Gregory was a whiz at numbers and loved science. He had four graduate degrees and was pursuing another one. Nevertheless, Gregory would be the first to admit he was not a wise man. His broken relationships with family and friends brought much sadness to his life. He regretted some of his choices in his adult life. He needed to take a course in Wisdom 101, but couldn’t figure out where the class was offered.

Beatrice never completed 8th grade. She dropped out of school to help at the family farm while she nursed her mother back to health. Many would say she lived a hard life, but Beatrice might not agree with that. She lived in the same house her whole life and never traveled more than 60 miles from her home. Yet, everyone in the area trusted Beatrice’s words and knew she was the wisest person in their area.

Imagine yourself at age twelve. Remember where you lived at that time of your life. Remember your interests and passions. Now imagine yourself at a festival with your family. Imagine wandering off from your family.

Scripture says wisdom comes from God. A wise person stays close to God’s Word, allowing it to shed light on daily life. It is not directly connected to intellect or academic training. By spending time studying God’s Word and being with others who are devout in their faith, we can be blessed and increase in wisdom. Fill the following blank with your own name: “__________increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favor.” How does that sound?

Consider making a new year’s resolution allowing time for God to bless you with wisdom and divine favor.

Prayer
Source of all wisdom, grant us wisdom on this day. Teach us to walk in your ways and increase our wisdom. Amen.
Prayer Requests

Specialist Sean Splittstoesser, grandson of Ruby & Dan Splittstoesser
Brody Welshofer, friend of Danielle Deck
Donna Gehrt, aunt of Jill Daly
Chris Galvin, friend of Morgan Johnson
Virginia, Meghan & Chris, friends of Chris Bedford
John Sheehan, grandfather of Walker Westfield
Gloria & family, aunt of Jill Daly
Nathan Koplinski, & 3rd Battalion India Company, son of Beth Koplinski
Fema, sister-in-law of Cherylin Stivers
Fred Gould, brother-in-law of Gary Volkening
Tom & Beth Graham, family of Dorothy Graham

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Polly Morrow, Saupe family relative
********************
Carmà Deck, Shaw family friend
John & Carol Hollern, friends of Dorothy Graham

********************
Elizabeth Buckley, former STM Choir direction
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John Gantz Isabella Gonzalez
Danielle Deck Bruce Carroll
Hervin Buhr Gerald Smith
Pr. Bill & Kathryn Harum
Garris Graham Cherylin Stivers
Don Saupe Lana Wegeng
Mary Jane Rasmus Joyce Hayn
Randy Alumbaugh

Remember our shut-ins:
Elaine Ebeling Leona Saathoff

Please note: Names on the list for prayers will be posted for one month unless otherwise requested. Please contact the church office with any updates or extensions. Thank you.

STAFF OF ST. MATTHEW LUTHERAN CHURCH
PHONE: 367-1189 www.stmatthewurbana.org

Pastor Robert J. Rasmus
Office Manager Gayla Pellum
Nursery Ruby Splittstoesser & Emma Lacefield
Parish Nurses Aziza Awate, Kathie Pound, and Beth Riddle

Connections Deadline: Submit announcements in writing to the church office or by e-mail to gayla.stm@stmatthewurbana.org no later than 9:00 a.m. Wednesday. Thank you!
Meet Your Stephen Ministry Team

Sarah Jackson: Stephen Minister
I became a member of St Matthew in 2001 when I was baptized. I started attending church with Tom as his girlfriend and we were married in 2003, the same summer I graduated from Illinois State University. I have a deep love of music and enjoy singing on Saturday nights during our evening service at St Matthew. I also enjoy crocheting and I hope to learn how to knit this winter. Family is important to me, and I enjoy spending time with our family. I enjoy being a Stephen Minister because I get to help others by listening. I enjoy caring for others and this ministry gives me a chance to do just that.

Jack Frost: Stephen Minister
I am married to Joyce, and we have 7 children between us. Plus a baker’s dozen of grandchildren, some of whom also now have children. I am retired and Joyce teaches 3rd grade at Judah Christian School. We have been worshipping with St Matthew since 2012. I completed my Stephen Ministry training two years ago. One of the joys of retirement for me is being interruptible and having time to devote to other people.

