



SAINT MATTHEW

**January
2023
Newsletter**

Wednesday Night Classes Resume



Classes resume on Wednesday, January 11!

Wednesday Night Meal: 3:30 pm - 6:30 pm in the Vine Cafe.

New Life Club Choir: 4:00 pm - 5:00 pm in the Park Room with Jeanie Lively.

Youth Band: 5:30 pm - 6:00 pm in the Youth Room with Matt Vollmar.

Kids Club: 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm in Kids Town with Lindsay Vollmar.

Youth: 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm in the Youth Room with Matt Vollmar.

College Group: 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm in the College Ministry Center (Door 7) with Andy Black.

Tangents: 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm in the Disciple Room with Brian Caringer.

CR Men's Step Study: 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm in Room 200 (upstairs).

CR Women's Step Study 1: 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm in Room 230.

CR Women's Step Study 2: 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm in Bride's Room.

Wednesday Night Bible Service: 6:15 pm in the Park Room with Larry Patton.

Wesley Ringers: 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm in Room 2 (downstairs under the Sanctuary) with Carrie Crago.

Sanctuary Choir: 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm in the Sanctuary with Hank Oplinger.

Discipleship Weekend

We are honored to welcome Jeremiah Bolich for a Discipleship Weekend on **December 30 - January 1**.

We invite you to meet Jeremiah and hear him speak on **Friday, December 30 at 6:00 pm** (dinner will be served for a free will offering); on **Saturday, December 31 at 9:00 am** (breakfast will be served for a free will offering).

Combined New Year's Day Service

On **Sunday, January 1** we will have one combined service at **10:00 am** with Mr. Bolich as the speaker.



Important Congregational Meeting

An informational congregational meeting will be held on **Sunday, January 15, at 6:30 pm** in the Sanctuary. This meeting will provide a progress report on St. Matthew's disaffiliation from the Illinois Great Rivers Conference and the United Methodist Church. Please plan to attend. This will be for information only; a vote will not be taken at this meeting.

However, once the District Superintendent calls a Church Conference to vote on disaffiliation, only church members will be allowed to vote. If you are unsure of your "membership status" please check with Casey Skelton in the office right away. Maybe you have been attending St. Matthew for many years but you never "officially" went through a membership class or were received into membership. Now is your chance to remedy that!

Recently, Gina and I got to go to America's happiest place on earth; the place where dreams come true. Oh sure, the lines are long and every once in a while you might run into someone who has had a long day. But hey, it's necessary. I'm talking, of course, of the DMV. (What? You were expecting Disney?) Why do we all go to the DMV? It's not just to get a stunning new picture of ourselves. We go because our licenses expire, and we need to renew them.



One of the definitions of renew is to “make something effective for an additional period.” As I thought about that definition, I realized that this is something we can do in our spiritual lives as well. We can renew our commitment to Jesus Christ. We can renew our commitment to each other. We can renew our commitment to our church; to growing; to learning; to being an instrument of God's grace on this earth. The list can go on and on. Maybe you can think of areas in your spiritual walk you would like to renew. I can think of few in mine.

So for January, we will all have an opportunity to go to the DMV; that place where I can “Dedicate My Volition” once again to the Lord. Actually, we are going to start a new series called, “RENEW.” January is a great time to look to the new year and renew our commitment to the Lord. It's a great time to look forward to what God is going to do in our individual lives, our collective life as a church and how God might use all of us to carry his light into a dark world.

On January 1, we will have a guest speaker, Jeremiah Bolich. He will be finishing up a 3 day event on the 1st and we will have only one service on the 1st at 10:00 a.m. Then, for the rest of January, we will be looking at different places in our spiritual lives where we can renew our commitment to Christ for 2023.

I hope you will be able to join us this month as we GROW in the Lord. Every day is a great day to recommit our lives to the Lord.

Not loving my picture, but happy to be driving!

Bob

Illness Or Hospital Stays

Just a reminder that if you are sick or in the hospital for any reason, please call the church office (or ask a friend or relative to call for you). If you don't let us know; we won't know!

We will start from the beginning of the Recovery process, and the process of walking with the Lord and alternate each week throughout the year with a lesson and a Testimony. Every week dinner is at 6, followed by a large group meeting at 7, and then we break into gender specific small groups at 8:10 for a time of safe and confidential open sharing.

January 6 - Chrissy Oplinger will be starting us off with the first lesson of the new year with step 1, coming out of "Denial". This is the first thing that has to happen when we are finally ready to admit that we need Jesus Christ as our Higher Power.

