



SAINT MATTHEW

**February
2022
Newsletter**

February Is A Month Of Prayer



Instead of setting our *resolutions* for 2022, pastors Bob and Andy spent the month of January helping us navigate the roadmap for setting our *priorities*. One such priority is prayer. We will spend the month of February focusing on prayer. Here are some ways you can join us in prioritizing prayer in our lives.

Sunday Morning Worship - Join us for in-person worship each Sunday at **9:00 am** (a blended worship service with choir and orchestra) or **11:00 am** (a contemporary worship service) and hear the pastors sermons on prayer.

Tuesday Morning Prayer - Each Tuesday morning a group meets at 8:00 am in the Sanctuary for prayer.

Friday Morning Women's Prayer Group - Each Friday morning a group of women meet at 8:00 am in the prayer room off of the Sanctuary.

Family Prayer Calendar - Visit and like the Children's Ministry Facebook Page at: <https://www.facebook.com/stmatthewumc.children> for daily prayers that you can do as a family.

We hope you use these options to help keep prayer as a priority in your life. Keep looking for the purple heart "Easter Eggs" about prayer throughout the newsletter.

Daily Devotionals - Pastors Bob and Andy recommend these popular devotionals that are a great way to incorporate daily conversation with the Lord into your life: *This Day With The Master*, by Dennis Kinlaw; *Face To Face*, by Stan Key; *My Utmost For His Highest*, by Oswald Chambers, *Jesus Calling*, by Sarah Young; & *A Guide To Prayer For Ministers And Servants*, by Rueben P. Job and Norman Shawchuck. All of these great options can be purchased on Amazon for very reasonable prices.

St. Matthew Prayer Cottages - St. Matthew church members will open their homes for a time of prayer each Thursday night in February at **6:30 pm**. We invite you to gather with your church family for prayer on one, or all, of these evenings.

February 3 host homes: Thom & Debbie Belter, Mel & Linda Bickel and Jon & Jackie Widel.

February 10 host homes: D.J. Mernick, Larry & Diane Patton and Matt & Lindsay Vollmar.

February 17 host homes: Mark & Laurie Caringer, David & Lisa Johnson and Jim & Phyllis Schuetz.

February 24 host homes: Jay & Dolores Fishback, Bob & Judy Kerico and LifeGroup 50/60 here at the church.

For St. Matthew Apartment Residents: Join Shelby Walasin on February 3 and 17.

Sign-Ups for the prayer cottages are available in the foyer.

How often should we pray?
1 Thessalonians 5:17
tells us to "*pray continually*".

Make prayer part of your daily life beyond this dedicated month of prayer. God wants His conversation with you to be daily.

Recently, Gina and I were discussing ideas to celebrate our 35th wedding anniversary that occurs in August. We realized, (for the first time,) we could celebrate our anniversary before the actual date. So, we began discussing; would we rather go on a ski trip or go to a beach to celebrate this milestone? While considering our packing list, one quickly realizes clothing for a ski trip is quite different from clothing for the beach. The destination determines the duds, but more importantly, packing the wrong things for the destination would drastically change the experience.



The same is true for our discipleship. If you have decided to follow Jesus, you don't have to make the journey with nothing in your "suitcase." In fact, Jesus has given us things for us to "pack" for our journey with him. And one of the greatest things we must bring along for any journey with him is the gift of Prayer!

Some people think of prayer as perhaps a luxury – for those who know how to "do it well." For others, they may view prayer as a crutch for "those who think they need it." Still others might view prayer like a game of solitaire; "you can do it but it doesn't accomplish very much." Of course, NONE of these could be further from the truth.

Prayer is the gift that God has given us to talk with him. Available to everyone, as we go through each day, prayer becomes our constant two-way communication with God. When we pray, we have access to God as we invite Him into our present moment. And this is one place where we find power to live. Jesus would not and could not have done what he did without prayer. Can you say the same?

