



SAINT MATTHEW

**March
2023
Newsletter**

Daylight Saving Begins

Don't forget to spring forward an hour for Daylight Saving to begin on **Sunday March, 12!** Lose the sleep but gain the sun!



New Members Class

Have you found "a place to belong" here at St. Matthew? If you would like to take the next step and become a member of St. Matthew we are holding a new members class on **Sunday, March 12** at noon in the Vine Cafe. A light lunch will be served followed by the membership class led by Senior Pastor, Bob Swickard. You will also learn about the different ministries of St. Matthew and have a chance to meet the ministry leaders.

If you would like to attend this class, or would like more information, please contact Scott Ferguson at: sferguson@stmatthewumc.org or by calling the church office at 618-397-5994.

Church Directory Updates

There will be a table in the foyer the entire month of March 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 make sure you stop by this table and check your information!** If you would like to be removed, simply cross your name off the list. If you would like to be added, there will also be forms available to fill out to do that. Thank you!

Special Church Conference

We are making progress in terms of our disaffiliation from the Illinois Great Rivers Conference and the United Methodist Church. We have signed the Disaffiliation Agreement and are now ready for the next step.

The District Superintendent has called a Church Conference for **Thursday, March 2, at 7 p.m.** in the sanctuary when professing members will vote by written ballot.

Thank you in advance for attending if possible and for your prayer support for this important meeting. Please continue to pray for us as we move forward in the days ahead.

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It was Winston Churchill – the larger-than-life personality who pulled Britain through the devastation of World War II – who said, “To improve is to change; to be perfect is to change often.”

Those words sound more at home in the mouth of a Greek philosopher than on the tongue of the unapologetic, chain-smoking Prime Minister. In some ways, Churchill’s is a romantic view of a force that regularly disrupts our lives and causes us headaches. Change is the Great Enemy of people who find comfort in what is predictable and routine, and I include myself in that number! For many of us, the very presence of change hints at the things we very much want to hide in ourselves: namely, imperfection and incompleteness. Couched within that stinging reality is another nasty barb: the threat of the unknown. Change always brings with it unknowns.



This is why the story of Jesus is so compelling to me. It’s the story of an unchanging, perfect God who breaks into a world afflicted by change. The New Testament isn’t the first time God became involved our business, of course; but it is the first time the God of Israel literally took on our flesh and became one of us. In so doing, Jesus brought something eternal and unchanging into our temporal world: access.

It’s quite profound. By faith in Jesus’ Name, we have *access* to His righteousness (2 Cor. 5:21). By His blood, we have *access* to His Father (Hebrews 10:19-21). By the Holy Spirit, we have *access* to His family (Romans 8). In a world governed mercilessly by change, having access to One who is eternally unchanging brings a great deal of peace. It doesn’t save us from experiencing change, but it anchors our soul in the midst of it.

My family and I are counting on those promises as we prepare to depart Saint Matthew for a new future in military chaplaincy. This opportunity – while exciting – means that a great deal of change looms on the horizon for Rebecca, James, and myself: a new home, a new city, a new ministry, and a new mission field – just to name a few.

Those are a lot of changes! But we are trusting that God is using those changes to glorify Himself through us. We believe that Jesus is calling us into a setting where *access* to the Kingdom of God is limited, where Jesus is not known. We are being sent as ambassadors to represent the gospel and raise God’s profile on military bases all over the world. It won’t be easy, but it will be worthwhile because we will be changed in the process.

Which means we’re embracing change. As hard as that is. We can do it because we have access to the eternal, immovable Rock that is our God. We are tethered to One who is trustworthy and faithful in all things. We know the story; now it’s our job to tell the story.

For His glory,

Pastor Andy

Friday Nights: Dinner at 6 pm. Large group at 7 pm. Open share groups at 8 pm.

If you are feeling led to serve, we need a volunteer to drive the van each Friday night for CR (to pick people up, bring them to church then drop them back off at home after). If we can get a few volunteers to rotate that would make it easier on everyone. Please contact Aaron if you are interested.

March 3 - We are very blessed to have a wonderful teacher and speaker in Tom Partelow, one of CR leaders here at St Matts. Tom will be sharing with us about the moment he realized he had to “TURN” in a different direction for his life in order to experience real growth and happiness. You will discover the importance of turning to a new path when life takes you to a dead end.

March 10 - Our St Matts CR Encourager Coach, Kathy Metz will be sharing her testimony. You will hear how God has held Kathy in His hand through many trials and heartaches and how He is working in her life. Kathy is a support to many people who come into recovery through CR and is a mentor and sponsor.

