



SAINT MATTHEW

**April
2020
Newsletter**

COVID-19 Update

Due to the nationwide effort to limit the exposure of COVID-19, the leadership team at St. Matthew Church has been closely monitoring CDC updates, recommendations, and directives from our local and national government as they change. The health and safety of our church is, and will continue to be, a top priority. No decision we've made is out of a place of fear, rather, in wisdom, listening, and prayer.

There is a COVID - 19 link on our website with all pertinent and up to date information about St. Matthew church and its activities. Visit <http://stmatthewumc.org/covid19> to access that information. We will try to keep it as updated and timely as possible. For now, the church offices will be closed. Keep checking the website, Facebook and your e-mail for further updates!

Joy of Easter Postponed!

The Joy of Easter is *POSTPONED* to a later date. This ministry will take place when it is safe to do so, even if it means Easter in July at St. Matt's!

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Holy Week

Holy week, the week of April 5 - April 12, our current plans are to bring you these worship opportunities. (Subject to changed based on "stay at home" updates)

- **Palm Sunday, April 5**
Join us for live streamed services at 9:00 am & 11:00 am.
- **Maundy Thursday, April 9**
Pastor Andy Black will lead this service in the Vine Cafe at 12:00. A lunch of chicken salad, potato salad and a small dessert will be served at 11:30 for a suggested donation of \$5.00. Please RSVP with a message at the church office.
- **Good Friday, April 10**
Larry Patton will lead this service at 12:00 noon in the Sanctuary.
- **Saturday, April 11**
Join us on **Saturday, April 11 at 10:30 am** for the Children's Easter Celebration! Children 4th grade and under (and their families) are invited for a special celebration which includes story time, music, crafts, photos, snacks, prizes and an Easter Egg Hunt! **We would love your help on Friday, April 10 at 10:00 am** if you'd like to help us decorate the Vine Café for this celebration. We'll be putting out tablecloths, centerpieces and hanging decorations. We'll be done by 12:00.

Easter Sunday, April 12

Come to worship and celebrate the resurrection of our Lord at 9:00 am (blended), 11:00 am (contemporary) or 6:00 pm (Cornerstone Deaf Church)!

Prayer Requests? Prayer Chain!

With the "Stay At Home" order in place we are not printing a weekly prayer list at this time. If you would like to place a request on the Telephone Prayer Chain please call Jean Swenson (618) 236-9572.

From the Pastor's Pen...

“Are we there yet?” I remember asking that question from the backseat of our station wagon while we were on a family vacation. As a child, I don't think I had the greatest patience when it came to reaching our destination. Add to that, whenever we encountered a sign up ahead that read, “DETOUR”, my heart would sink. “Detour” meant that the arrival time was going to be delayed. “Detour” meant I would be uncomfortable in the back seat for a bit longer. And each detour revealed what was really in my heart at the time. (Usually, selfishness.).



Many of us have found ourselves in the midst of a humongous “DETOUR” in our lives. What we thought might be a slight bump in the road with the COVID-19 virus has turned out to be a major detour. Eight weeks ago I wasn't saying phrases like, “Social distancing”, “self-quarantine” or “why is there no toilet paper at Target?” Now, we are wondering how many weeks we will only be live streaming the Sunday morning worship services and what other events at the church may be cancelled.

In the first draft of this article, I was highlighting all the Easter celebrations and Joy of Easter performances that we could all enjoy and to which we could bring friends and family. Now, I'm writing a different story because of the detour. But just because we've been “detoured”- doesn't mean God isn't still at work.

Romans 8:28 tells us that “in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” (NIV) or in another translation: “...and in everything, as we know, he co-operates for good with those who love God and are called according to his purpose.” (NET) I like in the latter translation how it depicts God as working with us to bring about the good.

This past Monday, (March 16,) the entire staff and I got together to talk about where we are and what we are facing. I can't tell you how proud of the staff I am in the ways they came together to meet this unprecedented “detour.” In the staff meeting we decided to cancel worship services in two week segments but provide an update each week through social media. So on Monday's, we'll provide an update as to where we are and what you can expect in the near future.

That next day, the program staff and I met to talk about other areas of ministry and what could be done. The question? “How can we continue to be the church when we can't be together?” In that conversation, we found we could offer worship through the website and facebook during the midweek time. Lindsay offered to read books to kids over the children's ministry facebook page. Andy reached out to the Ogles community and let them know that when he runs the neighborhood, he is happy to pray for anyone who stops him and he will be praying for the neighborhood as he runs. We might even have some other fun things along the way. I can't imagine going through this detour with any other staff.