January 13 - Our first testimony of the New Year will be from Jana McDonald, former CR ministry Leader for Wood River. Jana has also worked professionally in the recovery field and has shared her story with many people throughout the years, you won't want to miss it.

January 20 - Max Minton, Ministry Leader for Discovery Church CR in Collinsville and also one of our St. Matthew CR leaders, will be sharing the second lesson "Powerless". Once we surrender control of our lives to God, He can begin to bring us into a new life that is full of hope and anticipation for the future He leads us into!

January 27 - Allison Knapp will be sharing her testimony with us. For the last few years Allison has led worship for us on Friday nights with incredible passion and last year, joined the leadership team of CR here at St. Matthew.

Celebration Place meets every Friday night and is offered to our kids as a “pre-recovery” kid’s group for Celebrate Recovery. Kids begin in the Chapel with their parents at 7:00 pm to be a part of worship time, then head upstairs to Kids Town for their own lesson, small groups, snack, game time & more. We need volunteers to help us teach on Friday nights, so please let Lindsay know if you can help on a rotating basis.

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

College Ministry welcomed winter with a trip to Branson for their Fall Retreat. The weekend excursion featured a stay in Kimberling City, a Saturday spent at Silver Dollar City, and lots of good food at Branson Landing! Fellowship and devotional time brought this energetic group closer to Christ and closer to one another!

Look out, 2023...here we come!



Our “Praise & Pajama Sunday” will be held on January 1 during the joint 10:00 am service in the Sanctuary. Our Nursery and Pre-School Kids Worship will open at 9:50 am with our Elementary Kids Worship being dismissed from service. Yes, let your kids wear their pajamas to church as we ring in the new year with praise and worship to our King!

Wednesday Kids' Club resumes on January 11, 2023! We meet every week from 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm for preschool – 6th graders in Kids' Town. Join us for a new semester of jumping into God's Word and exploring the gifts He has given us.

Kids Crew is available to all 5th & 6th graders who would like to help out in Kids Worship on Sunday mornings during the 9:00 am and/or the 11:00 am. We are looking for kids who like to be helpful, assist the teachers and help the kids while they are in worship. Contact Lindsay if your child would like to sign-up as a crew member!

Coming soon...Joy of Easter cast practice starts next month! If you or your family is interested in joining us this year, please contact Lindsay or sign-up at the Welcome Center. 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!

Mark your calendars, our **Children's Easter Celebration** will be Saturday, April 1 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!

Summer 2023... Vacation Bible School Work Week (June 5-8), “STELLAR” Vacation Bible School (June 12- 16), Beulah Youth Institute for finishing 7th – 12th gr. (June 18 - 24), Beulah Bible Camp for finishing 4th – 6th gr. (June 26 – 29), Beulah Beginner Camp for finishing 1st – 3rd gr. (June 30 – July 1).

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!

GOOD NEWS CLUB

Please continue to pray for our kids and their families as we continue to plant the seeds of faith in their lives! We have some incredible kids this year that are working hard on learning about Jesus and discovering more about their faith. Good News Club is a fun time packed full of Bible stories, music, games, memory verses, skits, snacks and planting the seeds of Jesus in the lives of our kids in the community. Your support and prayers are greatly appreciated!

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

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

Youth Band - Wednesday Nights from 5:30 pm - 6:00 pm in the Youth Room.

Youth Bible Study - Wednesday Nights from 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm in the Youth Room.

Jan 13 - 16th - High School Winter Retreat - This is for High Schoolers only! Cost is \$100 per kid (we cover the rest). Please see Matt for details.

January has arrived, and with it, a whole new LifeGroup Format!

We now have a LifeGroup opportunity for every age group in the church, so that people in their 20's to people in their 90's can have a large group with which to gather and grow in their faith together.

All LifeGroups will meet the fourth Thursday of each month. January's meeting date is **Thursday, January 26.**

The new schedule is as follows:

5:00 pm - 6:00 pm



LifeGroup 70 +, led by Bob & Gina Swickard, will meet for Bible study in the Side Vine Cafe.

6:15 pm - 7:00 pm

Dinner will be served in the Vine Cafe for **ALL LifeGroups**

7:00 pm - 8:00 pm

LifeGroup 20/40, led by Brian Caringer, will meet will meet for Bible study in (Park Room)

LifeGroup 50/60, led by Bob & Gina Swickard, will meet for Bible study in the Side Vine Cafe.

Glory Of Christmas Praise

We had 1,050 people in attendance, there were 6 decisions to make a deeper commitment to Jesus, AND there were 4 first time decisions to receive Jesus.

Praise the Lord!

