



ST. MATTHEW'S

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

The Circuit Rider

August 2021

Volume 58, Issue 8

Save the Date!



"Welcome JW" Picnic

Sunday, September 5

following the service

Details will follow...

Report from Administrative Council



The Administrative Council met on July 22, 2021.

Catalyst 360 Initiative

The Catalyst Initiative to reimagine our worship experience is progressing; a diverse

worship support team has been formed, with meetings to begin soon. The team welcomes suggestions, which can be directed to co-chairs Christin Vare and Gemina Archer-Davies.

It is our intent to renew our application for the next cycle of Catalyst. In support of this, and to identify the way forward for St. Matthew's, a leadership retreat has been proposed. Details will follow.

Missions/Outreach

Dan Blades and Pat Clunies are initiating joint outreach projects with the other Methodist churches in Bowie. More information will be forthcoming as these projects ramp up.

Continued on page 3

Rev. Park's Pastoral Pondering



The weather has been pretty hot during July, and I believe August should be another hot summer month. During these summer months we enjoy taking vacations for the renewal of our body and mind. We may meet our family and friends and reconnect with them during our vacation, or visit new (or familiar) places, or just step out of the normal routine close to home. These breaks are very important for keeping our body and mind healthy, because this change of pace is part of taking good care of them. God shows us an example of how to take a break by establishing a Sabbath on the seventh day of each week. But, sometimes we need to take a longer time to rest and rejuvenate.

This summer is a very special time to travel for many of us because we were not able to travel for over a year and a half due to the pandemic. I pray for the safety of all who travel this summer.

This summer is also very special for our church. St. Matthew's has been impacted by the pandemic by limiting how we worship and experience fellowship. I believe there is a yearning in the church to come back in person fully in everything we do. It would be wonderful to see the sanctuary full and have fellowship afterward; for Sunday Schools for all ages to be in session, and have our outreach and missions in full force.

Even though there is legitimate concern about Covid19 and its variants, we can rejuvenate our mission and ministry with caution. We will continue our hybrid worship, which is to say that we will worship both in person and online. We leave it up to each of you to decide according to your situation whether you come back fully in person or stay with the online worship. However, I would love to see all your faces in person as soon as your situation permits.

Stay healthy and cool,

JW



St. Matthew's Administrative Council Report



Continued from page 1

Christian Formation/Family Ministry

Our ASP team, with 9 participants, left the morning of July 25, returning July 31. Plans are underway to resume in-person Sunday School in September. Youth Group is also start up in September, with a welcome back event planned. Watch for more information.

Rev. Park has continued the Bible study of *Romans* by N.T. Wright on Tuesday evenings.

Trustees

The Trustees are investigating a project to upgrade the internet access within the entire facility (church, Wesley Wing, and EEC), as usage over the last year has highlighted deficiencies. Watch for more information as research progresses.

Social Justice

A document describing each portion of the proposed Social Justice sign (with references to the UMC Book of Discipline and Biblical justifications) was distributed at the July Ad Council meeting. To give council members an opportunity to review the document, voting on the sign is not scheduled until August. A task force is being created to define policy for future signage.

EEC

The EEC applied for and received a grant of \$7k to be used for upgrading telecommunications capability. This may be tied into the Trustee project mentioned above. Water testing within our facility (required by the state of Maryland every 3 years) is currently in process. Also, to meet fire safety codes, the EEC is renewing its request to have the kitchen stove hood vent replaced ASAP.

The EEC lost a long-time teacher in June, which has been a very challenging experience for families and teachers. The family held a memorial service and a "Celebration of Life" service is planned in August. The family has asked to plant a butterfly bush at St. Matthew's in her honor.

Worship

The current one-service schedule will continue for the time being. There is an interest in restarting the coffee hour later this summer, perhaps as a more grassroots effort, with various hosts.

Financial Status

Offerings were \$59.9k for June, which is \$5.7k over budget for the month. YTD total income is \$367.9k, which is \$12.2k under budget. Total expenses for June were \$61.9k, which is \$1.4k over budget, driven by large extraordinary expenditures for the new A/C compressor, plumbing repairs, and the CPA review. YTD total expense is \$381.8k, which is \$1.7k over budget. There was an operating gain of \$5.9k for June, with a YTD loss of \$13.9k. No funds have been transferred from the investment account this year. The mortgage balance decreased \$25k in June to \$235.8k. Copies of the June financial reports are available in the Narthex.

