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From now through
 September 4th,
 WORSHIP will be in
 the pavilion starting at
 9:00 AM!

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July 2016 Newsletter

STARS AND STRIPES.

During the month of July, American's proudly display the American flag as a reminder of our freedom in our country. We look to our flag with a deep sense of pride and thankfulness for all those who sacrificed and fought for the free rights that we are enjoying today.

The stars on the flag represent our fifty states and the thirteen stripes represent the original thirteen colonies. The colors of our flag also have a great significance. White signifies purity and innocence, red represents hardiness and valor, and blue signifies perseverance and justice.

In addition to our freedom of speech, religion, etc., that we are afforded in The United States, we can also look to the flag as a reminder of our freedom in Christ. If we look into the scriptures, we will discover that over 2,000 years ago, Jesus gave us freedom through stars and stripes.

Matthew 2:2 "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."

The birth of Jesus was the promise of a Savior, One who would save His people from their sins. He suffered on a cross so that you and I might know what true liberty really is. Christ is also referred to as "Daystar", which would arise within the hearts of all who would enter into the realm of salvation.

1 Peter 2:24 says, "Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness, by whose stripes we are healed."

He paid the ultimate sacrifice so that we could now live in complete liberty from all sin. Meaning, anything that would try to keep us from the liberty that Christ has already purchased for us!

So as you celebrate this Independence Day, pause for a moment and reflect on the red, white, and blue colors and symbols of our flag for what it means to be an American and a Christian. We not only celebrate our nation's independence from an oppressive rule, but we commemorate our sacred stars and stripes as the divine representations of our future hope as a nation.

In Christ, Rev. Bill



SUNDAY MORNING PARTICIPANTS

Lay Readers

July 3 Beth Stormer
 July 10 Joyce Corlett
 July 17 Shirley Haberman
 July 24 Karen Cuddihy
 July 31 Perry Kaupa

Ushers: Team 1

Andy Federmann - Leader
 Clayton Errington
 Keith Kanaley
 Christian Kanaley

Donn Mergenhagen

Jeff Rich
 Kurt Rich
 Luke Rich

Altar Guild

Chris Kluckhohn



On July 3, Blake Shroust and his grandmother, Velma DeShong, will share their musical talent with us.



The Praise Band will play some down home Christian music!

There will be no Children's Church during worship throughout the summer. Children, along with a parent or family member, may use the classrooms in the building if needed.

Spiritual Life will be moving the changing table from the third floor nursery to the high school classroom. There will also be toys and books for parents with little ones if needed.



SUNDAYS IN JUNE



Schueler Scholarship Awards

2016 RECIPIENTS

Noah Schaner: Albany School of Pharmacy and Health Sciences: Pharmacy Program

Emma Hoffritz: University of Buffalo: Majoring in Mathematics and Actuary Science



Sunday, June 12: **Brian "Little B" Snyder;** parents, Brian & Kim Snyder

Sunday, June 19: **Kim Snyder**



On Sunday, June 19, we welcomed into our church family Mallissa Schwarz, Christine Majewski, Bill & Kristine Morgan, Brian & Kim Snyder, and Larry Wightman!

June Attendance

June 5	125
June 12	108
June 19	119
*June 26	85

*outdoor worship



BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES
JULY

Richard Kolodziej	1
Brandi Nichols	3
Ken Kruszka	8
Luke Rich	8
Tom Schaner	10
Ed Simon	12
Natalie Bell	13
Christian Shrout	13
Marilyn Mergenhagen	14
Dennis Phillips	14
Gabriella DeMeo	15
Sydney Capasso	16
Jessica Goetz	16
Emily Rich	16
Caleb Shrout	23
Doug Stormer	24
Philip Stormer	26
Brandi Whytas	29
Jacob Rich IV	30

Gary Rich
Karen Kaitanowski
Hannah, Leon & family (Robyn Federmann's niece and baby)



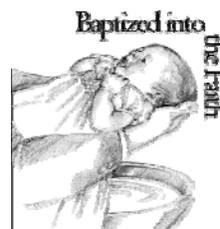
Those in the Military & Veterans
Stephen Ministers & their
Care Receivers
Those who are Homebound:
Sy & Peggy LaVett

Those Residing in Assisted Living:
Maxine Helm
Lois McMoil
Jan Poppendeck
Miriam Sheffield



Dr. Harry Petzing
One Fox Run, Apt. 218
Orchard Park, NY 14127
(716) 649-8503

Please come and witness the baptism of Miss Kait'Lynn Kathleen Burger on July 10, at 10:30 a.m., following the morning outdoor service.