So in the month of February, we are drawing our attention to this priceless gift of Prayer. I want to encourage you especially during this month to join those who are praying in the sanctuary every Tuesday morning at 8am or the group of women who pray on Friday mornings at 8:00 a.m.

Please pray for St. Matthew and it's ministries every day at 12 noon. You may remember our Breakthrough 1200 prayer cards in which we encouraged everyone to pray at noon every day for 1200 Moreland Drive. (St. Matthew's address). (see below). Some of you have never stopped. Thank you for your faithful prayers! You may use the printed ministries as a guide. Also, please come each Sunday as we grow in this life-giving gift of Prayer. I believe we have only scratched the surface of what is available to us in prayer.

Looking forward to taking this Prayer Journey with you!

Bob

What should we pray for?

Romans 8:26 tells us
"We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us ... in accordance with the will of God."

Therefore, pray as the Spirit leads!

You can pray for St. Matthew with this guide as the spirit leads!



Please take a moment and pray daily at 12:00 for God to **BREAKTHROUGH** in each of these areas at Saint Matthew:

- Worship
- Discipleship
- Ministries
- Missions
- Finances
- Outreach
- Witness
- Leadership

2022 St. Matthew Church Officers

Administrative Board Officers:

Chairperson:	Ken Williams
Trustee Chairperson:	DJ Mernick
SPRC Chairperson:	Mel Bickel
Finance Chairperson:	Ron Buerges
Treasurer:	Charles Kurrus
Pastors:	Bob Swickard & Andy Black
Retired Clergy:	Larry Patton, Dan Harry, Jim Schuetz & Doug Stewart
Prayer Ministries:	Sandy Rachel
NLC Rep.:	Diane Patton
College Ministry Rep.:	Jacob Anderson
Youth Reps.:	Aly Roberts & Matthew Fleming
Lay Leader:	Mark Caringer
Lay Member of Conf.:	Shelby Walasin

Administrative Board: Lisa Johnson, Aaron Oplinger, Wing Smith, Sharon Goetz, Matthew Swenson, Tom Belter, Bryan Carr, Don Rockwell, Roger Barfield, Carol Fischer, Jeff Uhl, Alan Bremer & Carrie Crago.
Ex Officio Members: Scott Ferguson & Hank Oplinger

Board of Trustees: DJ Mernick, Yvonne Keck, Mike Renneke, Jim Stuber, Tom Quinn, Lisa Johnson, Brian Caringer, Mike York, Dennis Hubbard, Ken Williams & Shelby Walasin

Staff-Parish Relations: Greg Souders, Bud Elliot, Stacy Hoffman, Jamie Palmer, Rachel Kriss, Virginia Shelton, Mel Bickel, Steve Padgett, David Johnson, Mark Caringer & Shelby Walasin

Finance: Ron Buerges, Bob Swickard, Andy Black, Dan Harry, Mark Caringer, Ken Williams, DJ Mernick, Mel Bickel, Charles Kurrus, Ted Gajewski, Tom Thom, Staci Atwood, Randy Roth, Andy Nicholson, Mike Dyer, Janice Woolard & Jim Redman

If you would like a hard copy of this list you can stop by the church office and request one. Or you can email Casey at cskelton@stmatthewumc.org to request a copy.

Women Of Worth

Please join us at 8:30 am at the Abbey on Saturday, February 19 for the Women of Worth meeting. Come ready for coffee, conversation and Christ!

Baby Bottles

Please make sure to return your baby bottles to the church office and we will transport them to the Mosaic Pregnancy Center.

Apartments Available

We have a couple of apartments available for rent. St. Matthew apartments are for those who are 55 and older. Preference will be given to St. Matthew members and family, as this is a ministry of the church. However, if they are not filled by members and family we will consider all other renters 55 and over. Please contact Aaron Oplinger in the church office (618-391-5994) for more information.



Financial Assistant Needed

We are looking for a part time financial assistant to work 3 days a week (with flexible hours) to do bookkeeping, accounts payable and payroll.