Thank you to the St. Matthew Music & Drama Ministries for making this wonderful evening possible and such a success.

All your hard work was evident, appreciated, and a blessing to all who came in person and watched on-line.



News & Events

Baby Bottles

In January we will begin distributing baby bottles to help raise money for the Mosaic Pregnancy & Health Center, which provides free, Christ-centered, medical pregnancy related care and counseling. You can make this a small group project for your Wednesday night class, Sunday school class, girl or boy scout troop, or you can just put one on your kitchen counter at home and get the kids involved. Drop your loose change in it all month long and return it back to the church on or before **January 29**. If you would like more information about the Mosaic Pregnancy & Health Center you can visit their website at: <https://revealmosaic.com/>. Thank you in advance for supporting this great organization.

Operation Christmas Child Volunteer Thanks

We would like to offer a special thank you to all the volunteers who worked during collection week on Operation Christmas Child. Also, a heartfelt thank you for all those who donated shoeboxes for this worthy and Blessed cause.

Welcome to the New Year! God has been so good to us this past year as His mercies are unending. We enter "2023" with assurance of His continued love!

Our first New Life Club meeting of the year will be at noon in the Vine Cafe on January 19, 2023. Our program will be presented by our contemporary service worship leader, Matt Vollmar and "friends." This will be a great program of wonderful music and comedy for sure. Rachel Brandon will prepare and serve our lunch for a donation of \$5.00. Please join us. Reservations are not required, but come early for a seat. You will find great Christian fellowship in this group. Start our the new year with us!

Larry Patton's Bible Study will be held January 12th and 26th with coffee and donuts at 9:30, Bible Study at 10:00 a.m. and the 26th will be "Bring Your Own Lunch" day.

“Redeemed Again - The Thrift Shop Of St. Matthew” - When you take down your decorations and decide to retire some, we are more than happy to receive them. Also, we are in need of a few more folks to help us one day a week for 4 hours. Please contact me (at the above e-mail or phone) or Connie Bergmann or Pat Cook if you are in the least interested in checking it out. WE NEED YOU! Your donations in "2022" served so many people in need. We cannot thank you enough. We look forward to assisting many more folks throughout the new year.

New Life Club Choir - What a beautiful group of sweet souls and "some" can even sing ... We worship the Lord with our voices and He is pleased with our offerings. Remember, "if only the birds with the best voices sang, the forest would be silent." We got to sing in 3 assisted living facilities in December and hope to continue in the spring. We will meet up again on January 11, 2023. Please drop in the Park Room at 4:00 and check it out.

St. Matthew Senior Travels

St. Louis Cardinals Spring Training - March 19 - 27, 2023 - We are taking a waiting list now.

We have trips booked for "Queen Esther" at Sight and Sound in Branson in April, "Aida" at the new Stages theatre this summer and there are many more to come.

We hope to have several available for sign up at the January meeting. Stay tuned.

We have many opportunities for you to serve in the Senior Ministry. Get involved. You will be blessed as you bless others.

Pictured below is NLC senior travelers (and 4,000 other concert goers) at the 25th Anniversary of *Straight No Chaser* at the Fox theatre.



Pictured above is the annual New Life Club "Christmas In Branson" trip. This trip is the perfect way to kick off the Christmas season with shows, shopping, sustenance & spirit!



Kid's Christmas Party!



Youth Christmas Party!



Senior Christmas Parties!



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>.

January 4

Pork Loin & Dressing
Malibu Vegetable Medley
Salad Bar
Rolls
Dessert

January 11

Beef & Noodles
White Shoe Peg Corn
Salad Bar
Rolls
Dessert

January 18

Taco Wednesday
Tacos
Enchiladas
Chips & Salsa
Salad Bar
Dessert - Empanadas

Stewardship Corner

“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink, or about your body, what you will wear . . . But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well” (Matt. 6:25, 33).

Most of our financial concerns fall into one of these categories, but Jesus says we are not to worry about them. Instead, He says we should focus on His kingdom. When we do, our physical needs will be met as well.



Special Events Calendar

Jan 1	New Year's Day - Combined Service at 10:00 am
Jan 2	Church Office Closed
Jan 3	SPRC Meeting
Jan 10	Trustees Meeting
Jan 11	Winter Classes Begin
Jan 12	NLC Bible Study
Jan 13 - 15	High School Winter Retreat
Jan 15	Congregational Meeting
Jan 17	Finance Committee Meeting
Jan 19	New Life Club Luncheon
Jan 26	NLC Bible Study
Jan 26	LifeGroups

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 Park Room

Senior Pastor: Robert Swickard

Associate Pastor: Andy Black

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