Thank you for your continued support of St. Matthew's! I look forward to seeing you in worship!

*Lisa Wilson
Acting Chairperson
Administrative Council*

Family/Youth Happenings

The Next Generation Needs You

Sunday School teachers and Youth mentors are needed to support the faith journeys and growth in Christ for the next generation of the church. If you can help with this critical ministry, or have questions about what it entails, please let Becky know by email to beckyroper@stmatthews-bowie.org.



Sneak peak



St. Matthew's Youth Group hanging out on their first night in West Virginia for the ASP youth missions project.

In Memoriam

Erica Bonora Turner

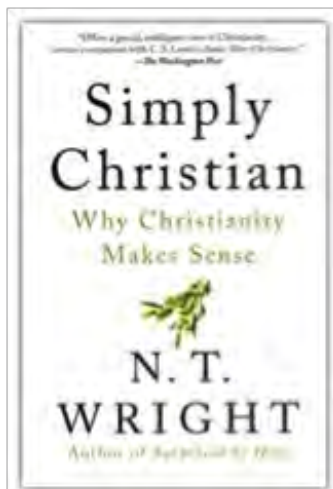
1982-2021



The EEC lost an amazing teacher as we began our summer program in June. Ms. Erica was a special gift to our school and the St. Matthew's community for over twelve years. You could always find her with one or more children on her lap or in her arms. Whether there was laughter, tears, frustration, or exhaustion, Ms. Erica was always there to offer hugs and provide comfort to any child in need. A "Celebration of Life" service will be held in the sanctuary on Tuesday, August 17 at 7 p.m.

Christian Book Club

The July meeting needed to be rescheduled, and will now be held on Tuesday, August 17 at 7 p.m. This session will feature a discussion of the second section in N.T. Wright's latest publication, *Simply Christian: Why Christianity Makes Sense*. The first section was covered in June, and we will complete the book in September.



Bloomin' 4 LFP

St. Matthew's Little Free Pantry was selected as the **August** beneficiary of a program at the Giant Food located at **Free State Mall**. **St. Matthew's LFP** will receive a \$1 donation for every \$10.99 Bloomin' 4 Good Bouquet purchased at the Free State Giant in **August**. Flowers bring happiness, brighten a room, or make someone's day, making it easy to support this program. **Be sure the flowers you select have the purple sticker on them!**

Coffee Chat Returns in September

The Coffee Chat sponsored by the Social Justice Sub-Committee for LGBTQUIA+ is taking a break during the dog days of August. But, they will return via Zoom on Sunday, September 26, at 2 p.m. The link will be posted in the *Midweek Messenger*, so be on the lookout for it, and we hope to see you there.



UMW News

St. Matthew's United Methodist Women are gearing up for a return to in-person meetings and events.

The program year will kick off with a Fellowship Tea on **Saturday, September 11**. More details will be in the September *Circuit Rider*.

Circles will also be returning to meeting. Again, details will be in the September *Circuit Rider*. We can't wait to see you!



United Methodist Women
Women's Division



Former Evening Circle Leader, Pattie Klein, returned for a visit and fellowship with UMW members

Morning Prayer Call

Morning Prayer Call is a ministry by phone. Begin your day **"remembering who we are and whose we are, one in Christ Jesus."** Join us for 15 minutes Monday through Saturday at 6:30 am. See dial-in instructions on page 12.

"The Singing Reed" by: Helen Schucman:

My eyes would look upon the Son of God. For this I came; to overlook the world, and seeing it forgiven, understand its holiness is but the truth in me. The Christ walks forth in every step I take. God shines within me, lighting up the world in radiant joy. The Holy Spirit comes with me, lest I should turn and lose the way, for God has given me a goal to reach, and has made certain that I cannot fail. And so, He gave me eyes to see beyond appearances and shadows. I will see the Son of God exactly as he is. And in that sight is all the world transformed, blessed forever with the Love of God. How holy are my footsteps, which but go to do the Will of God, Whose Son I am. And how forever perfect is my will, which is in no way separate from His Own.

August Prayer Leaders: (In week order) Bill Greaves, Peter Saderholm, Ray Orocco-John, Rebecca Roper.