Experience with Excel and Word preferred.

Accounting experience is necessary.

Salary commensurate with experience.

If you are interested please contact Scott Ferguson in the church office at 618-397-5994.

Feed My Sheep Food Drive runs until February 4. Bins are available in the foyer for your donations of non-perishable food items & personal hygiene items. For specific needs, see the food pantry's website at www.feedbelleville.org. On Saturday, February 5, all are welcome to join us at 8:30 am in the foyer to help sort the food and then transport it to the Community Interfaith Food Pantry. As Jesus told us, "If you love me, feed my sheep." John 21

Beulah Kids' Camp registration is open! Beulah Bible Camp (finishing 4th – 6th gr.) is June 27 – 30 and Beulah the Beginning Camp (finishing 1st – 3rd gr.) is July 1 & 2. Registration is due by March 15 and information is available at the Welcome Center, Kids' Town Gazebo and has been emailed to parents. Sign up by March 15 to insure your child(ren) has a bunk in the church cabin.

"Knights of the North Castle" Vacation Bible School is June 13 – 17 from 9:00 am – 12:00 pm for 3 year olds through finishing 6th graders. Registration is now available at vbspro.events/p/stmatthewchurchvbs. Join us on this epic adventure as we journey into a frozen land in search of the King's Armor. It's free, so bring your friends as our brave knights learn how to be strong in the Lord and in the strength of God's power! (V.B.S. Work Week is June 6 – 9.)

Wednesday Night Kids' Club continues from 6:00 – 7:00 pm in Kids' Town. Nursery will be available from 5:45 – 7:15 pm for parents attending classes. Contact Lindsay if you'd be interested in helping!

Mark your calendars, our **Children's Easter Celebration** will be Saturday, April 9 at 1:00 pm in the Vine Café this year. For 4th grade and under, join us for story time & music, crafts, snacks, tons of goodies and an Easter Egg Hunt. Bring your family!

If you're interested in helping out in Children's Ministry on Sundays, Wednesdays or special events, please contact Lindsay. We have so many different ways and places that you can serve. You will be a part of a loving & fruitful ministry that is planting the seeds of faith in the lives of our kids!

Email Updates & Activities. If you have a child or grandchild in the Children's Ministry and do not receive our emails, please send your email address to lvollmar@stmatthewumc.org. We will continue to provide your kids and families with opportunities to know, grow & go in the name of Jesus!

Youth Ministry: *Matt Vollmar - 618-795-6250 - mvollmar@stmatthewumc.org*

Sunday Night Youth - Sundays at 5:00 pm in the Youth Room.

Youth Band - Wednesday Nights at 5:30 pm in the Youth Room.

Youth Bible Study - Wednesday Nights at 6:30 pm in the Youth Room.

Feed My Sheep Food Drive - February 5. Meet at the church from 8 to 11 am to organize and deliver food to the food pantry.

Taste of Elegance - Taste of Elegance set up is on Friday, Feb 11 at 5:30 pm. We'll provide pizza. Taste of Elegance is Saturday, Feb 12. Arrive at 4:30. The event starts at 6.

Super Bowl Party - February 13 from 5 pm until game ends.

Fire Up Conference - February 25 - 26 in Troy, IL for high school students only. Meet at the church at 6:30 pm on Friday. We'll stay at host homes. The conference ends on Saturday at 8:30 pm.

College Ministry - Every Wednesday Night at 6:00 pm in the College Ministry Center (accessible through Door 7)

LifeGroup 50/60: *Gina Swickard - doxa715@gmail.com*

LifeGroup 50/60 is a "drop-in" discipleship group that is available to 50 and 60 year olds. This group will meet the fourth Thursday of the month: **Thursday, February 24 at 6:30 pm**. We gather together around a meal at 6:30 pm in the Vine Cafe for fun and fellowship. Then we gather around God's Word from 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm in the Side Chapel Room (Side Vine Cafe). It is open to all who would like to be a part of it.