Refreshments will be served between services.

Joy & Dave Burger



Allyson & John Mion
July 6, 2012

Karen & John Kaitanowski
July 10, 1971

Kim & Adam Hamm
July 21, 2007

In Gary Rich's temporary absence, we are looking for volunteers to mow the grass at church.

There is a sign-up sheet on the table outside on Sundays.

Thank you!

Buildings & Grounds Com.



Meals on Wheels

St. Matthew's has offered to provide volunteers to help with the local Meals on Wheels during the month of July.

If you would like to serve members in our community by delivering noontime meals any weekday during the month of July, please call Andrea Capasso at 648-5893.

On behalf of the Board of Christian Education, we would like to thank everyone who so graciously volunteered to help with our Sunday School programs this past year. Teaching God's children of all ages is so rewarding, and here at St. Matthews we are blessed with many volunteers who make our programs possible. Thank you to the following teachers of our Sunday School classes – Andrea Capasso, Starr Norton, Sharon Raymond, Michelle Kemp, Joann Ertel, Joe Capasso, Holly Dobrick, Dennis Phillips and Carla Shrout.



In addition, there was a lot of participation tending to our youngest students during worship at our Children's Church. Thank you to Sue Rich, Vanessa Rich, Beth Stormer, Dawn Goetz, Margie Phillips, Sharon Raymond, Kim & Adam Hamm, Dave & Pam Kaznica, Jeff Rich, the Capasso Family, the Hoffritz Family, Brook'Lynn Clausell, the Shrout Family, and Kenny Kruszka for sharing his music with the kiddos – so many people, and we are very grateful. If I forgot to mention your name here, please know that you are very much appreciated!

Special thanks go out to Rev. Bill and to Margie Phillips for their unending support, guidance and prayers. Thank you for your tireless efforts to make sure things go smoothly for everyone. We are truly blessed to have you share your gifts with us.

Planning is beginning already for next year's classes and child care. Please see me, Rev. Bill or Margie Phillips if you feel God is calling you to serve in this way. September will be here before you know it! For now, everyone have a safe and healthy summer with your families and friends. God bless you all!

Tammy Kruszka

Looking back at our June teacher's appreciation service, we saw all the dedicated teachers and helpers who support the Christian education ministry at St. Matthew's.

As we grow together in Christ, we have an opportunity to use our talents in the new 2016-17 program year. We challenge you to pray about ways you can serve the church. If God is calling you to participate in the Christian education of our youth and adults, please contact Rev. Bill, Tammy Kruszka or Margie Phillips.

July and August are the months we need teachers in place to start planning and training.

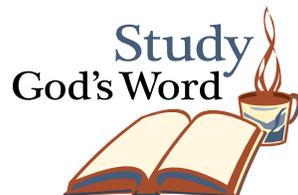
In His service,

Board of Christian Education (Tammy Kruszka, Michelle Kemp, Jeff Rich, Don McMillan, Diane Miltz, Shirley Stickler, Margie Phillips and Rev. Bill)



Men's Bible Study

The Friday morning men's bible study group will not meet during July and August. They will resume in September after Rally Day.



Women's Bible Study

Our first session was well attended and we enjoyed good discussions. I think we found that we're more alike than different since so many of the same meditations spoke to us.

Our group will meet for the other two summer sessions on Monday, July 18, and August 15.

Church Council News

On Sunday, June 26, we held a special congregational meeting to vote on the renovation of the church parking lot. It has been many years since we've done work on the parking lot and significantly longer since we have done any infrastructure corrections to address the foundation's deterioration.

After answering a few questions, the vote was unanimous to proceed with the parking lot project, approving \$70,000 for the repair which covers the \$65,800 outlined in the quote from Louis Del Prince & Sons and a \$4,200 contingency budget. This money will be coming from our capital savings in our Cemetery Fund. We will be holding a fundraiser to replenish our capital account.