If you would like to host a week of Prayer and Reflection, please contact me. We would love to have you work with us as we strengthen our spiritual connection with God through Prayer.

We hope you will join us soon. "May peace prevail on Earth."

In Love and Gratitude, Irene Schneider
Prayer Team Coordinator

August International Prayer Focus

In **Pakistan**, increasing drought and climate change have not only cut corn and wheat harvests, but have caused 90% of the mills producing flour to close. Read more stories [here](#).



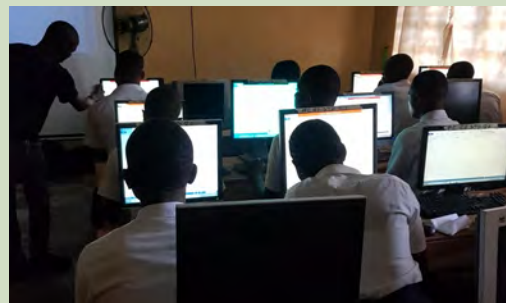
Seek the power of prayer and witness God's presence as healing prayers are answered.

News from Our Missionaries and International Partners

[Missionaries](#): St. Matthew's provided \$300 for each of the four missionaries we support.

[Liberia – St Matthew School](#):

- **Scholarships**: We provided \$300 from congregational donations to support one student for a year.
- **Computer Lab**: St. Matthew School is very thankful for the blessing of a computer lab from another organization.



[Guatemala – Impacto Ministry](#): St. Matthew's donated \$600 to Impacto Ministry for the Library Internet. Covid-19 has helped expand Impacto Ministry's outreach in Guatemala, and now more churches are helping to get them connected. One example is that every Saturday via Zoom, Impacto Ministry has a Women's Bible Study. Women from churches throughout Guatemala are joining in, including women from Zacapa, which is a 9-hour journey away.

If you enjoy learning about our missionaries and international partners and would like to be a liaison with them and help connect them with our congregation, please contact missions@stmatthews-bowie.org for more information.

Mission Community Activities

[Bowie Food Pantry](#): Donated \$250 from the church budget and \$546 in congregational giving to the Bowie Food Pantry.

[Bowie State University, Dorothy Holland Student Emergency Fund](#): Donated \$250 from the church budget.

[Mission Central Hub](#):

- Provided \$300 in congregational giving to [Mission Central](#) as a thank-you for the supplies they have given us to share with our community.
- Distributed supplies provided by Mission Central to [Bowie Food Pantry](#), [Bowie Supportive Housing Corporation](#) (Alpha/Beta House), [CHAMP House Recovery, Inc.](#), [Crofton Christian Caring Council \(CCCC\)](#) Baby Pantry, [Early Education Center](#), [Little Free Pantry](#), Mount Oak UMC, and St. Matthew's [youth for ASP](#).
- Thank-you letters were received from [Bowie High School \(Apr 2021\)](#) and [CCCC Baby Pantry \(June 2021\)](#).

A St. Matthew's Welcome for JW Park's First Official Sunday, July 4th



And yes, the choir made a rare summertime appearance, with Isaac doing his usual stellar job



MASK ??????

MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY
6 A.M. THROUGH 6 P.M.
YES
YOU MUST BE MASKED IN THE
HALLWAYS WHEN THE EEC IS IN SESSION.
EEC STUDENTS ARE STILL TOO YOUNG TO
BE VACCINATED AND THUS ARE THE
MOST VULNERABLE.

CHURCH MEETINGS AND SERVICES:
WE WILL FOLLOW PUBLIC GOVT REGULATIONS.
IF YOU HAVE NOT BEEN VACCINATED, IT IS REQUIRED
THAT YOU ARE TO BE MASKED. IF YOU HAVE BEEN,
IT IS UP TO YOU.
WE DO REQUEST THAT ALL PEOPLE RESPECT THE
DECISION OF OTHERS WHO DO STILL FEEL MORE
COMFORTABLE IN A MASK!



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circuitrider@stmatthews-bowie.org

Articles are due by the 15th of each month. Please e-mail articles to the above address or submit to the church office.

Please call to verify receipt of any faxed articles.

August Communion Offering

United Methodist Student Day is usually recognized in November, but St. Matthew's will be collecting special offerings for the entire month of August.