Jen Carter: Stephen Minister
I've been a member of St Matthew since 1990. I am married to Mike and we have 3 kids: Tyler, Ana, & Becca. We live in Tolono. I got involved in Stephen Ministers because of my Mom. I am so glad I did. It's rewarding and you get to learn so much about your care receiver on a deeper level.

We will feature more of our Stephen Ministers in January. If you are interested in learning more about Stephen Ministry or would like to meet with one please contact Pastor Bob or Mike Krumwiede.
ALTAR FLOWERS
The flowers on the altar this weekend are given by Chris Bedford in honor of what would have been her parent’s 71st wedding anniversary on Christmas Day.
Help make our altar beautiful! Celebrate a birthday, anniversary, someone’s life or just because. The sign up sheet is located on the bulletin board in the narthex. The 2019 sign up sheet is now posted on the bulletin board in the narthex.

Weekly Events Updates
Please note that Wednesday Adult Bible Study, Adult Choir Practice, Bell Choir & Youth Huddle will resume in early January 2019.
Also, please note that there will only be ONE SERVICE at 9:30am December 30 & January 6.

SUPPORTING THE STM FOOD PANTRY
The first full weekend of every month, we ask the members of our congregation to bring in items for our food pantry. Our food pantry provides a week's worth of meals to families within the community on a regular basis. You can pick up a full list of the items you can choose to donate in the narthex following our weekend service. A basket for your donations will be placed in the narthex Saturday and Sunday morning.

The following items are most needed at this time:
- vegetable soup
- peaches
- pears
- pineapple
- applesauce
- peas
- kidney beans
- chili beans
- pork & beans
- canned or bottled juice
- macaroni & cheese
- spaghetti noodles and spaghetti sauce
- peanut butter
- jelly
- salad dressing
- cold cereal
- hot cereal
Note: Please do not donate shampoo.

You are welcome to place items in the food box at any time throughout the month also. We so appreciate all that you do for our food pantry each month. Thank you! If you have any questions about the Food Pantry or would like to become a volunteer to help make deliveries call the Church office at 217-367-1189 or Doris Gebauer at 369-6772.

Food Pantry Weekend is NEXT WEEK – January 5 & 6, 2019!

It’s Time to Make Up the Next Worship Assistant Schedule!
NOTE: THESE MONTHS INCLUDE ASH WEDNESDAY, HOLY WEEK & EASTER!
I will be scheduling worship assistants in early January for the February through May 2019 services. If you are currently part of the schedule, please contact me to let me know if you are unavailable for certain weekends and/or if you have a scheduling preference.

We can add people to any of the assisting duties and would love to see more of you helping out! If you are currently not on our schedule, please consider giving any of our assisting positions a try! We are especially in need of people for Altar Guild, Sound Technician, Coffee Fellowship & Visitor Team areas. We will be happy to train anyone who is interested. We would love to have your smiling face be part of our team of worship assistants!

Please have your requests and/or preferences emailed to me at my office address (gayla.stm@stmatthewurbana.org) no later than January 10th. If you have any questions please give me a call at the office.

Thank you! Gayla Pellum
MEN’S COFFEE
Our Men’s Coffee group has decided to meet twice a month!
All available STM men are invited to gather for a cup of coffee & conversation on the first and third Tuesday of every month. Our next meeting will be Tuesday, January 8th at 10:00am at Harvest Market on South Neil St. in Champaign. Men of all ages are welcome & encouraged to join our discussions.

“LET’S DO LUNCH” LADIES LUNCHEON
Join us on the second Friday of each month at 11:30 am at a different restaurant each month. No age limit, no jobs to do, no colored hats to wear, nothing to study, strictly social and fun. Come when you can whatever months you can. The next lunch will be held Friday, January 11th at TGIFriday’s on North Neil in Champaign. The sign up sheet is posted on the bulletin board in the narthex. If you forget to sign up... come anyway! Women of all ages are welcome!

