



SAINT MATTHEW

March
2022
Newsletter

Ash Wednesday

We are having an all church Ash Wednesday event on Wednesday, March 2 to mark, and celebrate, the beginning of Lent.

First, we invite you to be our guests for a free Spaghetti dinner (reservations required) served between 3:30 and 6:30 pm.

Then Pastors Bob, Andy and Larry will lead a communion service at 6:15 pm in the Sanctuary followed by an anointing of the sick.

Discipleship classes will be canceled for the evening so you can attend the service. However; music rehearsals, Joy of Easter rehearsal and Bible Study Fellowship will continue as usual.

Please RSVP for the meal by: calling the church office, signing up on Sunday morning, through the St. Matthew App or through an order form on our website at: <http://stmatthewumc.org/wed-meal>.

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Church Software Update To Realm

By now you should have received at least one email from our new church software system called *Realm*. Isn't it pretty?! You should have also received an invite to join *Realm* yourself. Why would you want to be a part of our church software system? Here's why: First, this will serve as your digital directory. You can upload your picture to your profile, you can update your contact information and you can find a phone number, address or email of a fellow church member. Second, you will see what groups you are a part of (Sunday School, Choir, New Life Club, Wednesday Night Class, etc.) and be able to receive communications directly from your group leaders. If you are a group leader you can use *Realm* to send emails to your group, create events, ask for RSVP's and so, so much more.

Third, online giving has never been easier. In addition, you will be able to log into your *Realm* account to see and print your own giving statements. (If you are using *Pushpay* for online giving you will have to cancel that account and sign up with *Realm*. See page 3 For more information.)

Fourth, there is a very user friendly app to download that allows you to do all of the above on your phone!

In short, *Realm* is our new way to stay connected, stay informed and stay engaged with each other! Please log in and claim your profile today!

Daylight Saving Begins March 13

SPRING
FORWARD
remember to set your clocks

We may lose
an hour's sleep,



but we gain an
hour's sunshine!



On January 23, Ellie Hackman was baptized during the 11:00 service!

On February 13, Kristin Linthicum and Brendan McFarland we baptized and Kingston Marshall and Everett Marshall were dedicated to the Lord during the 11:00 am service!



On February 12, the youth group, leaders and sponsors hosted another wonderful Taste Of Elegance event. The Vine Cafe was decorated “to the nines”. The meal was delicious. The service was excellent. The company was superb. Thanks to your generosity, the youth group raised over \$4,000 at this event, which will help cover mission trip expenses this summer.



From Pastor Bob ...

Time For Lent

Lent is a time of 40 days that lead up to Easter. It begins with Ash Wednesday and continues through the Saturday before Easter, (not including Sunday's, since every Sunday is considered a “Little Easter Celebration.”) Traditionally, the Lenten season has been a time for people to practice their faith. They practice prayer and fasting - (abstaining from what we perceive as "necessary" (like food) in order to gain what is important - (like God!)). The Church has also found it to be a great time to practice generosity with others. (with Time, Resources, Talents, Attention). Just like Jesus was in the desert for 40 days to prepare for his public ministry, Lent can be an intentional time devoted to prayer, fasting, and growing closer to the Lord.



Now that we have finished up our series on BreakThrough Prayer, I hope you will keep making special time during Lent to spend with the Lord in prayer. Perhaps you can join the Tuesday morning prayer time in the Sanctuary at 8:00 a.m., or the Friday morning women's prayer time at 8:00 a.m., or even set some time aside with friends or neighbors to pray together as a small group.

During Lent, I will be leading an additional prayer time on Wednesday nights at 5:00 pm in the Sanctuary. Like Tuesday mornings, it will run about 30 minutes in length.

I hope you will find this Lenten season a blessing to you and enriching to your souls as you redeem your time to include prayer, fasting and growing in the Lord!

Looking for Serendipities with you,

Bob

Online Giving Transition: From Pushpay To Realm

We are in the process of transitioning from *Pushpay* to *Realm* for your online giving and we need your help! *Pushpay* will still function through March 31, but please switch your online giving over to *Realm* as soon as possible. If you have any questions or need any help with this transition, please contact Dan Harry, Financial Administrator, in the church office. **Please remember to cancel your giving through *Pushpay* once you have signed up for online giving through *Realm*.**

It's A Great Time To Join Choir!

With rehearsals for the *Joy of Easter* beginning, it is a wonderful time to join the choir. The choir rehearses each Wednesday evening at 7:00 pm in the Sanctuary and would love to welcome you. Please contact Hank Oplinger at: hoplinger@stmatthewumc.org for more information.

Neighborhood Volunteer Opportunity

Ellis Elementary (the school we work with for Good News Club, right here in the neighborhood) is in desperate need of help with their Mobile Market. The 1st Tuesday of each month they partner with the St. Louis Food Bank and pass out groceries to families in need (from the school parking lot at Ellis School, 251 Illini Dr., Belleville, IL.). They are looking for 6 volunteers a month from 8:45 am - 10:15 am to help place groceries in vehicles. Due to the pandemic they have lost most of their help and are struggling to provide for the community every month. This is a community service that runs year round (not just during the school year). Even if you are only able to make a 1 time commitment, please contact Lindsay Vollmar at (618) 660-7552.

