



JULY 2020

THE MESSENGER

ST. MATTHEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

ST. MATTHEW'S STAFF

Sherry Minzey
Admin. Assistant

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

Sunday Services
Cancelled due to
Coronavirus.

From the
Sr. Warden



Greetings to everyone in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus. This pandemic has been very difficult for all of us to deal with. We sincerely hope that everyone is doing well and avoiding situations that could lead acquiring the Corona virus.

Our lives have been changed a great deal, but we have to trust in God to help us through it all. I personally spent two days at St. Luke's Hospital to have a device called Watchman installed in a portion of my heart called the Left Atrial Appendage. The purpose of the Watchman is to prevent clot formation and there will be follow up visits, but I am walking several days a week. I did not say much to anyone about this, except the Vestry and Dave Macey.

I had a call from Pat Whitmore for telecare and I know that we are functioning as well as can be expected with remote contact. On Pentecost we had a nice outdoor service primarily organized by Barbara Wegener, Linda Gerding, Judy Taylor and Zella Forsythe. It was a very good service and the weather cooperated.

Barbara has been approved by the Bishop to proceed with training to become a Deacon and there will be more about that from her and James Laney. I look forward to seeing their comments.

On practical matters Sherry is working from home, and doing so very effectively. Dave Macey is also working from home with his usual efficiency and the Bishop has not indicated that we are close to reopening at this time. The Vestry will begin to make some plans, but we will comply with any and all requirements from the Diocese. Our Pentecost Service was conducted by Mother Christy Dorn. We will discuss having her come back or perhaps another Priest when we are ready to reopen.

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If anyone has any questions about the reopening please be sure to contact your vestry or me. At this time as you might imagine we have no hard and fast plans because the parameters the Bishop gave for the reopening have not been met and are frankly out of our control. The Jackson County Board of Elections has decided to move all voting to larger venues at this time and for the balance of the year.

We on the Vestry appreciate your continued support and trust. For now, that is really all I have for you. Please be sure and read the articles from Barbara and James regarding her work to become a Deacon.

Bill Noone, Senior Warden

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church **Celebrates Pentecost (at a Social Distance!)**

Pentecost on May 31, 2020 was a VERY special celebration this year. SPECIAL because it was the first time in 10 Sundays that we were together in-person to worship; SPECIAL because it was an outdoor service held on our parking lot with protective masks, lawn chairs, and cars parked theatre style; SPECIAL because we had Rev. Christy Dorn as a supply Priest to serve communion with tongs to those who wanted; SPECIAL because of the gifts (lego piece, bell bracelet and dove shaped cookie) created by Zella Forsythe for each Parishioner to commemorate Pentecost; SPECIAL because St. Matthew's had 28 in attendance; and SPECIAL because St. Matthew's bell rang at 12:00 pm for 2 minutes along with many other Episcopal churches across Missouri to honor those COVID-19 front line workers and those who have passed with the virus. And last but not least, SPECIAL because according to the Acts of the Apostles, "When the day of Pentecost had come, divided tongues, as of fire, rested on all who were gathered together and they were filled with the Holy Spirit"...and indeed we were!



Charles Cease, Bill Noone, Linda Gerding-marking parking lot sound system. Charles Cease also directed cars where to park



Barbara Wegener & Judy Taylor checking out

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Zella Forsythe & Pentecost treats decorations



Zella explaining her Pentecost gifts



Zella & Judy with Pentecost



The Congregation in lawn chairs, and those attending in their cars on the parking lot included: Tom, Stacy, Jordan, Alex, & Tary Wagstaff along with Diane Hunter, Richard & Jo Miller and Zella Forsythe.



Jane Matson, Turlins, Linda and Dave Batso



Beci Bosley and Yael Abouhalkah



Marci, Nicolas & Carl Turlin

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Rev. Christy Dorn and Barbara Wegener



The Batsons, Eric Story, Rebecca Jewell, and Rick Roberts(center row) Mary Cease also joined the congregation to ring bells.



