



SAINT MATTHEW

**January
2024
Newsletter**

Wednesday Night Programming



Classes resume on Wednesday, January 10!
(**Unless otherwise noted**)

Wednesday Night Meal: 3:30 pm - 6:30 pm in the Vine Cafe. (**Resumes on Jan 3**)

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. (**Resumes on Jan 17**)

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

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

A Study With Ross: 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm in the Library with Ross Atherton.

Wednesday Night Module: 6:00 pm in the Park Room. The first 6 week class of the year will be led by Ted Gajewski.

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

College Group: 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm in the College Ministry Center (Door 7) with Ross Atherton.

Sanctuary Choir: 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm in the Sanctuary with Hank Oplinger. (**Resumes on Jan 3**)

Joy Of Easter - Casting Call



If you or your family is interested in joining us this year, please contact Lindsay or sign-up at the receptionist window in the main foyer. We are looking for all ages to be

townspeople. Our first full cast practice is Wednesday, February 7 at 7:30 pm in the Sanctuary. 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@stmatthew.church. Practice schedules are available next to the cast sign-up.

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 28**. 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.



One of my fondest memories from childhood is attending a Christmas parade with my family. I only remember one such parade, but that one was certainly memorable. When “Santa’s float” came around, there were several people throwing what looked like “snowballs” to kids in the crowd. Inside some of the snowballs were slips of paper that children could redeem at a local store for prizes.



My dad took me to the store and I handed a person the slip of paper and they told me I could select from a pile of stuffed animals. What did I choose? A big stuffed turtle. I’ll never forget the feeling I had as a young child. I simply handed the person a slip of paper and I got to walk out with a stuffed animal.

That process of handing them a piece of paper to receive something better is called “redeeming.” To redeem something is to make an exchange for something of value. It can also be understood as buying back or winning back. For most of us, we think of redemption in terms of what Jesus did for us on the cross. He gave his life and shed his blood to purchase us back. And while this is the greatest act of redemption in the world, have you considered how we might “Redeem” the time in our lives?

In Ephesians 5:15-16 we read... “Pay careful attention, then, to how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.” What does that look like to redeem the time in our lives? That’s what we will be talking about this month. What if you could make some adjustments to your schedule that would have eternal significance? What if, with a few simple tweaks to your daily calendar, you found yourself more knowledgeable of the things of God? What if you were able to exchange your current “time allotment” for something better?

Even if we move at a turtle’s pace, learning to redeem the time in our lives is worth it! Please join us this month for worship and consider who you might invite along!

In Christ,



Bob

Wednesday Kids' Club & Nursery resumes on January 17! We meet every week from 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm for preschool – 6th graders in Kids' Town. 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 1!

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 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!

Parents, for your calendars: 1st Joy of Easter Cast Practice (February 7 at 7:30 pm), Children's Easter Celebration (March 23 at 10 am), Scuba VBS (June 10-14), Beulah Bible Camp (June 24-27), Beulah Beginning Camp (June 28 & 29).

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!

Joy of Easter

Casting Call! If you or your family is interested in joining us this year, please contact Lindsay or sign-up at the Receptionist window in the main foyer. We are looking for all ages to be townspeople. Our first full cast practice is Wednesday, February 7 at 7:30 pm in the Sanctuary. 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@stmatthew.church. Practice schedules are available at the Welcome Center next to the cast sign-up.

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

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

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

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

College Ministry: *Ross Atherton - 508-209-4635 - ratherton@stmatthew.church*

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.

We 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 25**

The 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 20/30, led by Ross & Veronica Atherton, will meet for Bible study in the Park Room.

LifeGroup 40/60, led by Bob & Gina Swickard, will meet for Bible study in the Side Vine Cafe.

News & Events

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!

Online Streaming Options Available

Also, as we head into cold, flu and covid season we just want to remind you that if you or your family are sick ... stay home! There are 3 ways to stream St. Matthew services.

You can watch from our website at: stmatthew.church OR you can watch on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/SaintMatthewBelleville>

OR you can watch on our YouTube channel at: youtube.com/@saintmatthew-belleville.