For this special effort, churches are asked to take up an offering to support scholarships nationally and to assist four area campus ministries. Half of the Communion offering collected will go to scholarships and the other half to BWC campus ministry needs not supported by our mission share giving.



Life Changes

Deaths:

Martha Bamford, long-time member of St. Matthew's (died July 7)

Brother of Marie Comstock (died in July)

Please join us in wishing those in our church family who are 80 and older a very Happy Birthday!



Dwight Hanawalt – August 1

Rich Dodson – August 7

Denny Hulen – August 10

Richard Mills – August 10

Ruth Miller – August 15

Liz Herrera – August 18

Jean Richardson – August 24

Lectionary Readings for August 2021

August 1 – 10th Sunday after Pentecost

2 Samuel 11:26-12:13a; Psalm 51:1-12
Ephesians 4:1-16; John 6:24-35

August 8 – 11th Sunday after Pentecost

2 Samuel 18:5-9, 15, 31-33; Psalm 130
Ephesians 4:25-5:2; John 6:35, 41-51

August 15 – 12th Sunday after Pentecost

1 Kings 2:10-12, 3:3-14; Psalm 111
Ephesians 5:15-20; John 6:51-58

August 22 – 13th Sunday after Pentecost

1 Kings 8:(1, 6, 10-11) 22-30, 41-43; Psalm 84
Ephesians 6:10-20; John 6:56-69

August 29 – 14th Sunday after Pentecost

Song of Solomon 2:8-13; Psalm 45:1-2, 6-9 or Psalm 72
James 1:17-27; Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23



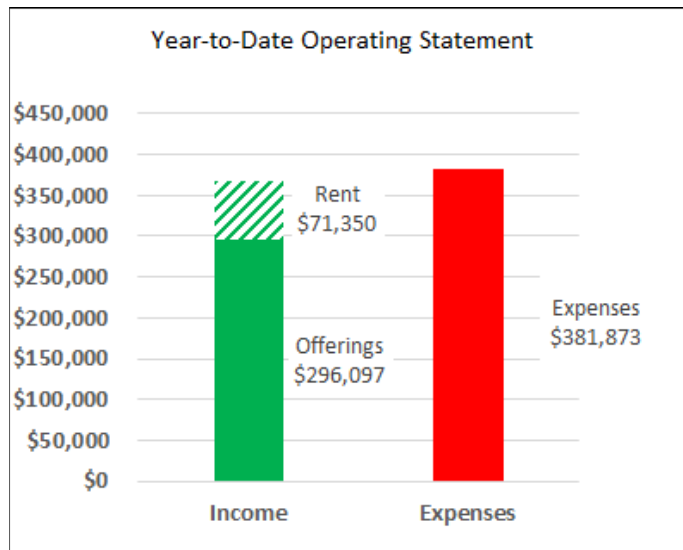
Millie Bechtold celebrated her 101st birthday on July 27

Finance Report: St. Matthew's Finances at a Glance

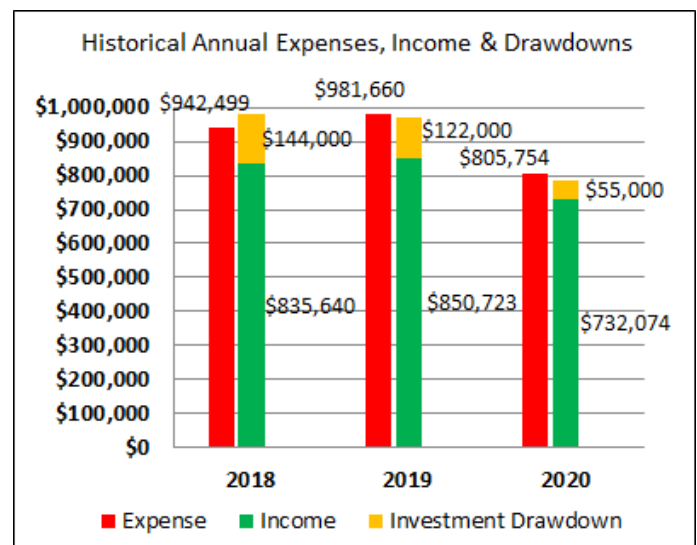
St. Matthew's Finance Committee works very hard to prepare reports for the Administrative Council. It is the Council's desire to share our financial status with the congregation on a monthly basis. Please direct any questions to our Finance Chair, Ray Orocco-John, at finance@stmatthews-bowie.org.

