



SAINT MATTHEW

**November
2023
Newsletter**

A Night Of Thanksgiving & Praise

Please join us for a night of Thanksgiving & Praise on Sunday, November 19 at 6:30 in the Sanctuary.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. Psalm 100:4



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, November 5** 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@stmatthew.church or by calling the church office at 618-397-5994. We appreciate the RSVP so we can plan accordingly for the lunch!

Church Wide Operation Christmas Child (OCC) Packing Party!

The church wide Operation Christmas Child Packing Party will be Saturday, November 11 from 10:00 am - 12:00 pm in the Vine Cafe. EVERYONE is invited on this day to help us pack our goal of 500 shoeboxes! Bring your items you've collected, pack a bunch of boxes with your friends & family, have some delicious Christmas snacks, listen to some fabulous Christmas music and make a difference in the lives of children all over the world. For more info on O.C.C., check out www.samaritanspurse.org/what-we-do/operation-christmas-child/.

Here are the donated items we would love for you to bring on November 11: small stuffed animals or dolls, coloring books, picture books, child jewelry, sunglasses, toy cars, jump ropes, child hairbrushes, travel games, soap, toothbrushes, hair accessories. (Please do not bring anything with liquid, toothpaste, war-related items, lotions, breakable items or food.) For questions, contact Lindsay Vollmar (618) 660-7552. (If you would like to donate items sooner than November 11, please contact Lindsay and we can store them at the church.)

Can't come this day? There are other ways you can participate in OCC. More information is on page 6.

New Member / Baptism Sunday

On **Sunday, November 12** we will welcome in our new members and baptize those who would like to be baptized.

If you would also like to be baptized on this Sunday, or would like to learn more about baptism, please contact Scott Ferguson at: sferguson@stmatthew.church or by calling the church office at 618-397-5994.



Daylight Saving Ends - November 5

Remember to “fall back” on Sunday, November 5 and set your clocks back an hour as daylight saving will end on this day.

Thank you so much for the warm welcomes and prayers. We have felt all the love as we have moved in and gotten settled.

As I was looking for churches to apply to a few months ago St. Matthew really stood out. I was watching an older service online to see what kind of church it was and I was blown away. Normally when I go to a church or watch an online service it doesn't take long for me to understand what denomination the church is or what it's theological leanings are etc. However, when I watched the full orchestra and Choir of St. Matthew my jaw hit the floor as I could not pin down what worship I was watching, just that it was worship indeed. Now having been here for a month I can see that this dynamic bleeds into all parts of St. Matthew. This church enjoys rich theological and denominational diversity and I know that it is all the better for it.



Another thing that has encouraged me is that our denominational diversity does not leave us without identity. Certainly our shared theology and convictions shine through our ministry and our identity is not made small or moot because of our diversity, in fact it is strengthened. This brings me hope in a time where one of the most valid criticisms of the Church the world can levy against us is our divisiveness. Indeed we find ourselves in a time of squabble and rambling and we often feel the need to fight for a core Christian identity against the maelstrom of new information and ideas. Knowing that we worship with brothers and sisters who share that core, whether or not we agree on secondary things, is one of our greatest tools against this accusation. Also showing our Christian unity can be one of our greatest evangelical tools. If we show peace to seekers about secondary issues and life in general than they may wish to seek that peace.

For these reasons and so many more St. Matthew has already been a massive blessing to Veronica and I. We know it will continue to be and we hope to be faithful partners in spreading that blessing and God's word to the community around us.

In Christ

Ross Atherton

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.

Looking for several helpers to volunteer in our Nursery or Cast Kids’ Room for Glory of Christmas (December 10). Please contact Lindsay if you’d be willing to spend time with our church’s most precious attendees!

Wednesday Kids’ Club continues to meet from 6:00 – 7:00 pm! This semester’s theme is “Into the Bible Verse” and we are continuing to store up the Word of God in our hearts & our head. Check out the flier in Kids’ Town or the Welcome Center for more info. Nursery opens at 5:45 pm for our little ones. (Note: We do not have club on November 22 and our last day for the semester is December 6.)

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@stmatthew.church. We will continue to provide your kids and families with opportunities to know, grow & go in the name of Jesus!

Parents, for your 2024 Calendar: Children’s Easter Celebration (March 23 at 10am), Scuba VBS (June 10-14), Beulah Bible Camp (June 24-27), Beulah Beginning Camp (June 28 & 29).

Good News Club

Keep praying for Good News Club as we are spreading God’s light into our community. G.N.C. is a free after school program for Kindergarten – 3rd graders offered at St. Matthew on Tuesday afternoons. December 12 is the last day of club this year, so you still have time to come over and join the excitement. It’s 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.