Help us keep each other safe and healthy!

One More Child

One More Child begins the new year with deliveries for 15 students on January 5. We humbly thank you for generously supporting this ministry! We receive any amount given with thanksgiving and joyful hearts.

Due to inflation, the weekly cost has raised \$1.00. In was \$6.00 per child, now it is \$7.00. The eight week order for the 15 meals is now \$840.00 up from \$720.00. Please make all checks payable to St. Matthew and write One More Child on the memo line or you can contribute through Realm. If you have any questions please contact Diane Patton at 618-604-1620.



These adorable wooden soldiers are reporting for duty!

They are also pleased to report that 1,600 were in attendance for the Glory of Christmas this year and we had 11 first time decision for Christ, 6 re-dedications!
Amen!

NEW LIFE CLUB is **Thursday, January 18 at noon in the Vine Cafe**. We are welcoming in "2024" with our program presented by Matt Vollmar and Little Matty as they present **"SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE."** Lunch for a donation of \$7.00 will be prepared and served by Rachael Brandon and devotions will be presented by Tona Eckley. Start the new year out right by joining in with our senior fellowship.

Senior Bible Study will be January 11th and 25th which starts with coffee and donuts at 9:30 a.m and Bible study at 10:00. Shelby Walasin leads this study. This is a wonderful and refreshing study group. Please join us.

"Redeemed Again" - The Thrift Shop of St. Matthew wants to thank you for your wonderful donations this past year. Your donations have helped so many in need. We will be closed until January 2, 2024. We need jewelry, baby clothes, devotional books, jigsaw puzzles, yarn, craft items, Valentine and St. Patrick's Day items.

New Life Club Choir is on break until January 10, 2024. It's a great time to join us. We need folks that love to sing and love the Lord! We meet Wednesdays in the Park Room at 4:00 p.m.

ST. MATTHEW SR. TRAVELS

New trips coming for "2024"

God bless you all as we enter this new year



Our New Life Club travelers spent a beautiful week of "Christmasing" in the Smoky Mountains where they: attended a fabulous Christmas dinner show in Nashville, stayed at the Inn at Apple Barn in Pigeon Forge, had dinner at the Biltmore and the Candlelight Christmas tour there and spent a day on the Great Smoky Mountain Railroad with a first class lunch and seating as they traveled the Tuckasegee River. They visited The Incredible Christmas Place, which is the largest Christmas store in the south, shopped at the big Tanger Mall, attended the Biblical Times Dinner Theater celebrating the birth of Christ and went to their new favorite place along the road - Bucc-ee's. We had daily devotions and prayer on our new Big Red Bus. It was a beautiful Christmas week. God's world is stunning ...



Administrative Board Officers

Chair:	Ken Williams		
Vice-Chair:	Thom Belter		
Secretary:	Virginia Shelton		
Treasurer:	Charles Kurrus		
Buildings & Grounds Chair:	Thom Belter		
Finance Chair:	Ron Buerges		
Personnel Chair:	Mel Bickel		
Pastors:	Bob Swickard*	Ross Atherton*	
Missions Representative:	Tara Renneke*		
Safety Team Representative:	Tom Quinn*		
Retired Pastors:	Dale Edwards*	Dan Harry*	Jim Schuetz*
Ex-Officio Members:	Scott Ferguson*	Aaron Oplinger*	Hank Oplinger*
= Non-voting Members			

Administrative Board

<u>Class of 2024</u>	<u>Class of 2025</u>	<u>Class of 2026</u>
Sharon Goetz	Bryan Carr	Carrie Crago
D.J. Mernick	DJ Rockwell	Paul Sander

Buildings & Grounds

<u>Class of 2024</u>	<u>Class of 2025</u>	<u>Class of 2026</u>
Roger Barfield	Bud Elliot	Dennis Hubbard
Stuart Brethauer	Mike York	Lisa Johnson

Finance Committee

<u>Class of 2024</u>	<u>Class of 2025</u>	<u>Class of 2026</u>
Mike Neace	Wing Smith	Staci Atwood
Mike Weaver	Janis Woolard	Ted Gajewski

Personnel

<u>Class of 2024</u>	<u>Class of 2025</u>	<u>Class of 2026</u>
Rachel Kriss	Kay Dyer	Randy Roth
Lou Rose	Janelle Wallace	Virginia Shelton

Stewardship Corner

“Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: ‘Speak to the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering. From everyone who gives it willingly with his heart you shall take any offering’” (Exodus 25:1-2).

