

May
2021



of



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Pastoral Message
Pastor Allen Mothershed

A Word from Pastor Allen

I invite you to read and reflect on these words from our new conference minister in the Northern Illinois Conference, Molly Carlson. I must confess that I have not done my job very well keeping us connected to our sister churches in Northern Illinois. We are stronger together and depend on each other in ways we do not acknowledge often enough. Molly puts into words my own thoughts.

A Message to the UCC Churches and members of Northern Illinois

We're just not there yet. It feels closer every day as more and more of us get our vaccines. Infection rates are down. The days are warming up – the sun is starting to shine – and we are more than ready to get out of our houses and get back to living! We're just not there yet.

There are still a lot of people that are not able to get a vaccine yet. There are plenty of folks that are still frightened of reentering society. There are folks that have found that they kind of like working from home, worshipping in their pajamas, using technology to connect with friends and family.

We are not post-pandemic. Infection rates have recently been ticking up. We still need to practice masking, social distancing, and hand-washing. Sneezing, coughing, and even singing spray those droplets that we now know are the transport system for spreading the virus and its many variants.

As a church, we have a little more time to really process what we have learned as we prepare for post-pandemic life together. Here are a few of my thoughts:

1. We always said that the church was not the building – and now we have some practice with that. Some of us did better than others – hopefully, most of us found ways to stay connected and supportive, to continue learning, to nurture our spiritual journeys, and to serve our communities without the benefit of our beloved sacred spaces. What have you tried that you need to continue; what are you ready to give up?

2. Technology is here to stay – in the church and in the world. For many, it has expanded your reach to your community, to members that cannot make it to worship, and to those who have moved away. For others, it has been a hindrance and a frustration. How will you use it in the future?

3. The big question of when and how to gather for in-person worship is on everyone's mind. Some churches are navigating these questions with grace and compassion; others are dealing with conflict and strife. Within the Conference, we have congregations that have been meeting in person for months and others who aren't even considering re-gathering yet for months. There is no one-size-fits-all solution. How are you deciding what is best in your context?

4. I hear from some folks an excitement to "return to normal" and conviction from others that there is no normal to return to. I am convinced that the world, and each of us individually, have been changed by this pandemic. It makes me wonder – what are the new needs in our communities that we might be called to meet? What is God up to in our communities that we need to engage with?

This coming year will be one of more change and experimentation. Some of our churches might be faced with decisions about ending their ministry. Others will find new life and ministries they never imagined. Others will settle into a familiar status quo of church life. It will be a season of opportunity to claim or to miss.

May you all be blessed with wisdom and compassion as we prepare for post-pandemic life. In the meantime, stay safe – masked and washed and socially distanced.

Blessings,
Molly

A Moment in My Back Yard

Marla is the bird watcher in our family, but with three bird feeders not so far from the window of our breakfast room, I've been getting in on the show of brightly colored birds, especially the goldfinches that have grown brighter yellow over the last couple of weeks. Then there are the squirrels that manage to perform acrobatics on our bird feeders and are good for a laugh.

Early one evening, I took our dog, Murphy, out in the backyard one last time before putting him to bed for the night. I thought how strange it was that he was barking wildly near the St. Francis statue. I laughed at the thought that maybe he was barking at the statue of St. Francis like he had never seen it before and was startled by a human-like figure he did not know in the yard. But then I saw him pawing and backing away at something in a bunch of emerging flowers. It was then I noticed he was attempting to figure out what to do with a very tiny new bunny rabbit. For a flashing moment, I thought how good it would be to have one less bunny eating our plants this year that we spent money and time planting last year.

But quickly I came to my senses, especially when I heard the bunny's pleas for help with painful cries for his mother. That, along with fact that St. Francis seemed to be watching me, moved me to grab Murphy up in my arms. I took him inside the house, his puppy heart beating wildly at his new adventure and squirming to get out of my arms, and looking most unhappy with me. I went back outside and explored the area further. Now the tiny bunny was gone and I moved my hands over the plant he had been hiding under. Then I discovered where he had come from and had returned. Hidden in our flower garden was a bunny hole.

There is a whole amazing world of life that happens just beyond our awareness in our yards. We don't have to travel so far to see mountains or beaches or dark places in open fields to observe stars to be amazed by the world God has given us. Good to wake up to the world around us. Good also to think twice about the poisons we routinely use, never thinking about their impact on the bees and the butterflies that are dying at alarming rates. We are all a part of the world we share, that God has given. Best to find a way to be in balance with it. We depend on each other more than we know.

Pastor Allen

Notes from the Music Room....



