

CROSSROADS

Fr. Chris writes ...

From the Priest

It has been a few months since the last issue of the Crossroads, which came out in April. This is the first issue we have published since I announced that I will be ending my time as your priest. As Rick and I said when we made the announcement, I'm continuing as your priest for now, while the transition process begins to unfold.

It takes time for parishes to call new priests. It takes time for priests to find new positions. In our world of instant everything, it can be discouraging to see the process take so long. It can start to feel like "the new normal" although we are definitely in a season of transformation and change.

Yes, I am in the process of applying to other churches. I have no real geographic preference, and I don't really have a narrow list of characteristics that I'm looking for. We're balancing several factors: location, size, resources, proximity to other Episcopal churches, the character of the diocese, the liturgical practices of the parish. It's a complicated dance. I'm seeing what comes my way.

You too are in the midst of your transition process. All through the month of May, you gave your input and feedback on twelve questions that form the heart of something called the OTM profile (more on that elsewhere in this issue). The responses you gave are being turned into a description of St. Andrew's and a description of the priest you'll be looking for. It's challenging work to distill the life and dreams of a parish community into something accurate and specific. Do keep the search committee and the Vestry in your prayers.

Above all, here are some questions that I'd like you to think about this summer: why St. Andrew's? Why this church and not some other congregation in town? What unique quality does St. Andrew's bring to the Christian landscape of Emporia? Why are you a member here and not somewhere else?

The better you are able to answer these questions for yourself, the better you will be able to articulate the mission of St. Andrew's. Right now we don't have a mission statement. I think, by the end of 2015, you should have one. I think St. Andrew's would benefit from having a single sentence that sums up the heart of our mission here in Emporia.

Somewhere out there is your next priest. God already has that person in mind. It will just take a little while to find that person, and for that person to find you. Now is a time for your imaginations to run wild with hope, not to rest or to retreat, but to step forward into a new season of ministry.

For now, may God's blessing be with you all.

Faithfully,
-Chris+



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Big Changes at General Convention

General Convention meets every three years to discuss, debate, and vote on how the Episcopal Church does its work. A new Presiding Bishop was elected to a 9 year term. The Right Reverend Michael Curry (bishop of North Carolina) is the first African-American presiding bishop in our history. Plenty of other resolutions have been discussed, addressing mission, evangelism, liturgy, social justice, budget, and all the other areas of our common life. Perhaps the biggest change is to our understanding and practice of marriage.

Father Patrick Funston, Rector of St. Paul's Manhattan, is a Deputy to General Convention. He wrote this to his parish, and we reprint this with his permission:

"With both Houses' (House of Bishops and the House of Deputies) adoption of resolutions A036 and A054, two major changes have taken place: First, the Canons of the Church (our church laws) have been changed such that marriage is no longer defined as a relationship between a man and a woman, but as a relationship between two people. Second, the Church has adopted two new marriage liturgies for "Trial Use." ("Trial Use" is a technical phrase, which means that the liturgies are under review but available for all churches to use with the permission of the Bishop. And will be revisited at the next General Convention.) Both of these resolutions together make it "Church Legal" for same-sex couples to be married in Episcopal churches. These changes have actually been in process for decades and it is just coincidence that they are coinciding with last Friday's Supreme Court decision making same-sex marriage a legal right in all 50 states."

Some will greet this with celebration and relief. Some will not. It's a big change. If you'd like to know more, or to talk with Father Chris about your response, please call or email.

What is the OTM Profile?

The Office of Transition Ministry is the official department of the Episcopal Church that handles personnel transitions. Both ordained and lay leaders use the OTM website to find available church positions, and churches post their availability on the site.

Candidates and churches alike prepare Profiles. The church profile has information about the terms of employment (salary, insurance, whether there is a rectory or not, etc.), statistics about the church (Average Sunday Attendance, number of services per Sunday or per week, etc.), and contact info for various people in the parish. At the heart of the Profile are the twelve questions in the Narrative portion. These are the twelve questions that you were asked to help answer back in May.

If you want to see a sample of what the profile looks like, go to <https://www.otmportfolio.org> and click on "sample ministry portfolio for a worshipping community".

Announcements and Reminders

Endowments

The finance committee and the vestry are proposing that a minimum amount of \$5,000.00 be used to create an endowed fund. Over the years several funds have been created at this amount or greater. We also have eight funds that are valued below \$2,000.00 each. The proposal is to spend these eight funds for the purposes they were originally intended. A majority of these funds support the music program, the altar guild and grounds improvements. With our deficit budget, these funds would be put to good use in the next three to five years. If you have any questions or comments, please talk to a vestry member. **-Bill Barnes**

Future of book shelf is up to parishioners

Establishing a “book swap” site in the foyer outside the parish hall was a good idea – at least in the beginning. The idea was simple: Parishioners could drop off books they had enjoyed, but no longer wanted to keep, and other parishioners could browse the shelves and help themselves to promising titles, to read and to keep or return to the shelf.