LifeGroup 30/40 is now part of Wednesday Night Discipleship and will meet weekly at 6:00 pm in the Park Room. Brian Caringer will lead this class most weeks; however, Bob & Gina Swickard will lead it the 4th Wednesday of the month.

Senior Ministry: *Jeanie Lively - 618-979-7434 - jlively@stmatthewumc.org*

NEW LIFE CLUB MEETING - Our February 17th New Life Club starts at noon in the Vine Cafe. You may want to be there much earlier to get a seat. We will be having a **BAKE SALE** before and after the meeting . Please bring your baked goods early. Our musical program will be presented by **Kent Woolston and Company, from Shepherd of the Hills in Branson, MO**. Kent was with us last year and we are pleased to welcome him back. Our lunch will be the ever popular "Potato Bar," prepared and served by Ladonna Kalish and helpers. Join us for a great time of fellowship and fun. Several "2022" trips will be presented for signup. Bring a friend as well!

NEW LIFE CLUB BIBLE STUDY BY LARRY PATTON - Our Thursday Bible Study will resume the second and fourth Thursday of each month, which is Feb. 10th and 24th at 9:30 am. We have coffee and donuts for a time, then we dive into the word of God. We all need a time of refreshing the body and the soul. Please join in.

"REDEEMED AGAIN," THE THRIFT SHOP OF ST. MATTHEW - We still have a need for towels and wash cloths. We are also looking for anyone who sells Avon, Mary Kay, etc. that could donate items. We have added more volunteers to our "staff." They are so appreciated and so wanting to serve. We are constantly blessed.

NEW LIFE CLUB CHOIR - has started up again in January, 2022 and we have new members as well as our "choir faithfuls." We will be practicing the next few months in hopes of making a DVD to send out to assisted living/nursing home areas for viewing since we still cannot visit in person. Our prayer is that those places open up soon!

ST. MATTHEW SR. TRAVELS

February 14, 2022 - **"OMNIMAX AND LUNCH"**, St. Louis, MO - \$65.00 at booking. Two Omnimax presentations, family style lunch Italiano at "Antonino's on the Hill" and a stop at the Missouri Banking Company on the Hill. Information is at the Welcome Center.

March 19-28, 2022 ST. - **LOUIS CARDINAL SPRING TRAINING**, Jupiter, FL. Information was sent out to "2020" travelers. Information is also at the Welcome Center.

God specializes in new things and His plans for you may be great this year. Maybe he wants you to serve somewhere. Just open your heart and he will guide you !

Who should we pray for?
James 5:16 instructs us to
"confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed."

Pray for each other!
Pray for our: church,
country leaders,
family, friends
... everyone!

The purpose of St. Matthew's Celebrate Recovery Ministry is to fellowship and celebrate God's healing power in our lives through the 12 Steps and 8 Recovery Principles. Our meetings are every Friday night at 6:00 p.m. We meet for dinner in the Vine Cafe, worship in the Chapel, and break out into smaller groups later on in the evening.

Here is what is happening in CR this month:

Feb 4 - Kathy Metz teaches on "Gratitude".

Feb 11 - Brandi Rasnick, CR Ministry Leader from Cutler IL. will share her testimony.

Feb 18 - Aaron Oplinger will teach a lesson titled "Give".

Feb 19 - Iron Sharpens Iron conference at First Baptist O'Fallon IL. We will have a St. Matthew CR table set up to connect with the participants.

Feb 25 - Ray Long, Ministry Leader from Marion IL. CR will share his testimony.

More News & Events

Joy Of Easter Casting Call!

