

**MARCH 2016**



**The Only Way, the Only Truth, the Only Life?**

*Moses said, "Show me your glory." And the Lord said, "I will make all my goodness pass before your face, and I will proclaim the Lord by name before you; I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, I will show mercy to whom I will show mercy." But he added, "You cannot see my face, for no one can see me and live." The Lord said, "Here is a place by me; you will station yourself on a rock. When my glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft in the rock and will cover you with my hand while I pass by. Then I will take away my hand, and you will see my back, but my face must not be seen."*

*Exodus 33:19-23*

John's gospel says, "I am the Way, the Truth, the Life. No one comes to the Father but by me." These words are often used to claim that our faith is the only true faith. As someone once said to me, "How could Jesus say it any more clearly than that!"

But have you ever wondered: How is it that so many of the world's major religions have so many elements in common such as forgiveness, grace, compassion, justice, and peace? Is it just an accident or is it possible that we as Christians do not have an exclusive claim on God?

Some believe we do have an exclusive claim on God. Wheaton College has just gone through a painful time over the question of whether or not other religions worship the same God as we do. In that debate some ask a helpful question, How could we worship the same God when there are many of our ideas about God which differ? We do well to acknowledge that the faiths of the world do have significant differences in how they experience and think about God. .

Attempts to distill a common essence to all the faiths, diminishes the unique expressions of each individual faith

But to say that my understanding of God is the only correct understanding of God is to be guilty of a spiritually dangerous lack of humility. At the core of our faith is the belief that God is ultimately beyond our full grasp, that we are only offered glimpses of God. God is only God, if God is far greater than our ability to understand or control God. In Exodus, we discover that Moses requested that he be given a glimpse of God. God grants him that wish by covering his face as God passes over him. Moses is then allowed to have a glimpse at the backside of God. We also are blessed as Moses was with a glimpse of the living God. If we live and move through the pervasive energy and presence of God in creation, then it makes sense to understand that the great religions of the world each have uncovered their eyes and received a glimpse of God's glory. We experience the same God, but each faith comprehends God in their own way. Not surprisingly, we have common perceptions and also differences.

As Christians, we have our clearest glimpse of God through the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. He is for us the Way, the Truth, the Life. He is our salvation, our Savior and Lord. This is our experience and our truth to share boldly with all people. When we say Jesus died and was resurrected to reconcile the world, we are saying that Jesus reveals to us the way God works in the world to bring life out of death and to forgive all people. This God we worship is wounded by our injustice and yet still loves and forgives. This is our glimpse of the magnificent glory of God in our world.

(continued) Perhaps the words of Jesus about His being the Way are best taken metaphorically rather than literally. After all, in John's Gospel images always have double meanings, a literal meaning and a metaphorical meaning, with the metaphorical meaning being the profound and essential message. That is to say: wherever people walk in the Way of truth and grace, in the way that leads to fullness of life, Jesus as the Word of God is present. May we walk in the Way God has provided for us and celebrate that God has blessed others as well.

## MISSION NEWS

### FOOD ON THE FIRST

Thanks to all who donated in the month of February; it was most appreciated.

Here is what is needed for March:

- Baby wipes
- Feminine pads
- Boxes of band-aids
- Birthday candles
- Cans of pineapple
- Cans of peaches
- Cans of tuna
- Cold cereal (no corn flakes)
- White rice
- Hamburger Helper

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.



### DuPage Convalescent Center Sunday School Mission Project

On Sunday, February 21st, many of our Sunday School students and their parents went to the DuPage Convalescent Center to help wheel residents to the Sunday church program in the building. The kids enjoyed meeting the residents, passing out valentines and helping them back to their rooms after the service, and the residents loved their hugs from the kids!





## NOTES FROM THE MUSIC ROOM

It's amazing how fast the time is going. Our Lenten journey started two weeks ago, and we will enjoy the promise of Easter at the end of March.

On Sunday, March 13th we will be treated to some wonderful music during the service. Marilyn Wilgocki and Cathy Eyeberger will again grace our worship with their beautiful Celtic harps. They will start with the prelude, and provide music throughout the worship service. As Celtic harps are quiet instruments, please be courteous to those who wish to listen to the prelude.