Lately, however, the shelf seems to be collecting assorted reading material, but that material isn’t, in library terms, “circulating.” Books and magazines are coming in, but they’re not going out.

Does this mean that the bookshelf has reached the end of its time of usefulness? Perhaps it does.

If you have definite feelings either way, please let me or Rae Ann know. If there isn’t support for this project, I’ll clear out the shelf and donate the books to the Friends of the Library for their next sale. Thumbs up or thumbs down – make your thoughts known by July 14. **– Lynn Bonney**

Funeral reception is important ministry of hospitality

Thank you to the bakers, shoppers and helpers who put their talents to use for the reception after Dick James’ funeral.

It’s our practice, when a St. Andrew’s member dies, to get in touch with the family and offer a reception or a family lunch, whichever fits their plans. Parishioners step up to make cookies or sandwiches or to help set up, serve or clean up. It’s something we can do to make a difficult day a bit easier for a grieving family, who are always appreciative of this small gift.

If you don’t have kitchen aptitude, there’s still something important you can do: Attend the service if you can – and stick around for the reception. Even if you didn’t know the deceased parishioner well, the family will be grateful for a small word of condolence. It’s truly a time that being present matters and it means a great deal to surviving family members.

And if you’re asked to bake, shop or assist with a funeral reception, please say yes. **– Lynn Bonney**

July Milestones

In our daily prayers we celebrate and remember

Births

		July 3	MayBelle Gideon
July 2	Laurilla Crispell	July 5	Paul F. Bailey
July 4	Kelby Harrell		Daniel E. Clarke
July 7	Bill Barnes	July 6	Giles E. Russell
July 18	Lance Moore	July 7	Harriett Brown
July 23	Barbara MacGregor	July 8	Cornelia H.C. Stauffer
July 24	Mary Smith	July 10	Bruce Perrin
July 25	Alicia Akrouche	July 12	Betty Badger
July 27	Lucas Moody	July 17	Leona Wortman
July 28	Collin Moody	July 19	Sara E. Smith
July 31	Mary Mingenback		Thomas B. Welch

July 20

Dean F. Allen

Richard Barnes

Sally Mason

Baptisms

July 13	Gary Mason		
July 20	Diana Moore	July 21	Flora O.A. Kopke
July 21	Donna Eudaley	July 24	Ruby C. Gallagher
		July 26	Cynthia Beitz

Jeffrey Beitz

William Lindsay White

Confirmations

July 26	Ann North		
	Bill North	July 27	Annette Vincent

Anniversaries

--none--

July 28

Jill Bannon

July 29

Henry Schoap Jr.

July 30

Ralph E. Purviance

July 31

Walter Tyson

The faithful departed

July 2	Jane Ballard		Kristi Hicks
	Beverly Hartsook		
	Robert Hollingshead		
	Mattie K. Jones		

August Milestones

In our daily prayers we celebrate and remember

Births

Aug. 4	Nancy Pontius
Aug. 6	Kegan Moore
Aug. 7	Ruthann Resch
Aug. 13	Barry Romine
Aug. 15	Gay Barnes
Aug. 16	Tammy Davis
Aug. 21	Kira Williams
Aug. 24	Brianna Dougherty
	Don Glasgow
Aug. 30	Don Bailey
	Lawrence Eudaley
	Lee Fowler
	Abigail Jacob

Baptisms

Aug. 10	Eddie Gilpin
Aug. 31	Kelley Fowler

Confirmations

--none--

Anniversaries

Aug. 1	Lee & Kelley Fowler
Aug. 5	Barry & Nancy Romine
Aug. 7	Millard & Onnalee Harrell
Aug. 11	Lawrence & Donna Eudaley
Aug. 12	Bill & Ann North
Aug. 18	David & Susan Mai

Aug. 26 Don & Dobby Bailey

The faithful departed

Aug. 3	Lorelei Ann Hicks
	Jenette Tomlinson
Aug. 5	Bettie Cuff
	William John Gunkel
	Eleanor Craig Jones
	George E. Noce
	Donald David Resch Sr.
	Larry Valentine
Aug. 7	Bobby Jo Dehler
Aug. 11	Winfield S. Hancock
Aug. 12	Constance Allen
	Ann Louise Jones James
	Phil Martin
Aug. 16	Gladys Peart
	George Newman
	Sprague
Aug. 17	Kathrine K. White
Aug. 18	Karl Bruder
Aug. 20	Herbert Ritterhoff
Aug. 21	Cordelia Gladfelter
Aug. 22	Rex Jones
Aug. 25	Laura McWilliams
Aug. 26	Frederick Higbee
Aug. 27	Harry McClure
Aug. 28	Gertrude Unger
Aug. 31	Gertrude Henning