Join us this year in the Joy of Easter cast! Please contact our Casting Director, Jeanie Lively (Lindsay's mom) at (618) 979-7434 or jlively@stmatthewumc.org if your family is interested in joining. Please remember all kids 6th grade and under are requested to have a guardian with them in the play. (If you are in the choir or orchestra, we will assign your child a "family" to hang out with.) For questions, contact Lindsay Vollmar at (618) 660-7552 or lvollmar@stmatthewumc.org. Practice schedules will be available soon, but the first cast practice is February 23 at 7:35 pm!

Iron Sharpens Iron Conference

What is Iron Sharpens Iron? It is a national conference that focuses on equipping and encouraging men to serve and be leaders in your local church which will, in turn, impact our families and change our communities for God's glory.

This year's conference is on Saturday, February 19 at First Baptist Church in O'Fallon, IL. You can visit ironsharpensiron.net or <https://rpmfm.org/ofallon/> for more information and to register.

How should we pray?

Matthew 6:5-8 reminds us: "*And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others ... But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.*"

Keep it simple.
Keep it real.



*Taste Of Elegance
Winter Wonderland*

*Saturday, February 12
6:00 pm in the Vine Cafe.*

*Tickets are \$25 each and are
available for purchase by
contacting Matt Vollmar.*

Please join us in welcoming Aaron Oplinger to the staff of St. Matthew as our new Property Administrator / Recovery Director! Aaron will oversee and manage the apartment buildings, the church building and the parsonage buildings. As the owner and operator of Oplinger Coatings, Aaron brings to St. Matthew a plethora of experience and knowledge with building, remodeling, and maintenance.

Aaron and his wife, Chrissy are already an integral part of our St. Matthew family. They are the leaders of the St. Matthew chapter of Celebrate Recovery and the Celebrate Recovery Southern Illinois State Representatives! Aaron's heart for the Lord becomes very obvious when you meet him and his calling in fulfilling the role of Celebrate Recovery director has been instrumental in God's kingdom. In addition, Aaron is also part of the 11:00 am service's praise team and he plays a mean guitar.

We are thrilled to welcome Aaron as an official staff member! Please join us in lifting him and Chrissy up in prayer as they begin this new chapter in their lives.



The Wednesday Night Meal Preview

Meal service is from 3:30 pm - 6:30 pm. Dine in or carry out!

You can order a meal by: calling the church office at 618-397-5994, signing up in the foyer on Sunday mornings, through the St. Matthew App or through an order form on our website at: <http://stmatthewumc.org/wed-meal>.

February 2

Pork Loin & Dressing
Orange Glazed Carrots
Salad
Rolls
Dessert

February 9

Meatloaf
Mashed Potatoes & Gravy
Buttered California Veg Blend
Salad
Rolls
Dessert

February 16

Chicken & Dumplings
Peas
Salad
Rolls
Dessert

Right Now Media

Use your free *Right Now Media* account to participate in one of the dozens of prayer series that they have available for you. *Right Now Media* is the Netflix of Bible Studies and St. Matthew has a free subscription for you. Just go to our website at <https://stmatthewumc.org/> and click on the *Right Now Media* banner to sign up for your free account.



Special Events Calendar

Feb 1	SPRC Meeting
Feb 8	Trustees Meeting
Feb 10	NLC Bible Study
Feb 12	Taste of Elegance
Feb 14	Valentine's Day
Feb 15	Finance Meeting
Feb 17	New Life Club Meeting
Feb 19	Women of Worth Meeting
Feb 23	Joy Of Easter Practice Begins
Feb 24	NLC Bible Study
Feb 24	LifeGroup 50/60 Meeting

Weekly Worship Opportunities

Sunday

Morning: 9:00 am & 11:00 am

Kid's Worship: 9:00 am & 11:00 am

Wednesday

6:15 pm in the Chapel

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Senior Pastor: Robert Swickard

Associate Pastor: Andy Black

Why should we pray?

Psalm 145:18 tells us that:
"The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth."

So if for no other reason, pray to be closer to God!

St. Matthew has a new YouTube channel! Click on this link and Subscribe!

<https://youtube.com/channel/St.Matthew>