



JANUARY 2021

THE MESSENGER

ST. MATTHEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

ST. MATTHEW'S STAFF

Sherry Minzey
Admin. Assistant

Patti McGill
Music Director

Jim Minzey
Sexton

OFFICERS

Bill Noone
Senior Warden

Jason Brooks
Junior Warden

David Macey
Treasurer

Linda Gerding
Secretary

Dave Chullino
George Miller
Clerk of the Works

SERVICE TIMES

10:00 a.m.
Sunday Service
ZOOM

Welcome to 2021!

While we all hope that 2021 will be like a new and shining day after a long and dark period, with continued prayer and through the grace of God, it will be so! While the first few months may well require us to remain in our homes, relying on TV for our entertainment and on computers for our church services, the prospect of a vaccine for everyone worldwide gives us hope. But will we all emerge from the shutdown ordeal with renewed spirits and refreshed perspectives on life and how we can live it with the remaining time with which God has blessed us? It's time to examine our new selves that will surely emerge as we assess who we've become and what we want for our lives and for our church going forward.

The question we must first ask ourselves, however, is "Do we really want life to return to 'normal', or do we want and need something better? And, if we want and need something better, how will we make that something better happen?" Surely nothing will change if we all keep trudging along like we did before the pandemic, thinking the same old thoughts, doing the same old things, holding the same old self-limiting beliefs about our capabilities, and acting like no new ideas or actions will make any difference.

So where do we begin if we want to make our lives and our church better? We *must* begin with ourselves. This is not selfish. It is necessary. In Matthew 5:13, Jesus said, "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted?" That "salt" and "savour" comes from Christ, from the Holy Spirit, from the Gospel, and it can be lost if we don't keep it alive within ourselves. It's up to us, individually and collectively, to rejuvenate our spirits so that we can continue to be the salt of the earth. Here are a few ideas to help you put the savour back into your spirit so you can individually make a difference:

Continued on page 2

-
- 
1. **Resolve in your mind the mistaken belief that you cannot make a difference.** *You can.* It's time to stop leaning on self-limiting excuses that you are too old, too tired, too busy, too scatter-brained, or too whatever to matter or to make a difference. Even a bed-ridden person can make a difference by praying for others and the world. If you are not bed-ridden, you can do even more. Remember, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid." Matthew 5:14.
 2. **Collaborate with God and Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit, to know and understand what you're made of and what you can do to contribute.** It's all too easy to forget that we are not alone in this world, and although it is nice when we have friends, partners, spouses and family members to bounce our ideas off, they are not our true Source on the deeply personal, spiritual level where our Source will show us who we truly are and what we are capable of. Before we share our ideas with others, even spouses, we must seek for ourselves a deeper knowledge of who we truly are and what we desire for ourselves, our families, and our church family. Only *after* we have prayed and worked through the Holy Spirit to formulate a personal plan for the use of our talents, should we share with our partners, spouses, or friends, who might feel compelled to remind us of our limitations. God knows who you are. Leave it to Him to know you and what you are capable of.
 3. **Put your personal plan into action.** Once you have a personal plan formulated in your mind with God's help, *pray* for God's help to make your plans a reality. Only then should you share your ideas with others and ask how they can help you implement your plan. Don't be surprised if your spouse, partner or friends don't immediately jump on board with praise and encouragement. In fact, expect some resistance. Change is never easy, and everyone will already have their own agenda with expectations of how you fit (or don't fit) into *their* plans. *Your* plans may appear to mess with *their* plans, or they may feel too tired themselves and don't want to be dragged along to wherever your plans might lead them. *Don't lose heart!* Keep moving forward. Keep taking what actions you can. Keep going even if your spouse or church family poo-poo's your ideas. *Remember* that you formulated your plan with God's help. No one can stop you unless you let them.
 4. **Seek out the help of others.** Don't try to do it alone. That's unnecessary and will most likely slow you down or make you quit. When everyone sees that you are determined to make things happen, they will naturally begin to do their part to help you, *especially if you keep praying for God's help and guidance!* That includes resistant spouses, negative church members and the "powers that be" whoever they might be. One of the best examples of this was seen this past year when the church was closed due to the pandemic. Zella Forsythe wanted to celebrate Pentecost. Knowing her, she prayed about it, then put forth her idea. Not everyone was particularly enthused. She kept at it, however, talking individually to Vestry members, the Worship chair, DOK members, and anyone else who would listen. Not everyone was in favor of her idea at first. That didn't stop Zella. The church wasn't yet open, so she prevailed upon Barbara Wegener to investigate the possibility of a parking lot service. Still not knowing whether a parking lot service would be approved, she made plans for making dove-shaped sugar cookies with red icing and started shopping for dove-shaped cookie cutters. She continued to pray for guidance, saying "I don't think God wants us to give up!" Bill Noone contacted Canon Rottgers, who