The bottom line? None of us plans for detours. But God can use the longest detour to teach us that our patience comes from Him. He can use the most uncomfortable detour to show us that He is our peace – not our circumstances. And he can use even the most frustrating detour to reveal to us that the most important thing is not the detour – but enjoying God on the journey and seeing what he is able to show us in the detour.

Grateful to be in the “car” with all of you!

Bob



Children's Ministry: *Lindsay Vollmar - 618-660-7552 — lvollmar@stmatthewumc.org*

Children's Easter Celebration is postponed until a later date. We will have the celebration in conjunction with the Joy of Easter when it is safe to do so.

Beulah Bible & Beginning Camp Forms Are Available – Pick up your registration form at the Welcome Center or in the children's section of the church website. Parents on our email list, your forms were emailed to you. Beulah Bible Camp is for kids finishing 4th – 6th grade and is on June 15 – 18. Beulah Beginning Camp is for kids finishing 1st – 3rd grade and is on June 19 & 20. We only have a limited amount of spots so please turn in your forms as soon as possible.

Children's Ministry Encouragement Challenge Continues for kids 6th grade and under. Find ways to encourage different people in one of these ways: speaking good words, speaking God's Word or encouraging someone in God's name. For more information, pick up a mission sheet in Kids Town or at the Welcome Center. Deadline to complete challenge is April 12, Easter Sunday, with prizes awarded on Wednesday, April 15.

Wednesday Kids Club is for all pre-school through 6th graders. Club runs from 6:00 – 7:30 pm in Kids Town, so mark your calendars! Club is full of Bible studies music, games, crafts, skits, fun & fellowship. Check out the flier in Kids' Town or the Welcome Center for more info.

Important 2020 Dates For The Calendar: "Danny & the Shacks," kids spring musical (May 6, 2020), Vacation Bible School (June 8 – 12, 2020), Beulah Bible Camp 4th – 6th graders (June 15 – 18, 2020), Beulah Beginner Camp 1st – 3rd graders (June 19 & 20, 2020). **Please note** the change of camp weeks for Beulah 2020! They are 2 weeks earlier than in past years.

Kid Check! Don't forget to sign your kids in through our Kid Check system. Check-in systems are available in Nursery 1, Nursery 2/3 and Kids Town gazebo. Not registered? No worries! Let one of our ministry helpers know and we'll get it taken care of. Don't forget to change your number in your account if your cell number changes!

Good News Club - Thank you to our outstanding Good News Club team for another God-centered year of club. Thank you for your devoted help this year with planting and nurturing seeds of faith in the lives of our children. Join us in prayer as God takes those little seeds and turns them into deep rooted, outstretched and Christ centered children of God.



*Save
These
Dates:*



General Conference Postponed

The General Conference has been postponed until 2021 due to "... the undetermined length of the pandemic, uncertainty around travel bans in different areas of the world, delays in processing visas due to government and business closures and other questions." (resourceumc.org). St. Matthew will hold an all church meeting in the fall to further discuss the General Conference and answer questions.

A New Location / A New Look

As of April 19, the 11:00 worship service is moving back into the Chapel! After much prayer and discussion it has been decided that the old balcony (former children's worship center) will be opened back up in the Chapel giving the 11:00 service room to expand and grow. We feel that this setting will be more congruent to the worship style of the contemporary service and we look forward to providing you this new and exciting space to worship!

Senior Ministry News

Senior Ministry: *Jeanie Lively - 618-979-7434 - jlively@stmatthewumc.org*

OUR NEW LIFE CLUB MEETING in April has been cancelled due to restrictions of gathering in place due to COVID-19. Please continue to keep our world, country and its people in prayer as we work throughout this. We will be communicating directly with every member as things are changing. Please feel free to call me if you have questions

REDEEMED AGAIN - THE THRIFT SHOP OF ST. MATTHEW is closed for business and drop offs through March 31, 2020.

NEW LIFE CLUB CHOIR is cancelled through March 25, 2020. Members will be advised as needed.

SENIOR TRAVEL

- Washington D.C. Our Nations' Capital, October 12 - 21, 2020 - If you have ever wanted a comprehensive tour of our capital and the surrounding areas, this is it. Details at the Welcome Center or call me. It is suggested that booking be done by June 1, 2020 in order to have government security clearance in time for our private White House tour.
- "Noah" Live on Stage at Sight & Sound Theatre, Branson, MO April 22 - 23, 2020 - Cost is \$50.00 upon booking. Balance, April 8, 2020. Has not been cancelled to date. If you signed up, we will advise if anything changes.
- Lunch at "Patti's Settlement", Grand Rivers, Kentucky - May 14, 2020 - Cost is \$75.00 upon booking. Taking a waiting list.
- Fireside Dinner Theatre FT. Atkinson Wisconsin Overnight - June 4 - 5, 2020. - Deposit: \$50. Single: \$300, Double: \$230.00, Triple: \$205, Quad: \$190. A few openings left.

