

St. Matthew's Companion



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Pastoral Ponderings

For the past several months, I have been studying a subset of Appreciative Inquiry called Appreciative Living. Whereas Appreciative Inquiry is focused on the business place, Appreciative Living is focused on the personal life of the individual. Cognitive science has shown that we are hardwired to be negative, to see the worst in most situations. This is a survival skill that we have developed throughout the history of humans. Appreciative Living, as well as Appreciative Inquiry, flips this paradigm to look at the good in life, the positive, and to appreciate what we have.

Some people think this is a Pollyanna outlook, but that is not the case. Looking at the positive does not ignore the negative, but rather changes our focus to see what is good around us while exploring how to deal with the negative. Instead of problem solving, which focuses on the negative, this method looks for the strengths which can be enhanced.

If we spend our time always looking at what is wrong in life (in our jobs, our families, our church, our communities), we will get discouraged. But, by focusing on all of the good things that are happening around us, we will be energized to do more. How does this impact us as a church?

We can either focus on the negatives - low attendance, tight budget, fewer people actively taking part in our work, or we can look at the positives - five straight years of positive balances in our accounts at the end of the year, successful outreach through Marion Medical Missions and Wednesday evening meals, growing attendance at the AA meetings, a beautiful space for worship. I could go on, but I think you get the point. I am not ignoring the negatives, but not focusing my attention there.

In his message below, Rob points out many of the freedoms we have as Americans - things many in this world do not have. We could focus on all of the problems with our country, but I

believe it is better to focus on the fact that we are blessed to live in this country and celebrate the freedoms we enjoy. That is what Appreciative Living is all about.

I challenge each of you to take a little time this month, even a couple of minutes each morning, to write down a few things you appreciate in your life today. It might be as simple as appreciating air conditioning, or having food to eat. It might be as complex as appreciating the freedoms we enjoy in this country. After you have written your list for the day, take 30 seconds to reflect on each item on your list and truly savor your gratitude for that item. Then, at the end of the week, review your list and see how your attitude might have improved. It has been proven that doing this simple exercise each day - just a few minutes each morning - will help you feel better about yourself and your life.

Appreciate your life! Look for the good that surrounds you. It is there.

Rev. Chandler Jackson
Priest in Charge

COMMUNITY DINNERS FOR JULY



July 3

Hamburgers

July 10

Baked Potato Bar

July 17

Spaghetti & Meatballs

July 24

Hot Dogs

July 31

Enchiladas



From the Computer of the Bishop's Warden

Here we are in the month of July. The month where we celebrate the birth of our nation on the 4th. We probably have all seen movies about the Fourth of July although I am not certain how accurate they are in every detail. Never the less, our Founding Fathers did an excellent job starting us on the path we find ourselves today.

Now I know we have separation of church and state in this country but I believe from time to time we can and should remind ourselves of the freedoms we have. For me, most of the freedoms can be put into two categories. Those are: freedoms “to do” something and freedoms “from” something.

The first ten amendments to the U. S. Constitution are called the Bill of Rights. I am certain we all learned that fact in school. But, do we know what those ten amendments do for us? Here are some of the freedoms we have: We can worship where we choose; we can live where we choose; we can be educated where we want and hold whatever job we want; we have freedom of speech; we have freedom of the press; we have the freedom to assemble peaceably; and the freedom to petition the government for a redress of grievances. We also have the right (or freedom) to bear arms and the right (or freedom) to a fair and speedy trial.

So, what are we free from? We are free from having soldiers quartered in our homes (although I am not certain this applies in this day and age); we are free from unreasonable searches and seizures of ourselves or our property; we are free from having to answer for a capital crime without a grand jury (except in certain cases) and we are free from excessive bail. While what is detailed above is not inclusive, let us not forget how blessed we are in America as we celebrate our birthday on the 4th.

And so, what is the bottom line? I believe it is that as good Christians and good Episcopalians we can and are living our lives as God intends us to live.

May God bless us all,
Rob

Rob Barns
Bishop's Warden



Below are the reports from the Bishop's Committee for May.

Bishop's Committee
May 5, 2024
Minutes

Present: Fr. Chandler Jackson, Rob Barns, George Keller, Jerry Larsen, Debbie Smith.

Fr. Jackson opened the meeting at 2:00 pm with a devotion on Acts 15. Jewish Christians thought Gentiles needed to become Jewish (circumcision, kosher diet, etc.) before they could become Christians. The issue was handled by coming together, discussing the issue, debating the options, and then coming to an agreement following prayer. This is a model for us.

Discussion question: Last month, we said we loved food and fellowship, Wednesday meals, and quilting. This month the question is, How has God gifted us to do these things? We are social in nature; are great cooks who love to cook and talented quilters who minister through their gifts. We are blessed with hospitality, service, people who are willing and like to be involved.