March 17 - Nathaniel Rose has some of the best insights and fresh perspectives on the principles of Celebrate Recovery. Tonight he will be talking about the need for “ACTION” in our lives and our walk with the Lord. Nathaniel uses his experiences over the last several years to help bring us tools to use in our daily lives.

March 24 - Allen Raber will be sharing his testimony. You don’t want to miss this one! Allen has been one of the biggest inspirations to me personally and to many others as well throughout our recoveries. Allen battles physical disabilities but with God’s help he doesn’t quit! I hope you can join us this evening to be inspired and get to know Allen a little better.

March 31 - I, Aaron Oplinger, will be explaining how and why having someone to walk with you through recovery and life is so crucial. We are not expected to go through this life alone and when we are trying to rebound or recover we simply cannot. I will share the things to look for when you decide to find a sponsor, and also what the expectations of that relationship should be for both people.

Celebration Place meets every Friday night and is offered to our kids as a “pre-covey” 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 (lvollmar@stmatthewumc.org) know if you can help on a rotating basis.

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

College Ministry Meets every Wednesday Night at 6:00 pm in the College Ministry Center (door 7).



College Ministry linked up with the Youth Group on February 5th in St. Charles, MO to take in Winter Jam 2023.

Appearances by We The Kingdom, RENEE, Anne Wilson, and Austin French made it an unforgettable night. Legends Jeremy Camp and NewSong rounded out a worship-filled evening at Family Arena.



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. If you would like to make a monetary donation to the purchase of the eggs this year, please mark "kids" and turn into the church office. Make sure you bring the whole family out to celebrate Jesus' resurrection!

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 6 or Friday, April 7 that would be able to spend some time with our kids and little ones. Contact Lindsay if you are interested. (Background check included).

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). Beulah sign-up link coming soon!

Wednesday Kids' Club! 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. Our Nursery opens at 5:45 pm for our little ones 3 years and under. The last day of Club & Nursery for the semester will be May 3!

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 you child would like to sign-up as a crew member!

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!

Scan this QR code to register for STELLAR VBS. It's free!



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

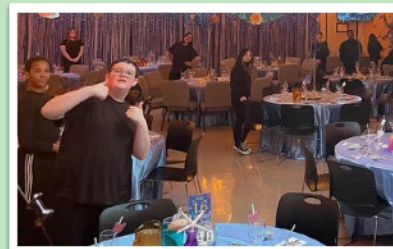
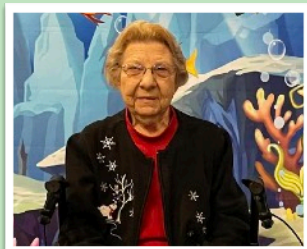
Sunday Night Youth - 5:00 pm in the Youth Room.

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.

March 12 - Family Feud Youth Night - all parents are invited as our kid's will compete against our leaders in a game of Characters of the Bible/Family Feud! Desserts/snacks to follow.

March 31-April 2 - Branson/Young Christians Weekend.



Thanks to everyone who supported the youth by coming out for Taste Of Elegance. It was an evening of great food, great fellowship and great service! Thanks to your support the youth raised over \$4,000!!!



*January's LifeGroups enjoying dinner together!
Come join us next month.*

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.

March's meeting date is **Thursday, March 23.**

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.

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 1

Chicken & Dumplings
Orange Glazed Carrots
Salad Bar
Rolls
Dessert

March 8

Pork Loin & Dressing
Malibu Vegetable Medley
Salad Bar
Rolls
Dessert

March 15

Corned Beef & Cabbage
Potatoes
Salad Bar
Green Bread
Dessert

Stewardship Corner

“Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God” (Rom. 13:1).

God expects us to pay our debts, to provide for our families and to pay our taxes since the government is ordained and established by God.

It is BASEBALL MONTH at New Life Club.

Our March New Life Club meeting will be held on Thursday, March 15th at noon in the Vine Cafe. Come and hear the stories of former **St. Louis Cardinal batting practice pitcher of 16 years, DENNIS SCHUTZENHOEFER**. Dennis was also the former head baseball coach at Belleville East High School and chemistry teacher at Belleville West High School. Meet Dennis at noon in the Vine Cafe to hear his St. Louis Cardinal baseball journey and more. Larry Patton will be giving our devotion. We will also have a baseball lunch of hot dogs, slaw, potato salad, and ice cream sandwiches provided and served by "Jack" for a donation of \$5.00. We have a great time of fellowship at these meetings. Why not join us!

Larry Patton's Bible Study will be held March 9 and 30, 2023, with coffee and donuts at 9:30, Bible Study at 10:00 a.m. and the 30th will be "Bring Your Own Lunch" day. We meet in the Vine Cafe. This is a great way to learn and understand the Bible as Larry addresses our comments and questions. This is a great group to join.