STM QUILTERS
Your STM Quilters were busy in 2018. We made 3 High School Senior quilts, a raffle quilt and 10 Linus Project quilts. We appreciate the support we got from you. With your donations we were able to purchase fabric and supplies for these quilts. We look forward to completing 3 more Senior High quilts and other projects in 2019. We couldn’t have done it without you. Thank you!

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY
The next meeting of the Prayer Shawl Ministry will be Wednesday, January 16th at 9:30 a.m. in the Concord Room at church. We welcome all who knit. If you know of someone who would be comforted by a prayer shawl, please contact Joan Peterson (384-7415), Mary Anderson (896-2061), Pastor Bob or the church office (367-1189). The stories from the recipients are beautiful & filled with gratitude for the prayers & love that goes into making them.

LADIES... LET’S PLAY BUNCO
Play a fast paced game, win great prizes, and have a lot of fun. Please bring your drink of choice. The next BUNCO Night will be Thursday, January 31st starting at 6:00pm in the Augsburg Room. No need to sign up... everyone is welcome. We have a great time! Join the fun & bring a friend!!!

ARE YOU A Snow BIRD? HAVE YOU MOVED?
Are you moving to a new address or enjoying a sunny, warm climate this winter? Please let the office know! We need your new mailing address or if you will temporarily away we need to know when you will be leaving AND when you return. We need update our mailing labels with your new address. If you’re just away for the winter months, we can hold your newsletter or we can send it to your “warm” address. The post office charges us and the mailman collects cash from the office for our returned mail.

THE OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 31 AND TUESDAY, JANUARY 1 AND REOPEN ON WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 2. HAPPY NEW YEAR!
ADULT MISSION TRIP 2019
We will be going in February again this year. We will leave on February 16th and return on February 24th. Anyone interested in going can sign up on the sheet in the narthex. No special skills are required. Only a desire to help and maybe get a little dirty is all that is needed!! If you have questions you can call me at 217-552-3876 or email at jwarriner51@live.com.

If you can’t go but would like to support us financially, we could use some extra funding. Our line item in the budget has remained the same for several years. Even though we have places arranging work we don’t have the same housing arrangements and cost has increased substantially. Each participant pays motels while traveling and evening meal costs in New Orleans. But with that said our cost is about another $2200 over the line item budget. Any help in this area would be appreciated.

As always, we appreciate everyone’s prayers and encouragement. Thanks to the St Matthew family we have been able to put a lot of people back in the comfort of their own homes.

God’s Work, Our Hands – John Warriner

CONTRIBUTIONS REMINDER
Our Keeping the Faith Capital Campaign has crossed $380,000 in pledges which is almost 85% of our goal of $450,000. If you have not had a chance to turn in your commitment card, we look forward to receiving it soon.

Our church receives funds for many purposes. Please help us to count your contributions accurately. For any checks from you (or investment companies) towards our capital campaign, please note on the memo line “Capital Campaign 2018.” Thank you for your generosity.

NEW OFFERING ENVELOPES
Your 2019 offering envelopes are available for pick up just outside the chapel now. They are arranged alphabetically. Please recycle any 2018 envelopes you had left at the end of the year. Also, if you give through Simply Giving you still have envelope packets to be picked up. Envelope packets not picked up will soon be mailed out at an expense to the church. Please get yours today!

JUST A REMINDER…
If you have made changes to your pledge to St. Matthew’s for 2019 and generously give through our Simply Giving program please be sure to update your Simply Giving by completing a new form that was included in your acknowledgment letter & returning it to church. Forms are also available in the back of the sanctuary and in the church office. Thank you for your support of the ministries and programs of St. Matthew Lutheran Church. Randy Alumbaugh, Financial Secretary

HAVE YOU NOTICED??
It has been very noticeable that many of our notices have not been noticed. We’ve also noticed that reaction to the notices has been noticeably unnoticeable. Therefore, this notice is to remind you to notice the notices & react to the notices because we do not want the notices to go unnoticed.

2019
HAPPY NEW YEAR