Reports:

Secretary - April minutes - Rob moved and George seconded motion to approve minutes. Motion passed.

Treasurer - Correction on the Total Income line - should be \$3783.63. George asked if we have any funds in interest bearing accounts and, where would that show in this report? We don't have any such funds at this time, but we could add a line item in Income. Rob questioned how money donated for the altar guild showed on this statement. Jerry said it comes under Extras. Debbie asked about the Good Friday offering. It shows on the second page under DFMS. The \$525 expended from the Discretionary Fund was for housing assistance. George asked if the church could earn interest such as from owning stock. The answer is yes. Debbie moved and George seconded approval of the treasurer's report. Motion passed.

Warden - Advertising the Wednesday dinners in the local paper (under events) has been fruitful with four people coming from Nixa who said they saw the notice. The bowling alley in Nixa allows not-for-profit groups to put signs up along the walls. It costs \$250 per year to have a sign, plus the cost for the production of the sign (they are all produced by someone to match). Rob stated that the Barns' would like to do this. Jerry moved that we allow Rob to continue investigating this possibility. Debbie seconded. Motion passed. The sign would be approximately 2½ X 3½ feet, large enough to have our logo, address, phone number, and service times.

Since we are discussing advertising, Jerry pointed out that Sands Restaurant allows small signs and business cards to be placed on their bulletin board. Perhaps we could take a picture of this sign from the bowling alley and place it at Sands. We could also put up the recycling flyer about there. Jerry will work on this.

Monthly potluck dinners - Before COVID, we used to have monthly potlucks after service and conduct the Bishop's Committee during the meal. Rob suggests we try this again, beginning in July. Since we are having a potluck on Pentecost Sunday, we can ask people about doing this then. One problem we had before was that non-members of the committee would interrupt with their ideas and questions. This made the meetings difficult. We will need to stress to people that they can only observe quietly - with no voice or vote. Debbie moved and Jerry seconded a motion that we give this a try for 6 months and reevaluate. Motion passed.

Priest - At the Deanery Council meeting in April, there was a discussion about the scheduling of the deanery picnic. When I presented the results of that discussion to the Bishop, she was not happy with the decision made. This will be discussed at the next meeting of the deans with the bishop.

A couple from Camdenton has moved into assisted living in Nixa. Mtr. Laura Hughes has given me their contact information. Lisa and I will contact them and welcome them to the community. Since they are in assisted living, I don't think they will be able to attend services, but we will see. We can at least take communion to them and minister to their needs.

There has been no announcement of memorial service arrangements for Mtr. Paula Lively. (Since the meeting, arrangements have been announced. The service will be May 18 at 10:00 at St. Mark's, Kimberling City.)

Old Business: None.

New Business: Annual Audit - Ron Weil, financial administrator for the diocese, has offered to do our audit again this year. Debbie moved and Rob seconded the motion to have Ron do the audit. Fr. Chandler will take the information Ron needs up to the diocese on his next trip.

Calendar -

Our next meeting will June 2 at 2:00. It will be hybrid.

Meeting adjourned at 2:57 pm with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Smith, Secretary

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church

JULY 2024						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Online services are via the St Matthew's Facebook page. Wednesday evening meals and service are downstairs at the church.						
	1	2 Vicki BD 12:30P Quilters	3 5-6:30P Dinner 6:45P Evening Prayer CHURCH & ONLINE	4 Independence Day	5	6 8A Men's Breakfast at St. Matt's 9A Women's Breakfast at Village Inn
7 9A Holy Eucharist – IN CHURCH & ONLINE 10:30A Pot Luck 11:00A Bishop's Committee	8	9 12:30P Quilters	10 5-6:30P Dinner 6:45P Evening Prayer CHURCH ONLY	11	12	13
14 9A Morning Prayer – IN CHURCH ONLY 10A Coffee Hour 10:30A Christian Education	15	16 12:30P Quilters	17 5-6:30P Dinner 6:45P Evening Prayer CHURCH & ONLINE	18	19	20
21 9A Holy Eucharist – IN CHURCH & ONLINE 10A Coffee Hour 10:30A Christian Education	22 St. Mary Magdalene	23 12:30P Quilters	24 5-6:30P Dinner 6:45P Evening Prayer CHURCH & ONLINE	25 St. James	26	27
28 9A Holy Eucharist – IN CHURCH & ONLINE 10A Coffee Hour 10:30A Christian Education	29	30 12:30P Quilters	31 5-6:30P Dinner 6:45P Evening Prayer CHURCH & ONLINE			

The Bishop's Committee:

Rev. Chandler Jackson, Priest	Debbie Smith, Secretary
Robert Barns, Warden	George Keller, Member
Jerry Larsen, Treasurer	

Church Staff:

Rev. Chandler Jackson, Priest in Charge
Gary Bancroft, Organist