Rev. Christy Dorn



Communion via tongs



Stacy Wagstaff & Tary-Tom's Service dog

Linda Gerding-Reporting

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/>



Take my life and Let it be, Consecrated Lord to Thee is the first phrase of one of my favorite Hymns. In trying to decide what to share about my last year, the last 15 years really, these words came to me over and over. It's a simple hymn (#707 in the Hymnal), with profound meaning to me, written by Frances Ridley Havergal in the 17th century. But more on that later.....

Many years ago, Fr. Bob asked me if I had ever thought about becoming a deacon. My response to that was shock and disbelief. As the years went on, I heard the same question in various forms from many individuals-Priests and Laity. My common feeling was complete fear and denial as well as thinking people were crazy for saying that to me! Maybe one of my boys, but not me!

In 2008, God's nudging to me became very loud. Because Fr. Bob had just retired, Laurie McKim and I went to pray with Lucian Watkins bedside as he lay dying. On the way home that night I was hit with "this is what you're supposed to do". Up until then I thought it was my personal desire creating a calling-and that it was just me seeing all these minor miracles in my life—the things that seem to say, 'Go in this direction'. God continued to nudge me and put me in situations that I never would have put myself in by choice. I said, 'Okay God, I will do this, but I still think you're making a mistake'. I talked with now Mtr. Laurie many times thinking she would stop me, but she never did!

Fast forward to approximately two years ago. As I got closer to retirement, a certain someone rejoined St. Matthews congregation. When she looked and smiled at me, all I could hear and see was God's saying GO. Once again, my ego said no this is just me. But it didn't go away. I have always told everyone that God pretty much has to hit me on the head before I really believe that it's from God. Then someone else in the congregation showed me a graphic out of the blue, saying 'I feel I need to show you this'. The graphic said: ***"DEAR LORD, IF THERE'S A DOOR I SHOULD NOT GO THROUGH, PLEASE CLOSE IT, LOCK IT, NAIL IT SHUT. BOARD IT UP, SURROUND IT WITH BARBED WIRE, PUT A REFRIGERATOR IN FRONT OF IT AND A GUARD DOG WITH NOTHING TO LOSE."***

God was now hitting me on the head! So, in the last two years, I have positioned my life in order to dedicate my thoughts and my heart to this calling. To know, once and for all, if it is my ego or God calling. In April 2019 I met with Arch

Deacon Bruce Bower, who asked me some questions and told me a great deal about what is being a Deacon is all about. I then met with Fr. Orin, who very wisely shared that discernment continues right up to the point of ordination. I remind myself of that quite often. I also spoke with the Bishop at length.

For the next 6 months, my fears began to fall away while I retired, lost one of my brothers, sold my home of 32 years and moved to the Northland. Throughout all these life changes, my prayer was “God, if this is your will, please show me to know what to do”.

So here I am. (Just like our St Matthew’s shirts say!). I have been through the Diocesan process, which you will see explained in James Laney’s words (Thank you James!). I have been accepted by Bishop Martin Field, into the diaconate field of study at Bishop Kemper school for Ministry (BKSM). I will be attending online orientation the second weekend in July with classes starting in August. The diaconate field of study consists of 20 classes over two years in the areas of bible, theology, church history, ethics, liturgics and practical ministry. It also requires a clinical pastoral education program (CPE) at St. Luke’s Hospital.

I am so honored and **grateful** to all of you, for your support and guidance through these many years. I humbly ask for your continued prayers as Lord knows they are needed! I love you all, my family in Christ, and hope we will walk this road together.

Take my life, and let it be Consecrated, Lord, to thee; take my moments in my days, let them flow in ceaseless praise. Take my hands and let them move at the impulse of thy love; take my heart, it is thine own; it shall be the Royal throne.

