

St. Matthew's Companion



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March 2025

Pastoral Ponderings

Recently, I asked many of you to complete an online survey entitled “Congregational Vitality Assessment” which was created by an organization called FaithX. The Diocese of West Missouri has engaged with FaithX to get a handle on who we think we are, where we are as individual congregations, and to help us lay the foundation for the work ahead. This is a snapshot - not an in-depth study.

Part of this survey asked about our vision and engagement. Other questions sought to understand how we might be ready for change. Most of this could be viewed as seeking what we, as members of St. Matt's, feel about our long term viability of existence and our level of vitality - the nurturing of people in the faith. One of the interesting facts from research across religions of all types is that there is no correlation between the sense of viability and vitality.

So, why did we do this survey? Other than the obvious answer that the Bishop asked us to, before we can start any process of improvement or growth, we need to know where we are now - what is our starting point? In all the years I worked in higher education, this was what we did. We find out where we are, we discuss ideas of where we want to be, and then we devise a plan to help us get from here to there.

That begs the question - what is the next step? We now know, somewhat, where we are. Now, we need to decide where we want to be, or better, who we want to be as a congregation. True, I am getting a little ahead as we have not gotten the results from the survey, but I would like to start the conversation of who we want to be as a congregation.

Therefore, I ask each of you this question - What do you want St. Matt's to look like in five years? This is a brain-storming exercise with no right or wrong answers. I am asking for ideas. Let me know. Talk with one another. At the bottom of the calendar on the last page of this newsletter is a list of the members of the Bishop's Committee, the governing body of this congregation. Talk to them. Over the next month, I would love to see us generate some ideas that the Bishop's Committee can discuss at our meeting in April.

Let's talk!

Rev. Chandler Jackson
Priest in Charge

COMMUNITY DINNERS FOR MARCH



March 5

March 12

March 19

March 26

2 Soup Supper

Hot Dogs

Sloppy Joes

Chicken Divan



From the Computer of the Bishop's Warden

So here we are at the beginning of March and looking forward (I hope at least) to the season of Lent and beyond to Holy week, the Easter celebration and all that those days hold for us. In Mark, chapter 10, Jesus and the disciples are discussing who can get into heaven. They asked Jesus “who then can be saved?” Jesus looked at them and said “With man this is impossible but not with God; all things are possible with God.”

For all of these monthly writings, I have tried to not put forth my personal feelings or what is going on in my life. However, I have had an event happen to me last month I feel compelled to share with all of you.

A few times in the adult Sunday school class, several of us have expressed times in our life when we have experienced the presence or power of God. I too can cite times in my life when I have felt that I am not walking alone. But, if my memory serves me correctly, I cannot recall anyone saying that they have heard God (or Jesus) speak directly in a voice that they could understand. If I am not correct in my memory recall, I apologize.

However, as far as I can remember I have never heard God's voice speak directly to me. That is until last month. Most of you know that I am in remission with bladder cancer. I go to St. Louis every three months to be scoped by the oncologist. When I saw the oncologist in November, he said that if there were no tumors when I saw him in February, I would not have to see him for six months. So, to say the least, I was a bit apprehensive. Imagine then, as I was showering on February 11th when a voice quietly said to me “Rob, I've got your back, do not be afraid.” I not only heard it once but twice!! Almost immediately any apprehension I had left me. Even as I was waiting for the Doctor, I felt completely calm as I had a sense that God was really in control. When I finally saw the Doctor and told him what I had experienced that morning in the shower, he said praise God - sometimes we work together. And so the results of the scope at this point is there are no residual signs of cancer, no scar tissue, nothing. Praise God!

I relay this not for any praise on my part. It was God who did it all and I give Him all the glory that I can. I am so blessed – on so many levels. Now I can add one more level.

ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE WITH GOD.

May God bless you all.

In His love,
Rob
Bishop's Warden

What's Up With Sunday School?

You may not know that after S.S. most weeks several of us go out to lunch. Very informal. Everyone is invited and wanted. Last week, we went to Lambert's - not our normal place as it's more costly than our usual sites. When it came time for the bill, our waiter informed us it had been paid by another patron. We almost couldn't believe as there were five of us together. It was just the extension of our lesson for the morning. "How to show Love to even those we don't know." Whomever that soul was that shared a lovely gift we are grateful to. An easy way of sharing God's Love, just by reaching out to someone. Thank you, from the grateful five.

In two weeks we'll start the Lenten study: ENTERING THE PASSION of JESUS by Amy-Jill Levine. She sets the narrative in historical context and analyzes the risks and motives of the story's characters. She teaches at Vanderbilt Divinity School. I hope you'll all be able to come to S.S. during this Lenten season and explore the historical context and analyzes the risks and motives of story's characters.