"REDEEMED AGAIN," THE THRIFT SHOP OF ST. MATTHEW - Thank you for our two new volunteers Deb Brem and Nancy Barris. We are thrilled to have them both join the team. We are gearing up for a big sale the first weekend of March, so all donations are needed and gratefully welcomed. We are in great need of towels of all kinds (dish, bath, etc.). Your blessing to us flow to our community.

NEW LIFE CLUB CHOIR - We meet Wednesdays at 4:00 p.m. in the Park Room. Please join with us in prayer that we will be able to witness in song and conversation with our folks in our local assisted living areas. We look forward to that time in the near future.

ST. MATTHEW SR. TRAVELS

- **ST. LOUIS CARDINALS SPRING TRAINING - MARCH 19-27, 2023.** - Full with waiting list.
- **"QUEEN ESTHER" at the Sight and Sound Theatre, Branson, MO. April 12-13, 2023.** This trip filled up in the January meeting with a waiting list. We are looking at taking another group in May possibly. If you might be interested, please let me know.
- ****NEW** Josephine's Tea Room - May 25, 2023** - \$50.00 upon booking.
- ****NEW** St. Louis Cardinal Game - Busch Stadium - National Car Rental Club Suite - Wednesday, August 20, 2023 - 1:15 Game Against The San Diego Padres.** All inclusive upscale buffet, indoor climate controlled reserved seating, private bathroom all on the third base line with great views - \$180.00 upon booking.

Many more great ventures to come.....

Our group is for all seniors and not just for folks from this church. We welcome all like minded folks to join in on the many opportunities here.

When I started this journey in 2002, I would have never have believed I would still be here in 2023. Only through God's grace and prayer I have made it. On 1/31/2023 I was able to ring the bell, something I never thought I would get to do. I had a stem cell transplant in 2005 that gave me 20 months of remission. In 2007 I began chemo again. God has always been in this journey with me. I was on the first chemo for 3 months, the second for 12 months, another for 54 months, yet another for 104 months and now this final one for 13 months. That is 15 years of chemo. I am now in a "no detection" stage and my bone marrow biopsy was squeaky clean. God is so good. I will have bone marrow biopsies to make sure my multiple myeloma is still "no detection". They say it will come back, but I am standing on the promise that God is the great physician and he has healed me. Please keep me in your prayers and thank you for being in this journey with me and lifting me up in your prayers. God is good all the time. - Ruthie Anglin.



The Joy Of Easter

Save the date for the *Joy of Easter* on April 6 & 7 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.



Joy of Easter News

Cast practice continues every Wednesday night at 7:30 pm in the Sanctuary. Please check the rehearsal schedule to know if you need to be at practice. Pick up a schedule in the main foyer for more details!

Costume fittings will be on March 1, March 8 and March 15 from 6:00 – 7:30 pm in the Costume Room (under the Sanctuary, through the Choir Room). Please don't wait til the last minute to be fitted!

Stage canvas laying is Sunday, March 19 at 5:30 pm and we need all able bodies to help stretch canvas, carry props down and staple canvas to prepare for the set construction that begins March 20. Your help is greatly appreciated!

Dress Rehearsals are April 4 & April 5.

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 all applications to Casey Skelton no later than **May 31**.

Biblical Words and World - A Radio Ministry

From Tom Hobson: I would like to thank St Matthew for your full year of support for my radio outreach to Utah, "Biblical Words and World," which has been broadcast weekly on Saturday afternoons on KUTR in Salt Lake City. Because I am now currently the transitional pastor at the Presbyterian church in Herrin, I finished our radio program as of February 25. You can find the programs you sponsored in our Radio Archives at either www.biblicalethic.org or www.historicaljoseph.org. We've been getting an average of 700 downloads per week on our archives. Thank you, St. Matthew, for making this ministry possible!



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Special Events Calendar

March 1	Joe Of Easter Costume Fittings
March 2	Special Church Conference
March 3	World Day Of Prayer
March 7	SPRC Meeting
March 8	Joe Of Easter Costume Fittings
March 9	NLC Bible Study
March 11	Don James & The Music Makers Concert
March 12	New Members Class
March 12	Daylight Saving Begins
March 14	Never Alone
March 14	Trustees Meeting
March 15	Joe Of Easter Costume Fittings
March 16	New Life Club Luncheon
March 21	Finance Committee Meeting
March 23	LifeGroups
March 30	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 Park Room

Senior Pastor: Robert Swickard

Associate Pastor: Andy Black

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