Welcome to May. Things keep getting better, albeit slowly. As of last Sunday, we have now started limited in-person worship. YEA!!! It will be good to see as many as we can admit. To allow as many of the congregation to attend, we are limiting music participants to a couple of voices, a guitar and drums, and Brian, of course. Choir and bells will continue to be virtual, via recordings. Currently, CDC guidelines recommend no live congregational singing or group recitation. In case

you haven't noticed, we have four clear plexiglass shields that our praise band singers stand behind to protect the congregation. Things are heading in the right direction with more getting vaccinated, but we aren't there yet.

Open Choir Sing – Virtually. I would like to put together an Open Choir Sing virtual choir. This is to include all those who have joined us from time to time for our regular Open Choir Sundays, as well as those that have wanted to but still haven't been able to for one reason or another. On your end, it requires some practice with a recording with your part, and then you record yourself singing it with your cell phone while listening to it with headphones from another device. Then you upload your recording to me. You have the easy part. When I bring all the videos together, the result is a nice choral sound, as you have heard. But I need to know if you want to participate so I can send you the music and link for the practice/recording tracks. Please send me an email letting me know to send you the information. I am also considering a Zoom meeting to answer questions. Looking forward to seeing you soon. Stay Safe!

Jamie Craig

music.director@stmatthewucc.org



Outdoor Worship

Starting in May, we will be holding one outdoor worship service each month:

May 2nd, June 6th, July 11th,
and August 1st.

No registration is required for the outdoor services. Masks are required and we will social distance. Please bring your own chair. On Communion Sundays (May, June, and August), we will provide the elements, but you are welcome to bring your own bread and juice if you prefer.

Indoor services will not be held on those days; however, we will be streaming a recorded service for those who are not able to worship in-person.



In-Person Worship

May indoor in-person worship dates: May 9th, 16th, 23rd, and 30th. We will be following public health guidelines, which limits our capacity to 40 attendees.

Pre-registration for May services is required and will begin on May 3rd at 9am. Masks required and we will be social distancing.

[Click here to register!](#) Or copy and paste:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/may-in-person-worship-tickets-152761418515>

With our capacity limitations, we ask that you not sign up every week to allow everyone the chance to worship in-person. Check back on Thursday morning to see if there are still openings. At that time, if openings remain, please feel free to register. Online streaming worship will still be available.

Pennies From Heaven (SCRIP)



SCRIP orders are suspended until we resume in-person activities.



MAY BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Curtis Holland
- Howard SooHoo
- 3 Linda Leinweber
- 4 Brian Anderson
- Jamie Craig
- Jackie Tobin
- 6 Wendee Passini
- 12 Alison Chatten
- 13 Daniel Ciner
- Michael English
- Susan Neufelder
- 15 Nigel Barnhill
- 16 Jason Edgar
- 18 Barbara Giordano
- 20 Monnie Stoller
- 22 Jason Schubert
- 23 Evelyn Hutchison



Pastor Allen's schedule varies from week to week. He is in and out of the office during the day for meetings, visits, and study. Please call ahead to check his schedule or to set up an appointment. His cell phone number is 630.441.5962. He is available by phone when not in the office.

office@st.matthewucc.org

Food on the First

Thank you to all who have generously donated. It is very appreciated!

Here is what is needed in May:

- Canned fruit and vegetables
- Cereal
- Salad dressing
- Mayo, mustard, ketchup
- Cake mix and frosting
- Birthday candles
- Baby wipes
- Adult diapers
- Diapers—size 6
- Bar soap
- Toilet paper
- Band-aids



[Click here to make a financial donation to PRC.](#)

Betty will be at church on Saturday, May 15th and 22nd from 1-2:30pm to collect donations.

Please make sure items have not expired and are unopened.

If you have any questions, please call Betty Greer at 847.207.9696.



PRAIRIE PATH CLEAN-UP

Thanks to the following folks for helping with the first Prairie Path Clean-up of 2021- Jeannine Adams, Lee Anderson, Hi and Nancy Baird, Carol Honeywell, and Dawn Schubert.

The date for Clean-up #2 has been changed and will now take place on **Sunday, June 27th** at 2 pm. Please watch the Happenings for any updates.

If you want to participate, you will need to complete a waiver (once a year). Please call Dawn Schubert, 630.542.0160, if you have any questions. The exact start times may vary; but in general, we will meet around 2pm and are usually done in an hour.

Watch the Happenings for updates as the date approaches.