Youth Ministry: *Matt Vollmar - 618-795-6250 - mvollmar@stmatthew.church*

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

Nov 10/11th - Youth Serving Project/lock in - The youth will be setting up for the Operation Christmas Child packing party and staying the night on the 10th. After the packing party the next day at 10 am, we are going to The Edge Theater to watch The Marvels. Cost of the weekend is \$20.

Nov 26th - No Youth/Thanksgiving Weekend



Youth Girls Slumber Party!

If you are 18 to 25 we would love for you to join us for fellowship and diving deeper into the word.

Our normal meeting times are Wednesdays starting at 7:00 pm and Thursdays starting at 6:00 pm.

LifeGroups: Gina Swickard - doxa715@gmail.com

LifeGroups will resume again in January. Enjoy the holiday break!

News & Events - All Things Christmas

St. Matthew Christmas Extravaganza

If you are looking for Christmas items either slightly used or brand new with tags on them, we will have them at our fabulous Christmas extravaganza (which fills the entire gymnasium of the church) on **Wednesday, November 8** from 3:30 pm - 6:30 pm; **Thursday, November 9** from 10:00 am - 3:00 pm & **Friday, November 10** from 10:00 am - 3:00 pm.

We will have gorgeous Christmas decorations, dishes, clothing, gifts, and everything Christmas at a fraction of the price you would pay in regular stores. All proceeds benefit the St. Matthew Thrift Shop.

This will be a cash only sale. Tell your friends - they will be glad you did.



The Hanging Of The Greens

The annual Hanging Of The Greens is **November 27 at 9:00 am** and we need your help! Even if you can only stay for an hour we would really appreciate your participation and good cheer!

The Glory Of Christmas

Join us on **Sunday, December 10 at 7:00 pm** for *The Glory Of Christmas*!

The Glory of Christmas is a musical drama that tells the story of Jesus' birth and God's gift of salvation. An ensemble of: cast, choir and orchestra, amid beautiful costumes and set designs, with live animals; make this a memorable Christmas experience for all ages.

Why not start a new tradition this year? Make *The Glory Of Christmas* the beginning of your annual Christmas celebration with your family. Invite your friends and neighbors too because this is a wonderful opportunity to introduce new people to St. Matthew, and to Jesus!



NEW LIFE CLUB is Thursday, November 9, 2023 at 11:30 am in the Vine Cafe. ******Please note the date and time change!****** Our program will be presented by Maroon Majic - Belleville West High School. Our luncheon, a Thanksgiving themed lunch of turkey and the fixins', will be prepared by Rachel Brandon and Crew. **Due to the price of food, we are asking for a donation of \$7.00 per person from now on.** We appreciate your assistance with this. The Christmas Extravaganza will be set up in the gymnasium, so come early to shop all things Christmas. This will be a cash only sale. Also, **Please bring your Samaritan's Purse Shoebox donations of TOYS to the meeting. We are on countdown to packing day.** As always there will be plenty of Christian fellowship for the soul. Reservations are not taken, just drop in!

Senior Bible Study will be November 16 and 30 which starts with coffee and donuts at 9:30 a.m and Bible study at 10:00. Shelby Walasin leads this study. We also pray and share with each other which is support for the soul.

"Redeemed Again" - The Thrift Shop of St. Matthew - can use towels, jewelry, kids' toys and king size bedding. Remember us when cleaning out closets, play rooms, etc. A lot of folks do their Christmas shopping with us. We thank you for your wonderful donations all year long that help us be a blessing in our community!

New Life Club Choir is back in swing at **4:00 p.m. in the Park Room.** We sang at three area assisted living centers in October (pictured right!). We enjoy being able to get back into these places and fellowship with the folks there and witness to them in song. We have many assisted living, etc. places booked to sing in through December. This is a great time to join. If you love the Lord and His music, please consider joining us.

ST. MATTHEW SR. TRAVELS

Information of all trips ready for booking will soon be hanging in holders in the foyer ... stay tuned.

- **Fireside Dinner Theatre - Ft. Atkinson, WS - November 2 - 3, 2023.**
- **Pigeon Forge / Biltmore - November 27 - December 1, 2023.**
- **ST. LOUIS CARDINAL SPRING TRAINING 2024 - DATES ARE MARCH 10-18, 2024** (Pricing for sign up this fall).

Great trips for 2024 in the works ... make sure you are at the November meeting to sign up!



We're getting new folks joining in all the time and we love it! See how you can be involved.

Pictured left: Val Hoover celebrating her 95th birthday at the October New Life Club Meeting!



Our Senior Choir recently sang at a Millstadt retirement home. We love these times. After singing we had lunch at Reifschneiders in Columbia. God loves a cheerful and well fed singer ... look at those nachos!



Operation Christmas Child (OCC)

It's not too late to pack your own shoe box. Collection week is November 13 - 20! So you have until then to pick up, pack and return a box.