Click here for
Online Giving

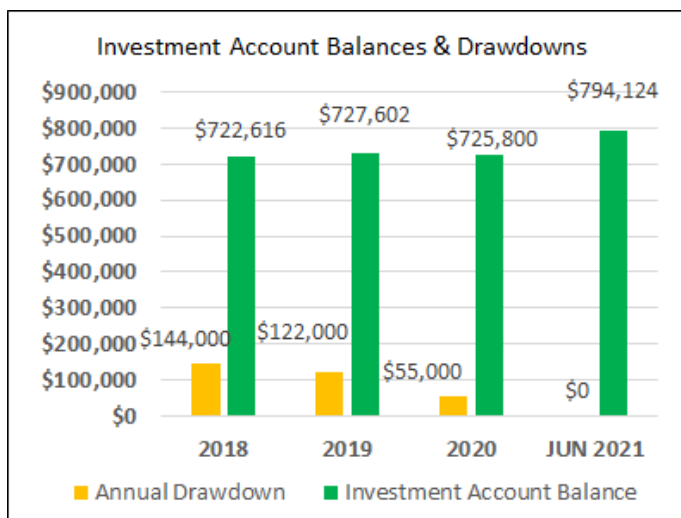
ST. MATTHEW'S FINANCES IN GRAPHS (June 2021)



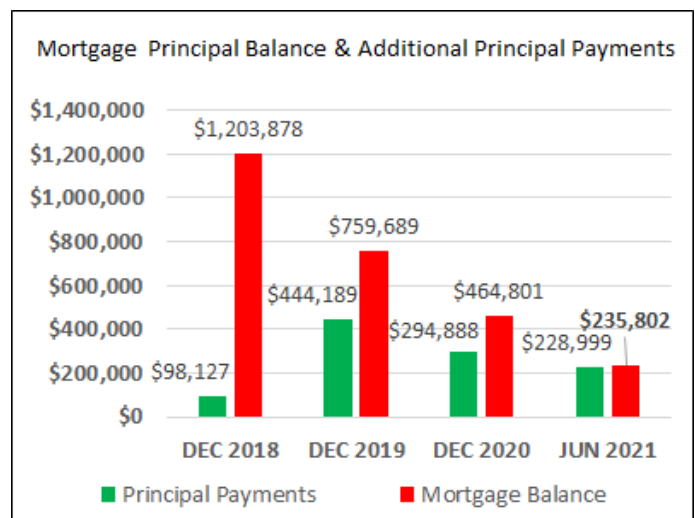
GOAL: Operating income should be greater than or at least equal to operating expenses



GOAL: To not need to draw down our investment portfolio to pay for routine operating expenses



GOAL: To allow our investment portfolio to grow by not needing to use it to pay for routine expenses



GOAL: Mortgage burning party on December 31, 2021



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WE'RE ON THE WEB!
STMATTHEWS-BOWIE.ORG

Facebook: stmbowie

Time Dated Material
Please Deliver Promptly



Weekly Schedule

Sunday 10 a.m. Worship

In-person services have resumed—masks are not required for those who are vaccinated.

Live-stream:

- [St. Matthew's UMC Facebook](#)
- [St. Matthew's UMC Website](#)

Zoom: Contact church office for the link.

Call-In: 712-775-7031, code 111-576-270#

Wednesday 7 p.m. Simple Prayer Service

In-person service plus live-stream or call-in. (see Sunday worship)

Daily

6:30 a.m. Morning Prayer (except Sundays)

Call-in 712-775-7031, code 111-576-270#

Daily Devotional (except Wednesdays)

Posted on Facebook by 8 p.m.

St. Matthew's Welcome Statement

Inclusive Community. Connecting in Christ. Making a Difference.

St. Matthew's UMC is an inclusive church, connected to our community, and committed to welcoming all persons in every phase of church life. We choose to live by Christ's example, affirming that all people are created in the image of God.

We celebrate our diversity of sexual orientation, gender identity, race, age, marital status, nationality, physical abilities, mental abilities and economic position. Through the Spirit we commit to live in the words of John Wesley to "love alike though we may not always think alike."

Wherever you are in your faith journey, you are welcome here.