Any senior may travel with us. They need not be a member of St. Matthew. We have many such friends that travel with us month by month. We love meeting and traveling with "like minded" folks of all denominations and backgrounds.

New Trips Are Presented at our New Life Club meetings held the third Thursday of each month.

COMPLETE TRIP DESCRIPTIONS are at the Welcome Desk. You can also check the church website at www.stmatthewumc.org for up to date trip information. Anytime a trip is full that you are interested in, please sign up on the waiting list. We always get to most folks on this list. Come travel with us!



*St. Matthew Senior Travels Cardinals Spring Training
"Class of 2020"*

Youth Ministry News

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

April 19 & 26 at 5 pm - youth will meet in the youth room as usual.

April 12 - No Youth/Easter Sunday.

April 22 - The Youth Band plays in the 6:30 pm Wednesday service.

Equip University

What is Equip University, or: Equip U?

Equip University is a brand new ministry beginning Summer 2020 here at St. Matthew! Equip University exists to resource our congregation and our community with valuable tools, knowledge, and skills to help folks be a blessing in ministry to others. Classes will be held Wednesday nights from 6:00 to 7:30 at St. Matthew beginning June 3. Classes are free and open to the public, but **pre-registration is required** for enrollment. Additionally, some classes may request a small donation to cover the cost of materials.



Class offerings include:

Baking	Ballroom Dancing
Beginner Guitar	Card Making
Cooking	Filmmaking
Painting	Woodworking
Plus others!	

What about the kids?

The Children's Ministry will also offer nine weeks of practical, hands on skills specifically designed for children like: sewing, cooking, science, fire safety, and more! Pre-Registration will also be required with some classes requesting a small donation to cover materials.

More information to follow in April and May! Come and see where campus, community, and Christ come together.

Staying Connected From Home

Right Now Media

Don't forget about this **free gift** from St. Matthew. From this site you have access to literally thousands of Bible study options, videos, testimonies, and more. It is the Netflix of Bible study! If you still need to set up your free profile you can visit the invite link at: <http://bit.ly/stmatthewumc>. Or text "RIGHTNOW STMATT" to 41411 for the link.

Download The St. Matthew App

Go to Google Play or the App Store on your phone and search for St. Matthew Belleville and download the app! From there you can live stream, get the pastor's notes, sign up for push pay, learn about our ministries, sign up for notifications and SO MUCH MORE! More information will be added all the time!

Like Us On Facebook

Search for St. Matthew United Methodist Church and like us! You can watch our Sunday morning services through Facebook Live! Don't forget to also like the St. Matthew Youth page, the St. Matthew Children's Ministry page, the St. Matthew New Life Club page and the St. Matthew UMC Celebrate Recovery page!

LiveStream From Our Website

Visit our website at stmatthewumc.org each Sunday for a live stream broadcast of both our 9:00 am blended service and our 11:00 am contemporary service!



Special Events Calendar

- April 5 Palm Sunday
- April 7 Trustees Meeting
- April 9 Maundy Thursday
- April 10 Good Friday
- April 11 Children’s Easter Celebration
- April 12 Easter Sunday
- April 13 Church Office Closed
- April 16 New Life Club Luncheon
- April 16 Administrative Board
- April 21 Finance Committee Meeting
- April 25 Wesley Men’s Breakfast

Weekly Worship Opportunities

Sunday

- Morning: 9:00 am & 11:00 am
- Kid’s Worship: 9:00 am & 11:00 am
- Cornerstone Deaf Church: 6:00 pm

Wednesday

- Prayer, Praise & Preaching Worship Service
6:30 pm, Chapel.
- Nursery available at all Worship Services*

*** * REMINDER * ***

If you are sick or in the hospital please let the church office know. Hospitals and Chaplains work very hard, but they won’t always have the time or resources to let us know about each St. Matthew member who is ill. Just remember: please share, because we care!

Senior Pastor: Robert Swickard
Associate Pastor: Andy Black
Pastor of Congregational Care: Larry Patton

All current Easter plans are subject to change. Please visit the website for further updates.

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