You can be involved in several ways:

1. Stop by the table in the foyer to grab your box. Each box comes with suggestions and packing instructions.
2. See "Church Wide OCC Packing Party" on page 1.
3. You can pack a box completely on-line for \$25 by following this link: <https://www.samaritanspurse.org/operation-christmas-child/buildonline/>
4. OR You can make a cash donation to help cover shipping costs. Just write "OCC" on the memo line of your check or on the envelope.

Thanks to everyone in advance for your support in this wonderful ministry!

Kitchen Closed

The Kitchen will be closed on Wednesday, November 22. Happy Thanksgiving!

One More Child

One More Child is a program designed to provide much needed food for vulnerable children in our community. In the spirit of the Christmas season, many individuals, families, Sunday school classes, and other groups may want to make a special contribution to a charitable cause. *One More Child* is a great opportunity to do just that.

One More Child provides a weekend's worth of food for many needy children throughout the entire school year. For only \$6.00, you can cover the cost of food for one child for one of those weekends. You can make a one time contribution or you can commit to sponsoring a child for each weekend of the school year. Please make all checks payable to St. Matthew Church and write *One More Child* on the memo line or you can contribute through Realm (please make sure you designate it as a *One More Child* contribution).

If you have any questions about this program please contact Diane Patton at 618-233-8575. Thank you in advance for your participation in such a wonderful program to help feed the children in our community.

New Bus Financial Report

Thanks to the hard work and generosity of members of St Matthew Church and the New Life Club, we have purchased and received delivery of our new bus. Special recognition should be made to the Children's Department, the Youth Department, and the Music Department for their gifts totaling \$7,500 toward this purchase. We are still in need of \$4,045.39 to have it paid for in full. If any would like to make a special donation toward this debt, please make payment to St Matthew Church and mark it "New Bus" in the memo.



Stewardship Corner

"But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand"
(2 Chron. 29:14).

There are many reasons we give to God and to His work here at St. Matthew Church, but behind all of them lies this indisputable fact: We give to Him because He first gave to us.

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

October was a big month for our St. Matthew Celebrate Recovery! We began the month with a powerful CR Sunday service (pictured below) and potato bar fundraiser and we ended the month with our 16 year anniversary.



We would like to thank everyone for your continued love and support of this wonderful ministry. It is because of you that we are not just surviving, but THRIVING.

We always need help with cooking meals, child care, driving the van, and Celebration Place for the children. If you are interested in being a part of this ministry, call the church office or my cell (618) 406-0287. As always your financial support is much appreciated and is helping to change lives through the ongoing Celebrate Recovery meetings here every Friday night.

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.

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, signing up in the foyer, or on line here: stmatt.co/wed-meal

November 1

Meatloaf
Potato Casserole
Creamed Peas & Carrots
Salad Bar
Rolls
Dessert

November 8

Chicken Fried Steak
Mashed Potatoes & Gravy
Green Beans
Salad Bar
Rolls
Dessert

November 15

Pork Sausage & Sauerkraut
Mashed Potatoes & Gravy
White Shoe Peg Corn
Salad Bar
Rolls
Dessert



Special Events Calendar

Nov 5	Daylight Saving Ends
Nov 5	New Members Class
Nov 7	SPRC Meeting
Nov 9	New Life Club Luncheon
Nov 10 & 11	Youth Service Project Lock-In
Nov 11	Veteran's Day
Nov 11	OCC Packing Party
Nov 12	New Member / Baptism Sunday
Nov 13	OCC Collection Week Begins
Nov 14	Never Alone
Nov 14	Trustees Meeting
Nov 16	Senior Bible Study
Nov 19	Thanksgiving Service
Nov 21	Finance Committee Meeting
Nov 23 & 24	Offices Closed For Thanksgiving
Nov 27	Hanging Of The Greens
Nov 130	Senior Bible Study

Sunday Worship Opportunities

9:00 am & 10:45 am

Kid's Worship: 9:00 am & 10:45 am

Senior Pastor: Robert Swickard

Associate Pastor: Ross Atherton

NEED PRAYER?

Submit a prayer request here:

stmatt.co/prayer

In This Issue:

Page 1: A Night Of Thanksgiving & Praise, OCC Packing Party, New Members Class, Baptism Sunday & Daylight Saving Ends

Page 2: The Pastor's Pen

Page 3: Children's Ministry & Youth Ministry

Page 4: College Ministry, LifeGroups, St. Matthew Christmas Extravaganza, Hanging Of The Greens & The Glory Of Christmas

Page 5: Senior Ministry

Page 6: Operation Christmas Child, Kitchen Closed for Thanksgiving, One More Child, New Bus Financial Report & Stewardship Corner

Page 7: Celebrate Recovery & The Wednesday Meal.

Page 8: Special Events Calendar

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

youtube.com/@saintmatthew-belleville