See you at coffee hour for treats and an interesting program.

Lisa

Reports from the Bishop's Committee for January.

Bishop's Committee
January 12, 2025
Minutes

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

Fr. Jackson opened the meeting at 11:15 am with prayer and a devotion on Epiphany. The Feast of Epiphany is January 6th and begins a trio of events - The coming of the Magi, Christ's Baptism, and the miracle at Cana.

Discussion - Prepare for Annual Meeting.

Need to recruit a treasurer and another member of the Bishop's Committee. Also need to elect delegate and alternate to Convention. The 2025 budget will also need to be adopted. Those are the items that need to be voted on.

Reports:

Secretary - December minutes - Rob moved and George seconded that the minutes be approved. Motion passed.

Treasurer - Debbie moved and George seconded approval of the treasurer's report. Motion passed. Rob announced we still have \$6662.92 in the bank.

Warden - Scott Pope's mother gave us a generous gift. We received notice that Church Insurance has added coverage for Active Assailant and Cyber Liability at no additional charge. Our donations to Marion

Medical Mission exceeded the amount needed for 6 or 7 wells. Rob reminded us of the need for a treasurer as he should not be doing both jobs.

Priest - My primary focus, in addition to Diocesan Registrar, is serving as co-chair of the Consecration Committee. My workload for this will increase over the next 4 months. Bishop-elect Amy will be moving to Kansas City sometime in February, but her family will not move until after school is out in May. She will be shadowing Bishop Diane and learning the ropes.

Old Business: None.

New Business: Housing Allowance Resolution

George moved and Rob seconded the following resolution.

Resolution of the Bishop's Committee of St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, Ozark, MO
to Designate a Portion of Clergy Salary for IRS Parsonage Exclusion

WHEREAS, St. Matthew's employs certain clergy ("Clergy") to provide ministerial services; and WHEREAS, St. Matthew's does not provide housing to the Clergy; and

WHEREAS, Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code permits members of the clergy to exclude from gross income (in computing federal income taxes) a designated allowance paid to the clergyperson as part of their compensation (the "Parsonage Exclusion") to the extent such funds are used by the clergyperson for actual expenses in owning or renting a home (including furnishings, utilities, and maintenance); and

WHEREAS, the Parsonage Exclusion must be authorized by the governing body of the clergyperson's employer; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that St. Matthew's, as the employer of the Clergy, through the Bishop's Committee, its Board of Directors, hereby authorizes the Parsonage Exclusions for the Clergy listed below for the calendar year 2025:

The. Rev. Chandler C. Jackson \$7,800.00

Resolution passed.

Calendar -

Annual Meeting, with potluck will be after church on January 19.

Our next meeting will be February 2 at approximately 11:15, with potluck dinner.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Smith, Secretary

Since no financial report was approved at the January meeting, it will be included in the April newsletter.

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church

March 2025						
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 8A Men's Breakfast at St. Matt's
2 CHURCH & ONLINE 10A Brunch 11:15A Bishop's Committee	3	4 <i>Shrove Tuesday</i> 12:30P Quilters 5-6:30 Pancake Supper	5 <i>Ash Wednesday</i> 5-6:30P Dinner 6:30P Ash Wednesday Liturgy CHURCH & ONLINE	6	7	8
9 <i>DAYLIGHT SAVINGS BEGINS</i> 9A Holy Eucharist – IN CHURCH & ONLINE 10A Coffee Hour 10:30A Christian Education	10 Noon Jubilee Group	11 12:30P Quilters	12 5-6:30P Dinner 6:45P Evening Prayer CHURCH & ONLINE	13	14	15 1-4P Farewell Reception for Bishop Diane Christ Church, Springfield
16 9A Holy Eucharist – IN CHURCH & ONLINE 10A Coffee Hour 10:30A Christian Education	17	18 12:30P Quilters	19 <i>St. Joseph</i> 5-6:30P Dinner 6:45P Evening Prayer CHURCH & ONLINE	20	21	22
23 9A Holy Eucharist – IN CHURCH & ONLINE 10A Coffee Hour 10:30A Christian Education	24	25 <i>The Annunciation</i> 12:30P Quilters	26 <i>Dave BD</i> 5-6:30P Dinner 6:45P Evening Prayer CHURCH & ONLINE	27	28	
30 9A Holy Eucharist – IN CHURCH & ONLINE 10A Coffee Hour 10:30A Christian Education						

The Bishop's Committee:

Rev. Chandler Jackson, Priest	Debbie Smith, Secretary
Robert Barns, Warden	George Keller, Member
Vacant, Treasurer	
Betty Gloyd, Member	

Church Staff:

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