Women Of Worth

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

Church Directory Updates

There will be a table in the foyer from **March 6 - March 27** for you to review your contact information and make any necessary changes. This information will be published in the church directory that you receive in the mail. ****Please note** you MUST mark that you have checked your information for it to be included in the directory. If you cannot make it to church during the month of March to check your info, please call the church office to verify your info and give verbal permission to print.**

Joy of Easter News

Cast practice continues on Wednesday nights at 7:35 pm in the Sanctuary. (Practices will be done by 8:30 pm.) Check the Rehearsal Schedule and Production Outline for a list of practices you will need to attend. Contact Lindsay for more info.

Costume fittings are Wednesday, March 2, March 9 and March 16 from 6:00 – 7:30 pm in the Costume Room (under Sanctuary, through Choir Room). Please don't wait til the last minute.

We'd need your help to lay canvas on Sunday, March 27 at 5:30 pm in the Sanctuary. Please bring your staple guns, staples and friends as we fellowship and work together. Contact Lindsay Vollmar (see next page for her phone number and email) for more info.

Dress Rehearsals are April 12 & April 13.

Souders Scholarship

The Edward and Evelyn Souders Scholarship is awarded to one college student each year. The recipient should be an active participant in St. Matthew and not a child, spouse or dependent of a St. Matthew staff member. Preference will be given first to a student preparing for full-time ministry, second to one with financial need, and third to one enrolled in a Christian college or university. If you would like to apply simply email Casey at cskelton@stmatthewumc.org for an application. Or you can pick up a hard copy in the church office. Please return it to the church office no later than **May 30**.

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.

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

Candy donations for Children's Easter Celebration! We are looking for store bought, small, individually wrapped candy donations by March 30 (it doesn't have to be specifically Easter candy). Candy can be donated to the Welcome Center or in Kids Town and please mark it as "kids".

Would you be able to help in the Joy of Easter Kid's Room or Nursery? We are looking for several people on Thursday, April 14 or Friday, April 15 that would be able to spend some time with our kids and little ones. Contact Lindsay if you are interested. (Background check included).

"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 ybspro.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!

We love new friends in Children's Ministry and have plenty of opportunities for you to serve. Let God use you in a mighty way by investing in the spiritual formation of our amazing kids! Not sure where your "sweet spot" would be? Meet with Lindsay and we'll find you a perfect place!

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.

March 13th - Winter Jam Concert - meet the church at 3:30. Tickets are \$10 and includes 7 bands, food, and our own boxes/suites. We will be back by 10 pm.

College Ministry: *Andy Black - 217-725-5079 - ablack@stmatthewumc.org*

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

LifeGroup 50/60 is a "drop-in" discipleship group that is available to 50 and 60 year olds. This group meet the fourth Thursday of the month: **Thursday, March 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 March 17th New Life Club meeting starts at noon in the Vine Cafe. You may want to be there much earlier to get a seat. We will be having the "Sixties Chicks" for our program this month. This group of musical ladies is a great treat. Evelyn Hammel will be presenting our monthly devotional and our lunch will be prepared and served by our St. Matthew Minister of Music, Hank Oplinger and "company." Several new St. Matthew Sr. Travels trips will be presented. Come out and join us and bring a friend! There is a lot of great fellowship going on there!

New Life Club Bible Study with Larry Patton - Our Thursday Bible Study is twice a month, which is March 10th and 31st for March, at 9:30am. *Please note the change to the last Thursday of March this month.* We have coffee and donuts for a time, then we dive into the word of God. The freedom to have Bible Study is a great luxury that many Christians around the world cannot participate in. It's a choice for us.

"Redeemed Again", The Thrift Shop of St. Matthew - We have a need for: bedding, towels, wash cloths, children's clothes, baby clothes, jewelry, wall pictures, pots, pans, sewing items, crafts, spring clothes and summer clothes! The sales in our shop went through the roof in Nov., Dec., and Jan. This proves there is a "great" need in our community for this ministry and we are staffed with the most dedicated volunteers who quietly serve day after day. The Lord blesses us, as do you with your contributions.

New Life Club Choir meets at 4:00 pm in the Park Room on Wednesdays. Our prayer is that we can soon get back to singing in the assisted living centers in our area. Our choir is really growing and it's never too late to join in.

St. Matthew Senior Travels

Frankie Valli and The Four Seasons - Stifel Theatre, St. Louis - Friday, April 8, 2022 - 7:30 pm. \$135.00 payable at booking

"Jesus" at Sight And Sound Theatre, Branson, MO - Thursday, May 26, 2022 - \$110.00 payable at booking
This phenomenal performance will be leaving for good at the end of summer. We are going again this year so that folks that missed it last spring can attend. Yes, we are doing it in one long day. See the promo at the 'Welcome Desk" or call me.