Take my voice, and let me sing always, only, for my king; take my intellect, and use every power as thou shalt choose. Take my will and make it thine; it shall be no longer mine. Take myself, and I will be ever, only, all for thee. Amen.

Barbara

Parish Discernment Committee

By now you will have read Barbara's article on her discernment process and that Bishop Marty has endorsed her as a postulant for the diaconate.

Lots of fancy words, but what that means is she has gone through, and continues to go through, a thorough discernment process to affirm her call to serve the church as a deacon.

I have been asked to write a few words about that process. I'm sure Barbara will have shared the background of her gradual coming to terms with the sense that she is called to serve as a deacon within the Episcopal Church. As part of the process, several months ago, just prior to his call to serve the Lutheran church in Springfield, Fr. Orin asked five members of St. Matthew's to serve on a Parish Discernment Committee to explore with Barbara her sense of calling, and to report our conclusions to our Vestry. The Committee included Linda Gerding, Bill Noone, Patti McGill, Zella Forsythe and myself; I was asked to serve as Chair of the Committee. After three in-depth meetings, starting in late January, we all agreed whole-heartedly that Barbara should pursue ordination as a deacon. Our recommendations were submitted to the Vestry for approval, who then, along with a letter from Fr. Orin, submitted their recommendation to the Bishop.

He then referred that recommendation to the Diocesan Commission on Ministry (COM) to review all relevant documents and information for their affirmation of the parish's discernment. The Commission appointed several of their members as a Regional Vocation Committee (RVC) for the initial review, along with me as Chair of the Parish Discernment Committee. This review took place via Zoom over the course of two in-depth meetings, and once again everyone agreed that Barbara should continue along this path. The entire COM accepted those conclusions, the Bishop concurred, and now Barbara starts the next phase of her journey which begins this summer with studies and training at Bishop Kemper School for Ministry. As I understand it this phase will take 2-3 years.

We are overjoyed that Barbara has successfully navigated this rather labyrinthian path to ordination, and ask that all members of St. Matthew's hold her in prayer as she embarks on this next phase.

James Laney

STAYING CONNECTED

In May, Vestry members each wrote a letter to the congregation in an effort to stay connected with everyone in the parish. In my May 15th Vestry Letter to the Congregation, I shared a few of the activities that I've involved myself in to stay busy, change and try to adjust to the "new normal" that has been thrust upon us thanks to COVID-19. I asked all of you to share some of the changes that YOU have made in your lives to help you adjust and maybe make your life better than before. A few of you shared some of the changes and, as promised, I'm sharing them with the parish:

Linda Gerding: Not being able to go out to eat, Mike and I have started cooking together (on occasion) since I seemed to be cooking a million meals! I think he felt sorry for me so decided to help. Since we are eating dinner at home every night, we have been drinking a lot more wine. This new normal has us recycling a lot more glass ... very happily!! Since we are home so much together because all my volunteer meetings have converted to ZOOM, we are binging a lot of Netflix together. Having ten grandchildren, we usually celebrate lots of family Birthday parties. Now we do "drive-by" birthday parties out on driveways.

Owning a house at Lake of the Ozarks, we spent a lot of the summer and Holidays with family and friends down there. Now we alternate our time at the Lake House with other family members and make sure 2-3 days have passed after someone leaves before we go down. We truly are washing our hands a lot more, social distancing, wearing our masks, and using less toilet paper! I know personally I have slowed down a lot and don't find myself rushing here and there all the time, which has also included driving slower (as in the speed limit). So, all in all, it hasn't been that bad. Blessings!

Jason Brooks: I am doing some online education for computer programming right now, and if there are some online Bible studies we can use as a community, I would be all for it. For example, I answered this question on Twitter: If God "will have ALL men to be saved" (1 Tim 2:4) and not everyone is, doesn't that mean man's free will overrides God's will in certain aspects? I would be interested in the answers of our sagely and experienced members on things of this nature. [So, what say you sagely and experienced members? Let's give Jason a response. Send me your thoughts, or send them to Jason and he can share your wisdom with us!]

