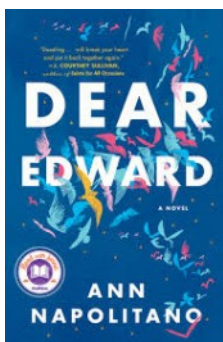
-Tracey Blake

NOVEL APPROACHES

Novel Approaches will be on hiatus for the time being due to the social distancing restrictions during this pandemic. We will reschedule as soon as possible and pick up where we left off discussing "The Secrets We Kept" by Lara Prescott.

We also have two recommendations for reading ahead: "Dear Edward" by Ann Napolitano and "Beneath a Scarlet Sky" by Mark Sullivan.

Hope to see everyone soon!



While we are unable to meet, we need to keep each other in thoughts and prayers. We don't want anyone to feel isolated or alone. 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>

Children's Ministry

April 2020

Thank you Allen, Dani, Kenna, and Dawn for covering for me while I am gone. God has put you in my life for such a time as this and I am truly blessed!!! Thank you to my St. Matthew family for all the wonderful cards, emails, text messages and colored pictures. Your thoughtfulness has contributed to my healing.

I have used my time of healing to think about how families can worship together during these times at home, when worshipping with your church family isn't possible. Just this week, Pastor Allen suggested making an altar in our homes. I loved the idea and got right to work on mine. The picture on the next page is my altar...for this week, but it might change next week. I wanted it to be a place where I am drawn to God in prayer, worship, meditation, song, and scripture. If you make an altar in your own home, I would have to guess that it might be something your children will never forget.

One of my fondest memories as a child was the time when illness or some other reason prevented our family from attending church and my mother would have Sunday School for my two sisters, brother and me on her bed. Still in our jammies, curled up on my parent's bed, my mother would read us a Bible story. She had such a wonderful way of bringing a story alive and we were captivated as she read. We prayed, sang our Sunday School songs, and talked about what God had done for us that week. I remember that I just didn't want it to end, even knowing that a pancake breakfast would follow. That is truly one of the fondest memories of my childhood. This is a perfect opportunity to spend time with your children drawing closer to God as a family.



A few ideas for a family altar:

Cross

Cloth

Candle to light for all those affected by the virus and for the light of Christ in the world

Chalk board, journal, or jar to put prayer requests into throughout the week

Bowl or plate for offering

A picture of your family, Jesus, or someone you want to lift in prayer

A globe, showing that prayer is needed around the world

Bible, adult and children's, to read from

Artwork

Notepaper to write thank you notes to God., reminding your children that we don't just ask God for what we want but also thank Him for what He has given us

Write and frame a family mission statement and read together (I will send more on that later.)



April birthdays:

**Kennedy Scalora
Molly Hutchison
Olivia Henderson
Kinley O'Connell
Jayda Hammond**

**April 1st
April 3rd
April 5th
April 17th
April 28th**

Please know that I am praying for my church family every day and that I miss all of you very much!!!

Blessings,
Ms. Susan

A note of "Thanks" from Susan

Thank you to my church family for all the wonderful cards, emails, and text messages. Your words of encouragement, love, and caring have contributed to my healing. Thank you to all the Sunday School children and youth who have sent me pictures and loving messages. I have them hanging in every room of my house to lift me up each day. Thank you to the St. Matthew staff for the beautiful plant. I am so blessed by my church family and I am working hard to be 100% recovered and back to work. Please know that I feel your prayers and that I, too, am praying for you and your families.

With love,

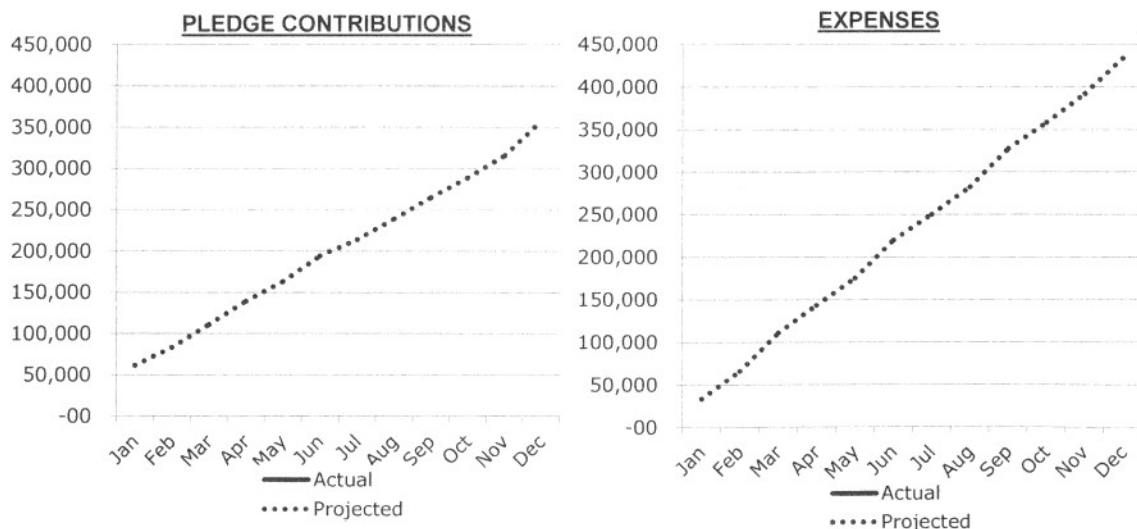
Susan (aka Ms. Susan)

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

For the Period Ending January 31, 2020

	ACTUAL CURRENT MONTH	ACTUAL YEAR-TO- DATE	ANNUAL BUDGET
RECEIPTS:			
Pledge Contributions	92,682	92,682	358,364
Loose Offerings	285	285	5,000
Rental Income	600	600	9,600
Fund Raising	139	139	2,200
Investment Income	14	14	120
More Property	-00	-00	37,000
Miscellaneous Income	650	650	5,000
TOTAL RECEIPTS	94,370	94,370	417,284
EXPENDITURES:			
Ministry	18,594	18,594	245,572
Building & Admin	5,550	5,550	116,678
Loans & Notes	-00	-00	26,750
Mission / OCWM	200	200	27,250
Committees:			
Christian Education	988	988	8,000
Membership/Congregational Life	-00	-00	3,000
Music	213	213	4,895
Worship	93	93	1,500
Memorial/Endowment	-00	-00	-00
Stewardship	-00	-00	-00
Misc. & Contingency	-00	-00	1,000
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	25,638	25,638	434,645
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	\$68,732	\$68,732	\$(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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