Andy Federmann, Chair of Buildings & Grounds, is going to contact the construction company and work out the timing of the project which will be done in phases. We will consider the 2016 calendar, and hope to have it totally done by the Fall.

Many thanks to Andy for his work with the contractors in getting us a very competitive bid.

If you have any questions, please contact me (863-8636; hrich@rich.com) or Andy (432-8364; wnybuild2@aol.com).

Howard Rich,
Church Council President

The Auxiliary of the Dunkirk Camp & Conference Center Summer Luncheon at DCC

The Auxiliary of the Dunkirk Camp & Conference Center will meet for a noon luncheon at DCC on Wednesday, August 17, at a cost of \$7. Camp Manager Ann Wilmot will give a camp update.

Please make reservations by August 10 by calling Jane Turner at 716-276-3882 or Ruth Degener at 716-668-4843.

The Camp kitchen is always in need of pot holders and towels. Please give donations to Steve Jankowski.

Also, this is the last chance to purchase tickets for the Quilt Raffle!



While enjoying the summer, don't forget Churches in Actions' Undie Sunday! Back-to-school sales are a great time to stock up on socks and underwear for men, women and children for our annual mission to supply the area's shelters with these important essential items. September will again be our collection month, and we hope you will support those needing our support!



What was the Cost of Jesus' Life?

I was reading over my daily devotions I receive by email by Rick Warren, and I wanted to share this important message with you all.

“If you’re still holding on to resentment, then someone is controlling you. Have you ever said, ‘You make me so mad’? What you’re admitting at that point is, ‘You are controlling me.’ The only way you get this person out of your mind and heart is to heal it with grace — God’s grace.

Hebrews 12:15 says, *See to it that no one falls short of the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.* (NIV)

Have you ever known a family where a bitter mom poisoned the whole family? Have you ever known a family where a bitter dad poisoned the whole family?

Bitterness is contagious, and it can actually become generational. Somebody has to break the chain, and it better be you. If your parents are bitter because their parents were bitter because their parents were bitter, you’re going to have to break the chain. And there’s only one way to break it: Heal it with grace.

Friends, if you don’t get God’s grace in your life, life will make you bitter. Because life isn’t fair. Why? Because sin is in the world. We live on a broken planet. This is not Heaven. Evil people get away with evil things all the time. Life is not fair.

And if you don’t get grace in your heart, it’s going to make you bitter. Is forgiveness fair? Absolutely not.

But it is not about fairness. It is not about justice. It’s about grace. You don’t forgive a person because it’s the fair thing to do. You forgive a person because it’s the right thing to do, and you don’t want your heart full of poison. You don’t want your heart holding on to the hurt and the hate.

Forgiveness is free, but it is not cheap. It cost Jesus his life. It cost God his Son. And as Jesus was dying on the cross, with his arms outstretched and the blood dripping down, he said, ‘Father, forgive them! They don’t know what they’re doing.’ He was saying, ‘I love you, I love you, I love you, I love you.’ He was saying, ‘They don’t deserve it. They don’t even know what they’re doing. But Father, forgive them.’ Leave justice to God. Heal your bitterness with his grace.”

Margie Phillips, DCE



Choose Grace, Not Bitterness

By Margie Phillips

July 6, 2011, marks a very important day. For some, it might be their birthday or an anniversary of a special time or event in their life. As for our family, it marks a heavy and deep change in our lives from that day on. Now some of you may remember what day I'm referring to. This year marks the 5th year of our house fire, which took the life of all our pets and our youngest son, Justin David Phillips, just 2 weeks after his high school graduation. You might be thinking, *well what does this have to do with Christian education...?*

Well, I'll tell you... "A Lot!" Choose Grace, Not Bitterness... Again, leave justice to God!! Remember we are just here a short time. As for Justin, he was only here 6,803 days... but this was a lifetime. His lifetime! Our next placement is permanent and forever. We need to be preparing for this as a very important event.