As I write this, our first choral Open Sunday is a week away. Also, I am asking those who can sing to please join us for a couple of rehearsals in March to assist with Palm Sunday and Easter music.

May your Lenten journey be especially meaningful this year.

Jamie Craig

630.202.6788

[Lanni1@comcast.net](mailto:Lanni1@comcast.net)





# CHILDREN & YOUTH

## Girl Scout Sunday - March 6th

During worship, eight of St. Matthew's Girl Scouts will participate in the worship service and receive their "My Promise, My Faith" pin. The girls completed the requirements needed to earn their pin, incorporating the Girl Scout Laws and Promise with their faith. Our St. Matthew Girl Scouts are **Kelley Passini, Kira Mothershed, Amelia Roser, Calista Roser, Anna Muntz, Evelyn Henderson, Ashley Caprini, Christy Banaszewski and Bonnie Bailey.**



## Workshop Rotation/Sunday school

This Lent, March 13th-April 3rd, the Sunday School children will go on a four-week **Road Trip** in Workshop Rotation. Each Sunday, the children will take a different trip to The Holy Land with tour guides from the *Jerusalem Tours Office*. Art, media production, games, and videos will all be part of the journey.



## M&M Annual Peep Diorama - March 13<sup>th</sup>, 11am

M&M partners will gather to make Peep Dioramas. This fun annual event is a favorite among Partners. Be sure to touch base with your partner and bring supplies to make your diorama special. Peeps of all colors will be supplied.



## Easter Egg Hunt - Saturday, March 19<sup>th</sup>, 10:00am

Egg Hunt - Donuts - Easter Bunny - Crafts

**FILLED EGGS NEEDED:** We fill about 500 eggs, but due to the large number of children attending we still run short. We are asking for volunteers to take home a bag of 20 eggs and fill them with a piece of candy, toy, stickers, etc. You can pick up empty eggs and return filled eggs to the narthex by March 13th

**No Sunday School on Easter Sunday, March 27<sup>th</sup>.** A special children's sermon and nursery care will be offered during both worship services. Have a wonderful Easter with your families celebrating Christ's resurrection.

**Thank you** to the teachers and shepherds who led the children in the Sinners and Outcasts lesson:  
**Teachers-** Marla Mothershed, Deb Felsenthal, Kenna Anderson, Roseanne King, Judi Gonzalez, Michelle Bresingham, Dawn Schubert.

**Shepherds-** Carol Honeywell, Jeannine Adams, Miegane Bresingham, Dave Boyd, Emily Ciner, Leslie Ortman and Bob Barnshaw. **Thank you also to Krista Caprini and Miegane Bresingham for leading our M&M group, with help from Dianne Hutchison.**

**Thank you** to those who generously donated items and postage for our **College Student and Military Care Package Project**. This year we mailed thirty boxes to students and military men and women who are away from home. Besides food items, we sent prayers and words of encouragement. We also ended our packing time with a prayer for each recipient, asking God to bless them and keep them safe. It is important to us at St. Matthew that these members of our church family know they are not forgotten and remain in our prayers.

## March Birthdays

Christy Banaszewski 3/15, Bryce Holshouser 3/21, Ava Sancken 3/21, Cole Hutchison 3/23,  
Ben Achammer 3/25, Luke Mothershed 3/30

## CRAZIES YOUTH MINISTRY

30 Hour Famine	Fri., March 4 <sup>th</sup> - Sat., March 5 <sup>th</sup>	TBD
NO crazies	Sunday, March 6 <sup>th</sup>	OFF
Special Gathering with FCCGE	Sunday, March 13 <sup>th</sup>	6-8:30pm
crazies Fellowship and Study	Sunday, March 20 <sup>th</sup>	6-8pm
Maundy Thursday Meal & Worship	Thursday, March 24 <sup>th</sup>	6-8pm
Easter Sunday Worship	Sunday, March 27 <sup>th</sup>	9am & 11am
NO crazies	Sunday, March 27 <sup>th</sup>	OFF-Easter Sunday
crazies Fellowship and Study	Sunday, April 3 <sup>rd</sup>	6-8pm
crazies Fellowship and Study	Sunday, April 10 <sup>th</sup>	6-8pm
Mission Trip Info Meeting	Sunday, April 17 <sup>th</sup>	5:30-6pm Teens too!
crazies Fellowship and Study	Sunday, April 17 <sup>th</sup>	6-8pm
crazies Fellowship and Study	Sunday, April 24 <sup>th</sup>	6-8pm
Crop Walk	Sunday, May 1 <sup>st</sup>	1-4pm



### 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, March 4th and continue until lunch time on Saturday, March 5th. 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.