The Peace and Practice of Centering Prayer

by Melissa Lowery

A couple of weeks ago, a few members of the St. Andrews family attended a workshop with Fr. William Meninger, a Trappist monk, teacher and author from St. Benedict's Monastery in Snowmass, Colorado. Titled "The Loving Search for God", the workshop took us through the practice of Christian centering prayer, a method of silent prayer that prepares us to receive the gift of contemplative prayer.

To begin the session, Fr. Meninger took us through some of the history of centering prayer, which is part of the *Lectio Divina*, a way of listening to the texts of scripture as if we were in conversation with Christ and He were suggesting the topics of conversation.

Centering prayer is not meant to replace other types of prayer, Fr. Meninger said, but rather to prepare minds and hearts for a deeper communion with God. During the time of prayer we consent to God's presence and action within. At other times our attention moves outward to discover God's presence everywhere. Through centering prayer, we open our awareness to God, leading to a closer union with Him.

The process is akin to meditating, for those familiar with that practice, except instead of focusing solely on the breath, we focus on a chosen "prayer word".

Fr. Meninger recommended devoting no less than 20 minutes to centering prayer for the greatest impact. Answering a member of the audience who asked about frequency, Fr. Meninger acknowledged that while he and his brothers at the monastery are able to practice twice a day, the right answer for each person is "as often as you can."

"If you can do it twice a day, great," he said. "If you can do it once a day, great. If you can do it once every few days, great. If you can do it once a week, great. The point is to do it and enhance your relationship with God."

Find a quiet place to sit, set a timer with a gentle chime or buzz for the length of time you will practice your centering prayer, then begin.

Centering prayer is initiated with a brief act of faith, such as repeating aloud the Collect for Purity or the Byzantine Prayer. This brings us into God's presence and prepares our minds for prayer.

Next, choose a "prayer word", preferably a name of God. Examples: Lord, Jesus, Father; or in other languages: Kyrie, Jesu, Jeshua, Abba. Other possibilities: Love, Peace, Mercy, Silence, Stillness, Calm, Faith, Trust, Yes; or in other languages: Amor, Shalom, Amen. This word will remain the same during your entire prayer session.

Thoughts may come and go, you may even experience mental breakthroughs as your unconscious minds unloads. When you become aware of thoughts, gently turn your focus back to your sacred word. You may even fall asleep during centering prayer, but that's perfectly acceptable, Fr. Meninger assured us.

“Don't worry if you fall asleep,” he said. “You fell asleep loving God, and that is a good thing. When you wake up, simply return to focusing on your prayer word.”

Once your time is up, remain sitting with your eyes closed for another couple of minutes as you readjust to your external senses. You might then choose to read scripture or journal about your experience, or simply move into the rest of your day carrying a sense of peace and awareness with you.

For more information and to access a selection of Fr. Meninger's worships and audio downloads, visit contemplativeprayer.net.

Guidelines for Centering Prayer

Begin your prayer with a brief act of faith, such as the Byzantine Prayer or Collect for Purity.

Choose your prayer word – preferably a name of God – and invest that word with the fullness of your love for God. Realize that it also speaks God's love to your heart.

Begin your prayer, after your act of faith, by “listening” to your chosen prayer word. Return to it whenever you realize you have stopped because of distractions, sleep or transcendence.

Note: Some people do not need a prayer word, or may only use it intermittently.

The Rt. Rev. Dean E. Wolfe
Bishop of Kansas

The Rev. Chris Arnold
Priest in charge

Rick Mitchell -Sr. Warden
Trish Weidert -Jr. Warden
Bill Barnes
David Cordle
Millard Harrell
Jordan Kline
Nancy Pontius
Jean Runge
Members of the Vestry

Mary Austin, *Sexton*
Helen Miller, *Organist*
Rae Ann Warneke, *Parish Secretary*

ST. ANDREW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

828 Commercial St.

Emporia, Kansas 66801

office@standrewsemporia.org

www.standrewsemporia.org

620.342.1537

WORSHIP TIMES

Sundays 8:30 (spoken)

and 10:45 a.m. (sung)



**St. Andrew's
Episcopal Church
828 Commercial
Emporia, Kansas 66801**