We need to learn as much as possible about Our Lord, Jesus Christ, and not let Satan get into our hearts about anything and anyone! Meaning we should not allow Satan have us control others by judging them, for He is our only judge. Life is too short for us not to just love on all our sisters & brothers in Christ! As we teach here at St. Matthew's UCC, we are teaching Jesus. Jesus is the only way through God, and believe you me... when it is my time, as well as yours, we should hope and pray God knows our name!

So, I urge you all to learn this hard lesson of truth that we need to forgive these people, as Jesus did on the cross by showing that we were never in control of our own lives, so don't try to control anyone else. Forgiveness is a free lesson to learn, but it has not been cheap! I felt that when I gave our son back to God, and I know God must have felt that when he gave His son for Us!



 MAY THE
 GRACE
 OF THE LORD
 BE UPON
 YOU


THE UPPER ROOM™
 YOUR PLACE TO MEET GOD

Reminder:

The Upper Room and DEVO (for teens) devotionals for July and August are available on the table outside the pavilion during worship and inside the back door all other times.



St. Matthew's UCC

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Custodians:

Pamela & David Kaznica
716-823-2568
716-913-7504 (c)

Church Council President:

Howard Rich
716-863-8636
hrich@rich.com

**Friends of
Night People**

Our next outreach will be Wednesday, July 6. Please sign up to volunteer!

If you have questions, contact Tom Schaner (646-0368).

Your donations of clothes, toiletries, and children's books will be delivered on the day we serve.

Monthly Food Drive

On the first Sunday of the month, we welcome you to bring in nonperishable food items for the UPC Soup Kitchen and Food Pantry. If you'd like to take a turn delivering the food during the week, please sign up on the bulletin board near the Fellowship Hall.



Caring for you ...

Stephen Ministers: Stephen Ministers provide confidential one-to-one Christian care to people experiencing a crisis or going through a difficult time. They listen, empathize, encourage, pray and provide emotional and spiritual support on a weekly basis to hurting people. Questions? Contact Lyn Rich or Cheryl Larson.

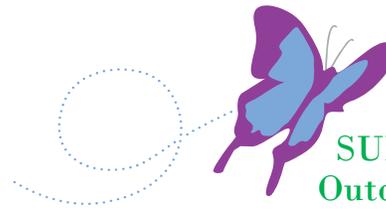
Caregivers: Do you or someone you know need a Caregiver service—a ride to a doctor's appointment? a home cooked meal? house or yard work? Call Karen Kaitanowski or the church office. If you are interested in being a caregiver, please fill out a form found on the bulletin board near the Fellowship Hall or call Karen (649-7824).

Support Through Prayer

Circle Prayer - Join in the circle of prayer at 9am in the Parlor. (Sunday School classes follow at 9:15.)

Prayer Chain - Call Rev. Bill (336-596-1868), Dolly Errington (823-6210), Jane Duewiger (649-2085) or text Lyn Rich (863-8636) to begin the chain of texts/phone calls to those committed to pray when they receive the request. Text/call Lyn if you'd like to be a link in the prayer chain.

July 2016



SUMMER
Outdoor Worship Services 9 AM

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3  Outdoor Worship 9 AM	4  <i>office closed</i>	5 Board of Christian Education 7pm	6 AA 10:30 AM Friends of Night People outreach Kaznica's vacation	7 OA 7:30 PM	8	9
10  Outdoor Worship 9 AM <i>Baptism following worship service</i>	11 Spiritual Life 6:30 pm	12 Stephen Ministry 4:00 PM	13 AA 10:30 AM Staff Meeting 9:00 AM	14 OA 7:30 PM	15	16
17  Outdoor Worship 9 AM "Bluegrass Sunday"	18 Women's Bible Study 7:00 PM	19	20 AA 10:30 AM	21 OA 7:30 PM	22	23
24  Outdoor Worship 9 AM	25 Spiritual Life Committee 6:30 PM	26	27 AA 10:30 AM Staff Meeting 9:00 AM	28 OA 7:30 PM	29	30
31  Outdoor Worship 9 AM					<i>No Church Council Meeting</i> <i>No Men's Bible Study</i>	

St. Matthew's United Church of Christ
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Hamburg, NY 14075



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Phone: 649-1532

Email: officestmattucc@verizon.net

Website: stmattsucc.org

Our church building is fully accessible.

No matter where you are in your life's journey, you are welcome here!