### Mission Trip Interest

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

### Thank You from Souper Bowl of Caring!

A big thank you to all who participated in this year's Souper Bowl of Caring soup sale! With your help and support, the crazies raised more than \$400 for the People's Resource Center Food Pantry. We'll see you next year!



# CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

There is a lot happening in the life of St. Matthew. Here is an overview of upcoming events to look forward to.

- **Euchre nights** are continuing. We have held two thus far and are planning to make it an ongoing club. Watch the bulletin for sign-ups.

-**Movie review night** - “Risen”, attend on your own or as a group and then meet at the home of Annette and Brian English for a post-movie discussion on March 12th, at 7pm. A sign-up sheet has been posted in the narthex.

-Join in the fun at the community **Easter Egg Hunt** on March 19<sup>th</sup> co-sponsored by Congregational Life and Christian Education.

-Bring your bike(s) for **Blessing of the bikes and bicycle safety class** on April 24th. This event is held in partnership with Christian Education (more details to follow).

-Mark your calendar to attend the **All-Church Picnic**, June 5<sup>th</sup> immediately after worship service.

We have also started planning for a few later summer activities, which include:

-A **Kane County Cougars Baseball Game** – watch for more details.

-A **progressive picnic**, we’re calling a **Deck Crawl** (date and details forthcoming).

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.

## MARCH BIRTHDAYS

1	Hillary Blake
	Jessica Blake
6	Bob Crooks
	Cheryl Umbeck
8	Erin Walsh
	John Price
12	Brian English
14	Bud Justice
16	Julie Barnshaw
	Lexie Justice
20	Lisa Curda
	John Ribe
21	Nicole Franz
	Adam Kirincich
23	Elijah Baird
	Andrew Kouns
27	Tony Banaszewski
29	Lori Chatten
30	Emily English



Happy  
Birthday  
to you!

## Movie Review



The movie *Risen* (PG-13) is in theaters now and depicts the story of the Resurrection as told through the eyes of a non-believer. The Congregational Life committee will be hosting a social evening and discussion of the movie on Saturday, March 12th at 7pm at the home of Brian and Annette English, 1951 Hampton Drive, Wheaton. A sign-up is available at church or email [annetteenglish923@gmail.com](mailto:annetteenglish923@gmail.com) if you would like to join us. Please view the movie prior to March 12th and come ready to share your thoughts!

Light snacks and drinks will be provided.

# family **G A M E** night

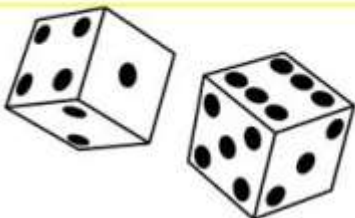
*Saturday, April 9th from 5-7 pm*

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.





# ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPCOMING EVENTS





## LENTEN SCRIPTURES - *"The Path Less Taken"*

Anyone who has ever been lost in the woods knows that the best way out is to take the most well-worn path rather than faintly traveled ones. In this season of Lent, we explore the counterintuitive practice of taking the path less chosen as the way to salvation. We allow the Gospel stories of the passion narrative to guide us down that less-taken trail that Jesus chose, a path of death to life.