Children's Ministry May 2021



As the church opened on April 25th for a limited number in attendance, so did the Sunday School department. The children, shepherds, and I gather upstairs in the Sunday School department to share Bible stories, crafts, and games. We are following the same guidelines as District 200, having the children and volunteers socially distance and wear masks. We ask parents to come upstairs at 10:30, after the worship service, to pick up their children. Once fellowship resumes in the Fall, we will go back to our 11am dismissal time. The sign-up information has been sent to families by the church office and begins each week on Monday morning. When signing up your family, if your children are remaining in worship, list them as one of

your family for worship. If they are coming up to Sunday School after the children's sermon, to either participate or be a shepherd helper, then do not count them in your family's number attending. We are planning outdoor worship once per month, where we are not limited to the number able to attend. The children will attend outdoor Sunday School after the children's sermon. See page 3 for outdoor worship dates.

April birthdays were mistakenly left out of last month's newsletter. Here they are:



April Birthdays:

**Kennedy Scalora
Molly Hutchison
Olivia Henderson
Jayda Hammond**

**April 1st
April 3rd
April 5th
April 28th**

May Birthdays:

**Jeremy Passini
Phoenix Passini
Alex Bono**

**May 1st
May 2nd
May 30th**

The Sunday School Holy Week lesson ended on Easter Sunday, with the children finishing their Easter garden. Thank you to families who sent me pictures and took the Holy Week journey with their children.



We mistakenly left a name off the College Care Package list. **Jacob Cohen** is attending college in Texas and is the nephew of Amy Barnshaw. Please keep Jacob in your prayers as he finishes out the school year.

- Susan Wold, Director of Children's Ministry

crozies

We are going to start having crazies each week from 5-6:15pm. For this month, there won't be crazies on May 9th (Mother's Day) or May 30th (Memorial Day weekend). I am in need of a second adult each week (with Blessy still unavailable), so if anyone can help during crazies, please let me know. I have a sign-up sheet until May 23rd.

We're also kicking off our Confirmation classes on May 23rd from 11am-1pm. After this first class (with parents attending), we will be having class on the second Sunday of each month.

Blessy and I would like to say thank to all of you who prayed for us and took the time to send cards or gifts. Your outpouring of love and support is remarkable, and we are blessed to have every one of you in our hearts and lives.

God Bless,

Mel Jerome, Director of Youth Ministry

Announcements



YOGA

May Yoga

Yoga on Thursdays 10am in the Sanctuary and via Zoom

All are welcome!

Simply contact Marla at mmothershed63@gmail.com or 630.441.5963.

Masks are worn and generous social distancing will be practiced. Donations accepted and will be given to Missions.

Prayer Requests



Please send prayer requests via the following links and we can share them (or keep them private, if you prefer). You can also email them to the office.

You can make a public prayer request here:

<https://www.stmatthewucc.org/joys-and-concerns>

Private prayer requests can be made here:

<https://www.stmatthewucc.org/prayer-chain>



The Men's Group continues to meet on Tuesday mornings at 8am on Zoom.

All men are welcome!

Contact Byron Miller at byronmiller@ameritech.net for a Zoom invitation.

2021 Voice, Happenings, and Bulletin Due Dates

All submissions for the weekly Happenings and bulletin should be submitted to the office no later than 9am Tuesday for the week it runs.

2021 VOICE deadlines: Typically the second to last Sunday of the month, with exception of November and December.

May 23rd, July 18th, August 22nd, September 19th, October 24th, November 14th, December 12th.

The Voice is not published in July.



Online Sunday Worship



While we are unable to share Sunday worship as a group, please join us on Sunday morning at 9:30 online for Pastor Allen's weekly message and worship service.

There are three ways to access Sunday worship:

Through YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/StMatthewUCC>

****Once you are on YouTube, you have the option to turn on closed captioning and resize the font. Once the video is playing, click on the setting wheel in the lower-right of your screen, choose Subtitles/CC, then choose English.****

Through the St. Matthew Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/stmatthewucc/>
Select YouTube on the left side.

Through our homepage: <https://www.stmatthewucc.org/>



Online Giving

During this time when we cannot worship together in-person, please make an effort, if able, to continue your offerings. We are so grateful for your continued support of St. Matthew.

If you would like to give to St. Matthew UCC, you can donate in the following ways:

- **Mail a check to the church (1420 S. Gables Blvd., Wheaton, IL 60189)**
- **Online with PayPal**
 1. Simply click here to be directed to PayPal (or copy and paste): <https://www.stmatthewucc.org/donate> and click the yellow DONATE button.
 2. You will then be directed to PayPal where you can use your own personal PayPal account or a credit card to make your donation.
 3. Click on either [+Write a note \(Optional\)](#) on the first page or [+Add special instructions to recipient](#) on the "Review your donation" page. Please indicate Sunday Offering so the money gets credited to the correct account.
 4. Please include your phone number so that we may contact you if we have any questions, and your address if you would like to receive a giving statement.
- *NOTE: You will be credited for the full amount of your gift on your giving statement; however, PayPal charges a \$.30 + 2.2% fee on each transaction. St. Matthew will receive the net amount. **The minimum amount for this online contribution method is \$25.***
- **Monthly electronic donations from your checking account**

If you would like to set up monthly electronic donations, please download this form: **[Electronic Donation Authorization](#)**, fill it out, and mail it to the church. You can also scan this form, along with a voided check, and email it to financial.secretary@stmatthewucc.org.