asked for an outline for the plan and suggested using lawn chairs that were socially distanced. This prompted Linda Gerding to draft the requested outline and seek approval of the Vestry, which was obtained on May 22nd, and Canon Rottgers gave the go-ahead on May 23rd. Judy Taylor was then compelled to shop for a PA system to project the sound, and Barbara Wegener shopped for a microphone and planned the Pentecost service. Sherry Minzey sent out email announcements, and the next thing we knew, St. Matthew's was celebrating Pentecost at its first parking lot service on May 31st.

Zella gives us a great example of the above principles. She resolved in her mind that she could make a difference. She collaborated with God, who helped her formulate a plan to have a Pentecost service, and then took action to make it happen. She ignored all resistance, praying the whole way through, and enlisted (and received) the help of others. This first parking lot service became the catalyst for monthly parking lot services until we were finally able to reopen St. Matthews on November 1st, nearly eight months after our initial closing. It all started with one parishioner resolving to make a difference, collaborating with God about *how* to make that difference, formulating a plan with God's help, putting the plan into action, and seeking out the help of her church family to make it all fall into place.

As Jesus said, "Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matthew 5:15-16. By individually allowing our lights to shine, we will renew our spirits, both individually and collectively. Let us all resolve to shine and make 2021 a spectacularly successful year, for ourselves and for St. Matthews!

Judy Taylor

ST. MATTHEW'S COMMUNITY OF CHAPLAINS

The Community of Chaplains met for the last time in 2020 on December 13th, via Zoom.

It was a fairly short meeting to review the status of those we had kept in contact with as Chaplains, and to be reminded that all reports needed to be sent in so that the Annual Report for the Parish could be completed.

The St. Matthew's Community of Chaplains wishes everyone a Happy New Year in 2021!

Carl & Marci Turlin, Linda Gerding, Mary Cease, Jim & Brenda Laney, Patti McGill, and Zella Forsythe

REAP CHRISTMAS STORE “COVID STYLE”

Like everything else this year affected by COVID, REAP’S Christmas Store had to have a complete make-over. Clients would not be coming to do “shopping” for their families Christmas gifts, but were interviewed by phone as to what their children would like and what they might need as a household gift.

190 families were contacted and lists were assembled for a handful of volunteers to fill the requested items. Due to COVID only a few volunteers were allowed to help; St. Matthew’s was represented by Linda Gerding. For the week of Dec. 7-11 the volunteers worked from 9:30 am until 4:30 pm sorting items and toys by age and gender, size and category.

As each order was filled and items selected, they were placed on a cart, then double checked against the “shopping list” prior to being put in large black plastic bags and labeled with the client’s name.