<b>March 6th</b>	John 14:1-14	<i>"When I am Gone"</i>
<b>March 13th</b>	I Corinthians 1:18-21	<i>"Was This Death Necessary?"</i>
<b>March 20th</b>	Luke 19:28-40 / Passion Reading	<i>"It Could Have Been Different"</i>
<b>March 27th</b>	Matthew 28:1-10	<i>"Greater Than Our Fear"</i>



*HOLY WEEK & EASTER WORSHIP*  
*Palm Sunday - March 20, 9:30am*  
*Maundy Thursday - March 24, 7pm*  
*Easter Sunday - March 27, 9am & 11am*

### MANNA PROGRAM



Let's make Manna come in "like a lion" this month. Maybe we can put more money in our (lamb) bank!



By the end of March, we'll be a quarter of the way through the year. We have an \$8,000 budget line for fundraising and if we expect the Manna Program to do that for us, we need to make \$2,000 per quarter. So far, through February, we've made about \$600. To reach our goal, let's make our Manna program **ROAR!**

If you are a Manna participant, thank you for your continuing support. If you have not tried it yet, stop by the Manna table in Dobstaff Hall on Sunday for more information on this **no-cost-to-you** fundraiser!

*Planning on a trip for Spring Break? Manna has a new merchant:  
Universal Orlando Resort*



## **Opening the Heart: An Experience of Balinese Hinduism**

**Sunday, March 6th**

Join Pastor Allen as he shares what he experienced and learned from his time in prayer and meditation in Bali, Indonesia. What can we learn from people of other faiths who are very different from our own? How can our practice of meditation and prayer support us to live in the world with thanksgiving and an open heart to others we encounter? How can we counter our consumer approach to prayer which tends to treat God as a remote parent whose job is to grant us what we want?

We will meet in the sanctuary after worship at **10:45am**.

### **Maundy Thursday Dinner - March 24th, 6pm**

We are in need of volunteers to make brownies or stew for dinner before the Maundy Thursday worship service. Brownie mixes may be picked up in the kitchen Sunday, March 20th and ingredients for the crock pot stew may be picked up in the kitchen on Wednesday evening, March 23rd, 4-7pm. Please sign up on the bulletin board in the narthex if you are able to help or plan to attend dinner.



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

Dobstaff Hall

Euchre lovers of St. Matthew are welcome to attend our newly formed Euchre Club! Come join us for our next tournament and attempt to dethrone the current champs Edie DeBoard and Hi Baird. Do not wait to complete your taxes at the deadline, be at St. Matthew! In April 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.**

## Calling All Runners, Walkers, and All-Around Do-Gooders!!!

If you would like to participate in a Run/Walk on Saturday, April 30<sup>th</sup> that can benefit ESSE (as well as 65 other local charities and organizations), please check out the link below, or call Dawn Schubert at 630.665.9860. St. Matthew is hosting the CROP walk which takes place the VERY next day (Sunday, May 1st), but I know that some of you cannot get enough of a good thing.



This event is sponsored by Giving DuPage.

Register to run/walk at <https://runsignup.com/Race/IL/DownersGrove/DuPageHumanRace>

Choose ESSE as your charity, and we will receive 50% of your registration fee **OR** make a one-time donation at <https://runsignup.com/Race/27820/Charity/2360> Click on the “Donate” tab and scroll down to chose ESSE as your charity, and we will receive 100% of your donation.

Thank you!

### Open & Affirming Update

Our exploration of the Open and Affirming process, which we began in late summer, is now near completion, and the Church Council has set a date for a congregational vote. Here are the dates and next steps to be aware of:

**-Mid-March** (target date: March 18), a mailing will go out to each member household. This mailing will include the text of our proposed Open and Affirming statement as well as supplemental materials containing additional information and a proxy ballot for members who will be absent the day of the vote.

**-April 3**, after worship we will hold a forum for those needing additional information or wishing to discuss the proposed statement, the process or any other issues leading up to the vote the following week.

**-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. This date will be for the vote only, with no further discussion before the vote is taken.

If you have general questions or feedback as we get closer to these dates, 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.