These options are also listed on the St. Matthew website: www.stmatthewucc.org

Questions can be directed to Edie DeBoard at financial.secretary@stmatthewucc.org.

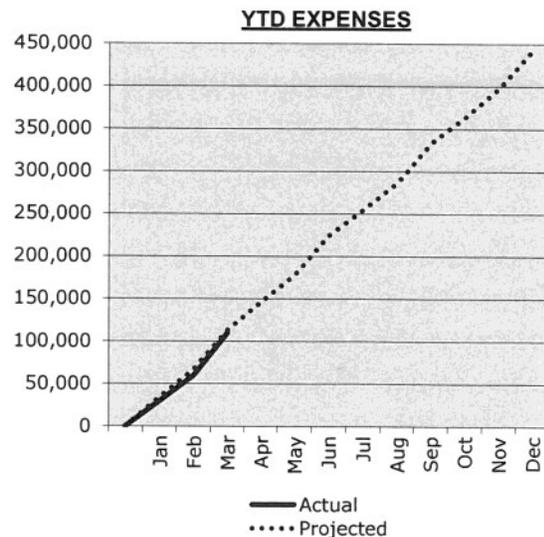
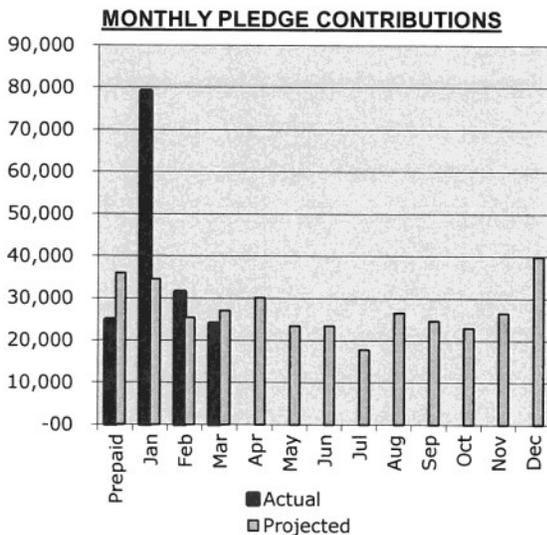
**ST. MATTHEW UCC GENERAL OPERATING FUND
STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURES**

For the Period Ending March 31, 2021

	ACTUAL CURRENT MONTH	ACTUAL YEAR-TO- DATE	ANNUAL BUDGET
RECEIPTS:			
Pledge Contributions (incl. Prepaid)	23,873	158,886	358,320
Loose Offerings	100	1,378	400
Rental Income	900	900	3,200
Fund Raising	38	134	400
Interest Income	18	26	120
Investment Income	0	4,347	-00
More Property	-00	-00	39,000
Miscellaneous Income	298	5,698	5,000
TOTAL RECEIPTS	25,226	171,369	406,440
EXPENDITURES:			
Salaries & Staff Expenses	23,121	68,730	283,863
Building & Admin	15,767	28,218	86,545
Loans & Notes	6,688	6,688	26,750
Mission / OCWM	4,000	4,200	27,250
Committees:			
Christian Education	352	647	8,000
Membership Life	-00	-00	3,000
Memorial/Endowment	-00	-00	-00
Misc. & Contingency	-00	-00	1,000
Music	241	925	5,568
Stewardship	-00	-00	-00
Worship	24	321	1,200
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	50,192	109,728	443,176
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	\$(24,966)	\$61,640	\$(36,736)

2021 Activity - Actual vs. Projected

Pledge YTD incl. Prepaid:	Actual	\$158,886	Projected	\$122,943
	(Actual Prepaid)	(\$24,673)	(Projected Prepaid)	(\$35,935)



Please contact Howard Peterson if you have questions or need additional information.

THE VOICE OF St. Matthew

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

1420 South Gables Blvd.
WHEATON, ILLINOIS 60189



St. Matthew United Church of Christ

630.665.1236 (Office)

Office Email: office@stmatthewucc.org

Web Site: www.stmatthewucc.org

Office Hours:

Monday-Thursday: 10am-2pm

Friday: 9am-11am

Sunday Worship: 9:30am

Sunday Church School: 10am

Our Purpose:

Become, Live, and Serve as Disciples of Jesus Christ.

Our Identity:

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome and accepted here at St. Matthew United Church of Christ.

STAFF

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