God’s universal principle concerning giving is relatively simple and straightforward:
Give willingly from the heart. According to 2 Corinthians 9:7, we are to give not because we have to.
We are to give because we have decided in our hearts to do so.

In January we start with the first step , "Stepping out of Denial". You will be surprised at what you learn about yourself when you begin to examine the areas of your life that you may be avoiding.

January 5 - Tom Partelow will talk to us about how "Denial" can grow into a life not necessarily affected by any kind of chemical dependency or abuse , but through the daily stresses and challenges that occur.

We will have a testimony on **January 12** and then move into the next step of "Admitting we are Powerless" over many things in our lives.

On **January 19** we learn that oftentimes we try to be God and control things that are in reality, out of our control.

We will wrap up on **January 26** with Allison Knapp sharing her story of God's healing and direction for her life.

Please join us every Friday evening starting at 6 with a free dinner.

At 7 we join together for large groups and worship, and at 8 we split into men's and women's open share groups.

We are excited for 2024 and hope that we see you there!

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 (lvollmar@stmatthew.church) know if you can help on a rotating basis.

Recognizing & Avoiding Scams

I just wanted to take a little space to talk about possible scams that are easy to fall victim too and how to avoid them. I hope that by sharing the ones I receive, you might recognize the ones you receive before it is too late.

Texts: In the past I have received texts from Pastor Bob asking me to buy him some gift cards because he was in a meeting and needed it done ASAP. There will never be a time that Pastor Bob calls, texts or emails any of us asking us for gift cards or money. This is a scam and all others similar to it from other people are too.

Facebook: A very popular scam right now is someone hacking your account and posting about a deadly car crash and tagging your friends. Every person who clicks on that link will also be hacked ... do not trust those links.

Emails: Every week I get an email from “Amazon”, “Netflix”, “Venmo”, and more telling me a few different things: 1. There is an issue with my account, 2. Someone is trying to log into my account. 3. There has been a password change on my account. All of these ask you to click a link in the email to “solve” whatever the issue is. This is almost always a scam. **Never click a link in an email.** Look at the email ... are there misspellings? Does the company logo look strange? Is there no official signature line? All of these point to shady dealings. If you are unsure, leave your email and log into your Amazon/Netflix/Venmo account and see for yourself. If there is no issue directly from them on their site with your account, there is no issue for you.

Praying for your online safety in 2024!

Casey Skelton

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

January 3

Beef & Noodles

Malibu Vegetable Medley

Salad Bar

Rolls

Dessert

January 10

Meatloaf

Mashed Potatoes & Gravy

Green Beans

Salad Bar

Rolls

Dessert

January 17

Taco Wednesday

Tacos

Enchiladas

Salad Bar

Chips & Salsa

Empanadas



Special Events Calendar

Jan 1	New Year's Day - Office Closed
Jan 9	Never Alone
Jan 11	Senior Bible Study
Jan 15	MLK Day - Offices Closed
Jan 18	New Life Club Luncheon
Jan 25	Senior Bible Study
Jan 25	LifeGroups

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: Wednesday Night Programing, Joy Of Easter Casting Call & Baby Bottles

Page 2: The Pastor's Pen

Page 3: Children's Ministry, Youth Ministry & College Ministry

Page 4: LifeGroups, Hospital Stays, Online Streaming & One More Child

Page 5: Senior Ministry

Page 6: St. Matthew 2024 Church Officers & The Stewardship Corner

Page 7: Celebrate Recovery, Recognizing & Avoiding Scams & The Wednesday Meal.

Page 8: Special Events Calendar

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

youtube.com/@saintmatthew-belleville