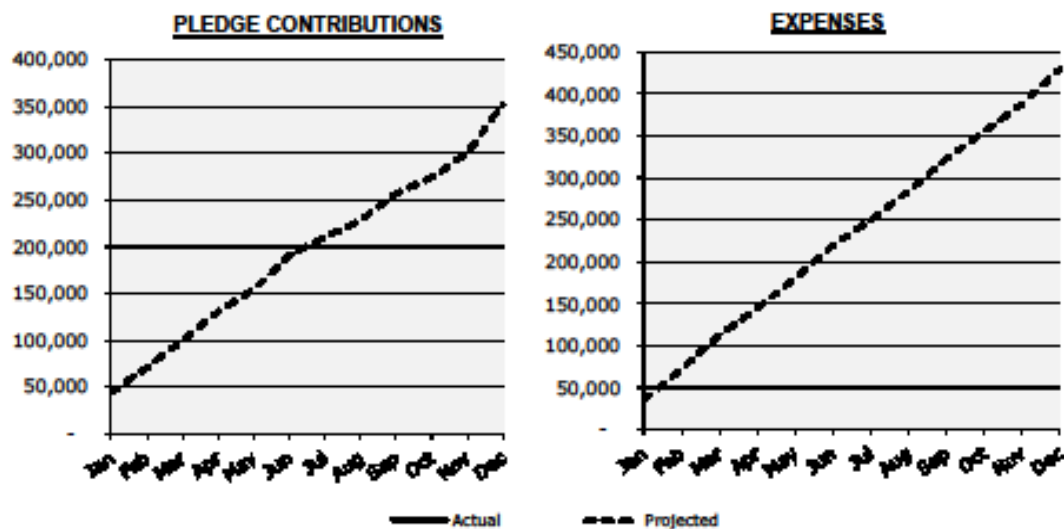


**ST. MATTHEW UCC GENERAL OPERATING FUND  
STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURES**

For the Period Ended January 31, 2016

	ACTUAL CURRENT MONTH	ACTUAL YEAR-TO- DATE	ANNUAL BUDGET
<b>RECEIPTS:</b>			
Pledge Contributions	52,456	52,456	353,000
Loose Offerings	413	413	10,000
Rental Income	200	200	5,000
Fund Raising	315	315	8,000
Investment Income	2	2	-
More Property	-	-	-
Miscellaneous Income	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	<b>53,387</b>	<b>53,387</b>	<b>376,000</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES:</b>			
Ministry	18,536	18,536	234,195
Building	7,239	7,239	118,253
Mortgages & Notes	2,229	2,229	26,750
Mission / OCWM	-	-	29,200
Committees:			
Christian Education	828	828	9,970
Membership	-	-	2,750
Music	327	327	4,700
Worship	289	289	1,500
Congregational Life	-	-	800
Memorial	45	45	100
Stewardship	-	-	500
Misc. & Contingency	100	100	1,000
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>29,592</b>	<b>29,592</b>	<b>429,718</b>
<b>SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)</b>	<b>\$ 23,794</b>	<b>\$ 23,794</b>	<b>\$ (53,718)</b>

**2015 Activity - Actual vs. Projected**



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

# March 2016

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 1pm Digital Committee 7pm Membership 7:30pm Mission	2 1:30pm Women's Prayer Group	3	4	5
6 9:30am Worship service <b>Girl Scout Sunday</b> 10:45am Adult Education	7 7pm Building 7pm Christian Education	8 1:30pm Pastoral Group	9 1:30pm Women's prayer group	10 7pm Finance	11	12 7pm "Risen" movie discussion (Annette/ Brian English home)
13 9:30am -Worship service 11am-M&M event 11am-Worship committee 6pm- crazies	14	15	16 1:30pm Women's prayer group	17 6pm-SRC 7pm-Council	18	19 10am-12pm <b>Easter Egg Hunt</b>
20 9:30am -Worship service <b>Voice Articles Due</b> 6pm - crazies	21	22	23 1:30pm Women's prayer group	24 <b>MAUNDY THURSDAY</b> 6pm-Church Dinner 7pm - Worship Ser-	25 <b>GOOD FRIDAY</b>  <b>Church Office Closed</b>	26
27 <b>EASTER</b>  9am Worship service 11am Worship service	28	29	30 1:30pm Women's prayer group	31	<b>Tuesday Nights</b> 6pm - Intergene-Ringers 7:30pm - Chancel Ringers	<b>Wednesday Nights</b> 6:30pm - Praise Band 7:30pm - Sanctuary Choir



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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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