Coming Soon"

Tulip Festival in Pella, IA - May 4-6, 2022

Lion King, Fox Theatre/Dinner - June 14, 2022

HGTV Southern Road Trip- October 3-11, 2022

Fireside Dinner Theatre - Wisconsin - "White Christmas" - Nov. 3-4, 2022

Branson Christmas - Nov. 15-19, 2022

December ---- TBA

Seniors, we invite you to get involved somewhere in our ministry. We need you!

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:

March 4th lesson **"YES"**-- We learn about saying "yes " to the next steps God has for us in life. **Allen Raber** and **Aaron Oplinger** will be teaching together and sharing why saying yes to God is so important for a fulfilling life!

March 11th *Testimony*-- **Michael Rorie** , CR ministry leader from Wood River, will be coming to share his testimony with our group. Michael has a wonderful story of recovery and the process of dealing with depression that so many of us can relate to.

March 18th-- **Chrissy Oplinger** will share a lesson about the **"7 Reasons We Get Stuck"** in life and in recovery, and the tools to avoid being trapped in an unhealthy cycle .

March 25th-- *Testimony*--**Chris Latta**, our very own CR Encourager Coach and TEAM member, will share his journey through the trials of abuse and heartbreak, and how God was there all the time to bring him through to a life of joy and hope!



On Friday, January 29 we were blessed to have the Herrick CR Choir and worship team with us to share their testimonies and worship through music. Holy Spirit filled the service and worked in the lives of many who watched and listened as our brothers and sisters shared their stories of brokenness turned to restoration and helplessness turned into thriving! Thank you Brett Short, Rachel Suey Short, and Jonathan Stephens for leading this group and this ministry! Also, thank you to Brian Caringer, Randy Roth, Don Knapp, Kevin Gale, and Peter Hackman for taking care of the sound and video production, you guys are the best!

- Aaron Oplinger

Glitz. Glamor. And ... khakis?

That's right! The St. Matthew College Ministry invite you and your family to a Miss America-style "Staff Pageant" on Friday, March 25 at 6:30pm in the Vine Café! Come out and watch as YOUR church staff members go head-to-head in three different competitions: the runway walk, talent show, and Judges' Q&A – all for the purpose of earning YOUR affections, YOUR votes, and the chance to be crowned Grand Champion!

MISS / MR. ST. MATTHEW

All proceeds from this event go to the College Ministry's first-ever mission trip to Baton Rouge, Louisiana in July. Tickets are \$10 per person and can be purchased in the church foyer on Sundays or by emailing Andy Black at ablack@stmatthewumc.org for digital tickets.

Don't miss out on an unforgettable night of laughs and luxury with Belleville's most lovable cast of characters!

Did you know that St. Matthew has a Safety Team made up of a group of dedicated volunteers? Several members of our Safety Team recently completed a training course resulting in their becoming a Certified Safety Member. The training consisted of an on-line course covering seven different modules relating to Security Team Fundamentals, Active Shooter Response, Deescalating Disruptive Persons, Protecting Children from Abuse, Use of Force Laws, Arson and Fire Safety, Severe Weather and Natural Disasters. This training course was in addition to the training classes normally held locally on a monthly basis which includes the above topics as well as communications, first aid and CPR, security techniques, and others topics as needed.

The team members completing the training were Rocky Cole, Mike Meinardi, Janice Woolard and Gary Woolard. Congratulations! Thank you for your over the top dedication to helping keep the staff, congregation and visitors of St. Matthew safe and secure.

Anyone interesting in more information or volunteering for the team should contact any team member or Tom Quinn (618) 978-7891.

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>.

March 2

Spaghetti & Meat Balls
Salad
Garlic Toast
Spumoni & Cookies

March 9

Roast Beef
Mashed Potatoes & Gravy
White Shoepeg Corn
Salad
Rolls
Dessert

March 16

Corned Beef & Cabbage
Potatoes
Salad
St. Patrick Green Bread
Dessert
Alt Chicken Nuggets

The Joy Of Easter

Save the date for the *Joy of Easter* on April 14 & 15 at 7:30 pm.

The Joy of Easter presents the gospel through a musical drama depicting the ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. Live animals, beautiful costumes and amazing sets accompany the cast of over 200 that includes choir, orchestra, a drama team and our technical support staff and crew. If you have faithfully

attended this production every year, we ask that you bring someone new with you this year. **Have you invited your family or friends?** A production like this is the perfect opportunity for us to become fishers of men. Help us cast the net wide to bring new people to St. Matthew ... and to the Lord.





Special Events Calendar

March 1	SPRC Meeting
March 2	Ash Wednesday
March 4	World Day of Prayer
March 8	Trustees Meeting
March 10	NLC Bible Study
March 13	Daylight Saving Begins
March 17	New Life Club Meeting
March 19	Women of Worth Meeting
March 22	Finance Meeting
March 24	LifeGroup 50/60 Meeting
March 25	Staff Pageant College Fundraiser
March 29	Administrative Board Meeting
March 31	NLC Bible Study

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

Senior Pastor: Robert Swickard

Associate Pastor: Andy Black

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

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