Note: Two "sagely" members have already weighed in on Jason's quest for online Bible studies: Barb Wegener suggested "The Way of Love" that is on the National Episcopal Church website. Judy Taylor passed on her sister's favorite website, BiblicalTraining.org, which has daily inspirational readings as well as Bible lessons which she finds invaluable.

Zella Forsythe: Reading, reading, reading! Zella's sister-in-law gave her a bunch of books during their last visit, and Zella has been reading almost non-stop since September. Her latest read is Every Breath by Nicholas Sparks. Other favorite authors

include John Grisham and Tom Clancy, but her *absolute favorite* is the Mitford series of books (about an Episcopal priest) by Jan Karon. Zella also enjoyed a long break from babysitting (because it allowed her to keep reading!) but is now back at it since everyone has returned to work. She has also stayed busy with Linda Batson, putting together and delivering Birthday Bags. She says July is a big birthday month at St. Matt's!

That's a little of what some of your friends at St. Matthew's have been up to these past 3.5 months. Let us know the changes *you've* made to keep busy!

Judy Taylor

From Expectations to Acceptance

From Sermon of Reverend Richard Levy

**The best of experiences you must move beyond,
and the worst of experiences you must move beyond,
know that it's going to be alright no matter what,
let it be what it is. Abraham**

**Michael J. Fox: " My happiness grows in direct porportion to my
acceptance,
and inverse to my expectations."**

**Even
After all this time,
The Sun never says to the Earth, you owe me.
And look what happens;
with a love like that, it opens up the whole sky. Hafiz**

**This is the power of giving to life without the burden of
expectations.**

Prayers for the USA.

Daughters of the King, Linda Batson

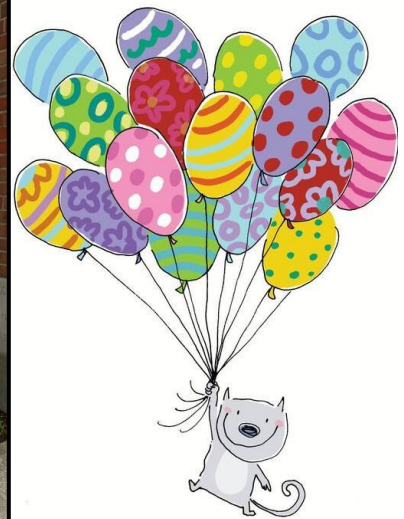
June Birthdays



Linda Batson



Nancy Anderson



Judy Roberts



Jason Brooks (Linda delivering bag)

Thank you so
much

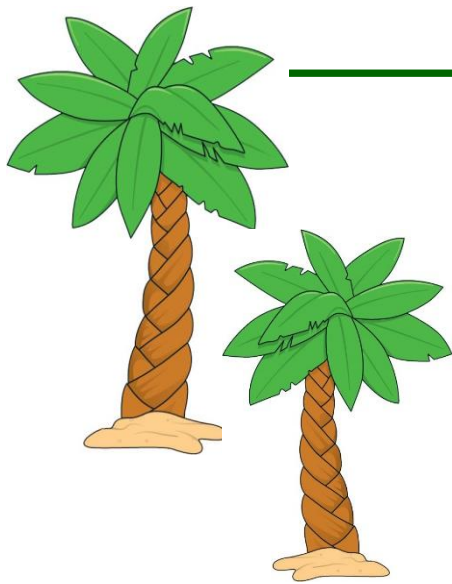


My thanks to everyone with the St. Matthew's Daughters of the King and The Prayer Group for remembering my birthday.

It was so good to see and receive your gifts from Linda Batson and Zella Forsythe.

Thanks for making my birthday a special one.

Blessings,
Nancy Anderson



**August Messenger
& Calendar Deadline
July 22nd**

Happy 4th of July!