Each client had pre-registered for eligibility and came by appointment only to pick up their gifts on Monday Dec. 14 or Tue. Dec. 15th. Their gifts included:

- A major toy for younger children and an appropriate gift for teenagers
- A hat, scarf and gloves’ (for everyone in the family including Mom & Dad)
- Stuffed animals for each child
- Underwear and socks (if sizes were available)
- A household bundle for the home (items such as micro waves, crockpots, and bed linens were available)
- If there were children under 10 a large Christmas sock was filled for each with miscellaneous items

Ann Verlinden and her sisters Judy and Denise, were the Christmas Store coordinators this year, and were incredibly grateful for all the volunteer help. Raytown is so blessed to have REAP, that allows the community the opportunity to help so many families to have a nice Christmas. THANK YOU too St. Matthew’s Parish Family for your generosity and continual support.

Blessings, Linda Gerding



Christmas tables stocked for shopping



An order on a cart waiting to be checked bagged



Orders filled and bagged waiting for pick-up by clients



**DIOCESE OF WEST MISSOURI
INTERNATIONAL OUTREACH GOALS COMMITTEE**

Dear Ms. Gerding,

“Congratulations! Your grant application to the Diocese of West Missouri’s International Outreach Goals Committee has been approved!” This was the first sentence in the letter signed by Bishop Field announcing that the grant application to the International Outreach Goals Committee had been approved. It followed to say:

“A check in the amount of \$511, on behalf of St. Matthew’s Episcopal Church in Raytown, Missouri, was sent to Church World Service to support their efforts to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. These funds come from the IOG line item of the diocese’s 2020 budget. Congratulations on your outreach to those in need. We look forward to your application next year.”

With this matching grant St. Matthew’s parish was credited for donating a total of **\$1,022.00**. **Thank YOU**, Parish Family, for helping to reach this goal.

Service & Community Outreach Chair
Linda Gerding



**ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
SUNDAY, JANUARY 31, 2021**

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held via ZOOM, on Sunday, January 31, after the 10:00 a.m. Sunday Zoom Service. Watch your email for further information.

All Parish officials and group leaders, please remember that **Annual Reports are due on January 6**.

Please send reports by email to **sminzey.stmatt@gmail.com**



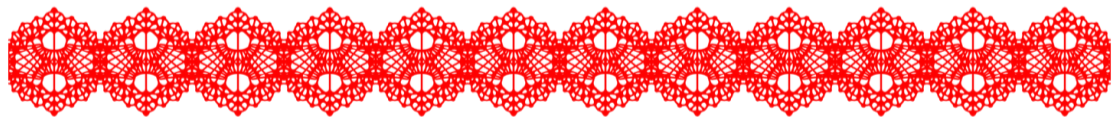
December

BIRTHDAYS



Darrel Cook (Beth Cook)

Tish & Carlos Arroyo



Birthday Bags



When we planned on doing Birthday Bags for a year; little did we realize what a "God Send" they would be in 2020. It was great to see church members again and to be reminded of all the good people in our congregation; the affectionate glue that holds our small church together.

With this being said and our thankfulness; Daughters of the King and Prayer Group will not be doing Birthday Bags next year.

God's Blessings for the New Year.



WINTER SOLSTICE BLESSING

MAY THE LONGEST NIGHT AND THE SHORTEST DAY,
BRING REST TO YOUR MIND AND SOUL, I PRAY.
MAY YOU FIND GUIDANCE AND MAY YOU FIND PEACE,
AS THE CYCLE OF LIGHT WILL SLOWLY INCREASE.
EMBRACE THE MAGIC THAT THE DARKNESS BEARS,
BREATH DEEP IN THE CHILL AND SHIFT IN THE AIR.
MAY YOU ALWAYS BE BLESSED WITH THE LIGHT FROM WITHIN,
AND MAY WELL-BEING BE YOURS AS THE NEW CYCLE BEGINS.

Linda Batson, Daughters of the King



GIVING REMINDER

Just a reminder that you have options on how you can send in your pledge.

By mail: Dave Macey's address: 2200 NW Summerfield Dr., Lee's Summit, MO 64081

Online: Online Giving Link: <http://stmatthewsraytown.org/>



 **January 20th**
February 
Messenger/Calendar
Deadline

